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CX-m-32 CX

ARMY (ABYSSINIAN ABANAS CROWN, &c.)

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 26 February 1871;—for,

"COPY of all CORRESPONDENCE which has taken place between the British Museum, the Treasury, the War Office, and Colonel *Milward*, R.A. and C.B., and Colonel *W. G. Cameron*, 4th King's Own Regiment, representing the Army of *Abyssinia*, relative to the Purchase of ABYSSINIAN ABANAS CROWN and a GOLD CHALICE captured at *Magdala*."

War Office,
14 March 1871.

EDWARD CARDWELL.

CX-m-24
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LETTER from Lieutenant-Colonel *Milward*, R.A., to the Principal Librarian of the British Museum.

Sir, War Office, 1 July 1868.

COLONEL FRASER, V.C., and myself had the honour to leave with you on Monday last the crown of the "Abuna" of Abyssinia, and a gold chalice. These articles belong to the "Army Prize Fund;" and on the part of the Prize Committee, Colonel Fraser and I offer them to the Trustees of the British Museum, [illegible] 2,000 *l.* (two thousand pounds).

I have, &c.

[illegible]es, Esq.,
Principal Secretary.

(signed) *T. W. Milward*,
Lieutenant-Colonel, R.A.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

My Lords, British Museum, 6 July 1868.

I AM directed by the Trustees of the British Museum to acquaint your Lordships that Colonel Milward, R.A., and Colonel Fraser, V.C., have, on the part of the Prize Committee of the Army of Abyssinia, offered to the Trustees for purchase, at the price of 2,000 *l.*, the gold mitre of the Abuna, and a gold chalice, both of which have just been brought from Magdala, and are to be sold for the benefit of the soldiers engaged in the late expedition.

The mitre is richly ornamented with embossed devices, executed partly in open work and with traces of enamel. The top has been apparently surmounted by an orb and cross, now lost; below are embossed four semicircular panels, with figures of the Evangelists, three of which are accompanied by Æthiopic inscriptions.

The body of the mitre is ornamented with three bands of pierced work, with an elegant edging, in which enamel remains.

Below these there is in front a kind of peak or shade projecting but a slight way, and margined with beads set in gold. On each side of this has been a lappet of open work, of which only one now remains.

The chalice has the appearance of being more ancient than the mitre, and is of very different workmanship. The stem is ornamented with very elegant scroll-work. Round the bowl and foot are Æthiopic inscriptions, which are to the following purport: "This is the chalice of our King Jyasu, whose regal name is Adwam Sagad, and the name of our Queen is Wa'atta Gyorgis. A proof of

grace which he gave to the altar at Kueskuam, that it might be to them for the salvation of body and soul," &c.

I am to express to your Lordships the earnest wish of the Trustees that, considering the special interest attaching to these two objects, which were in the first place secured by Mr. Holmes, the archæologist sent out to Abyssinia on behalf of the Museum, and that they will constitute a permanent record of the most remarkable event of the present time, your Lordships will be pleased to authorise their purchase for the British Museum, at the price of 2,000 *l.* named by the Prize Commissioners. The price may be considered high, but at the present time very large prices are asked and obtained for objects from Abyssinia.

The Trustees regret being under the necessity of applying to your Lordships for a special grant for this very desirable purchase, but having been required to surrender the accumulated balances in their hands, they have no longer any funds from which the required sum can be drawn.

I have, &c.

The Right Honourable
the Lords Commissioners of
Her Majesty's Treasury.

(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

LETTER from Lieutenant-Colonel *Milward*, R.A., to the Principal Librarian of the British Museum.

Sir, War Office, 13 July 1868.

I SHALL feel obliged by your giving as early a reply as may be convenient on the subject of the purchase of the Abyssinian crown and chalice, the Committee of the Army Fund having been applied to to dispose of the articles otherwise, should the British Museum not accept them.

I am, &c.

J. Winter Jones, Esq. (signed) *T. W. Milward.*
Lieutenant Colonel, R.A.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to Colonel *Milward*, R.A.

Sir, Briti 14 July 1868.

IN reply to your note, I beg to acquaint you that, direction of the Trustees, I have written to the Treasury asking the sanction of the Lords Commissioners to the payment of the sum of 2,000*l.* for the Abyssinian mitre and chalice. Immediately that I receive their Lordships' reply I will communicate with you on the subject.

I remain, &c.

Colonel Milward, R.A.,
&c &c. &c.

(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

LETTER from Colonel *Milward*, R.A., to the Principal Librarian of the British Museum.

Sir, War Office, 26 October 1868.

I BEG leave to call your attention to the long period which has elapsed since you informed me that application had been made to the Treasury for approval of the purchase of the Abyssinian crown and chalice, and I shall feel much obliged by your taking such steps as may be necessary to complete the purchase as soon as possible.

I have, &c.

J. Winter Jones, Esq., F.S.A.
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *T. W. Milward,*
Colonel, R.A.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to *G. A. Hamilton*, Esq.

My dear Mr. Hamilton, British Museum, 27 October 1868.

I HAVE received a letter from Colonel Milward of the Abyssinian Prize Commission, reminding me of the long period which has elapsed since I informed him that application had been made to the Treasury for approval of the purchase of the Abyssinian crown and chalice, and asking me to take such steps as may be necessary to complete the purchase as soon as possible.

May I, therefore, beg to draw your attention again to the subject.

I remain, &c.

George A. Hamilton, Esq., Treasury. (signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to Colonel *Milward*, R.A.

Sir, British Museum, 27 October 1868.

I BEG leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter respecting the purchase of the Abyssi[illegible] crown and chalice. I have written again to the Treasury on the subject, and will communicate the reply I may receive without delay.

I remain, &c.

Colonel Milward, R.A. (signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

LETTER from Colonel *Milward*, R.A., to the Principal Librarian of the British Museum.

Sir, War Office, 7 July 1869.

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the subject of payment of the sum of 2,000*l.* for a gold crown and chalice taken at Magdala by the late expeditionary force in Abyssinia, I have the honour to request that you will inform me when it will be convenient to the Trustees of the British Museum to pay over the amount as above stated to the credit of the Army Prize Committee with Messrs. Cox & Co.

I have the honour to call your attention to the fact that the valuable articles alluded to have now been in your possession for upwards of one year; that the proceeds are due to the soldiers of the Abyssinian army, from a portion of whom I have now received an official application claiming payment of their share.

Trusting that there may be no further delay.

I have, &c.

(signed) *T. W. Milward*, Colonel, R.A.

J. Winter Jones, Esq., F.S.A., British Museum.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

My Lords, British Museum, 13 July 1869.

REFERRING to the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordships by direction of the Trustees of the British Museum on the 8th of July 1868, and to my letter to Mr. Hamilton of the 27th of October, both with respect to the proposed purchase of the gold chalice and crown of the Abuna, taken with other spoils

spoils at Magdala, I have now the honour to forward to your Lordships, by direction of the Trustees, a copy of a letter which they have received from Colonel Milward upon this subject.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

The Right Honourable
the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury,
&c. &c. &c.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to Colonel *Milward*, R.A.

British Museum, 13 July 1869.

Sir,

I HAVE had the honour of laying before the Trustees of the British Museum your letter of the 7th instant, respecting the purchase of the golden chalice and crown of the Abuna taken with other spoils at Magdala; and I beg leave to inform you that I have received the order of the Trustees to submit a copy of your letter to the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, with whom the question of providing funds for the purchase rests.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

Colonel T. W. Milward, R.A.,
&c. &c. &c.

LETTER from Colonel *Milward*, R.A., to the Principal Librarian of the British Museum.

War Office, 13 December 1869.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour again to call your attention to the fact that the claim of the Prize Committee of the Abyssinian army for the sum of 2,000 *l.*, due by the British Museum for the Abyssinian spoils purchased by the Museum, still remains unpaid.

On the part of the soldiers of the army, to whom this portion of their prize money is still owing, I have to request that early payment may be made.

I have, &c.
(signed) *T. W. Milward*, Colonel, R.A.,
A. D. C. to the Queen.

J. Winter, Jones, Esq.,
British Museum.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to Colonel *Milward*, R.A.

British Museum, 15 December 1869.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, calling my "attention to the fact that the claim of the Prize Committee of the Abyssinian army for the sum of 2,000 *l.*, due by the British Museum for the Abyssinian spoils purchased by the Museum, still remains unpaid;" and, "on the part of the soldiers of the army to whom this portion of their prize money is still owing," requesting "that early payment may be made."

I will lay your letter before the Trustees of the British Museum at their next meeting; but in the meantime I beg leave to refer you to my letter of the 13th July last, in which, by direction of the Trustees, I informed you that your letter of the 7th July, making a similar application to the present one, would be submitted to the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, with whom the question of providing funds for the purchase rests.

A copy of your letter was sent to the Lords of the Treasury on the day on which I wrote to you.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

Colonel T. W. Milward, R.A.,
A. D. C. to the Queen.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

British Museum, 12 January 1870.

My Lords,

By direction of the Trustees of the British Museum, I have the honour to forward to your Lordships herewith a copy of a letter from Colonel Milward, dated the 13th of December 1869, again calling the attention of the Trustees to the claim of the Prize Committee of the Abyssinian army for the value of the crown and chalice brought to England from Abyssinia, and, on the part of the soldiers of the Abyssinian Army, to whom this portion of their prize money is still owing, requesting that early payment may be made.

On the 13th of July last, by direction of the Trustees, I forwarded to your Lordships a copy of a letter from Colonel Milward, and I then referred to previous communications which I had had the honour of addressing to your Lordships, and to Mr. Hamilton, on this subject.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

The Right Honourable
the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury.

LETTER from the Secretary to the Treasury to the Principal Librarian of the British Museum.

Treasury Chambers, 22 January 1870.

Sir,

THE Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have had before them your letter of the 12th January, submitting a further application from Colonel Milward, acting on behalf of the Prize Committee of the Abyssinian army, for the value of a chalice and crown brought to this country from Abyssinia, which he states at 2,000*l.*

My Lords desire me to state, for the information of the Trustees of the British Museum, that they must decline to authorise the purchase of the crown and chalice brought to this country from Abyssinia, on the terms stated in Colonel Milward's letter.

I am, &c.

The Principal Librarian, &c.,
of the British Museum.

(signed) *James Stansfeld.*

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to Colonel *Milward*, R.A.

British Museum, 14 February 1870.

Sir,

THE Trustees of the British Museum have again brought under the notice of the Lords of the Treasury the claim urged by you on behalf of the Prize Committee of the Abyssinian army, for the value of the crown and chalice brought to England from Abyssinia, and they have received from their Lordships a reply, dated the 22nd of January, of which, as directed by the Trustees at their meeting on Saturday the 12th instant, I beg leave to send you a copy herewith.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

Colonel Milward, R.A.,
A. D. C. to the Queen,
&c. &c. &c.

LETTER from Colonel *Milward*, R.A., to the Principal Librarian of the British Museum

War Office, 18 March 1870.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th ultimo, covering a letter from the Lords Commissioners of H. M. Treasury, dated

dated 22nd January 1870, in which you are informed that their Lordships decline to authorise the purchase of the Abyssinian Abuna's crown and a gold chalice on the terms stated by me.

I now beg, in reply, to request you to call the special attention of the Trustees of the British Museum to the facts of the case, and to the circumstance, that owing to the acceptance of the articles by you at the price named, and the long period which has elapsed since that acceptance was expressed, the committee of the Abyssinian Prize Fund must consider the Trustees responsible for the value of the articles, and request that the payment, which has been so long delayed, may be made as early as convenient, in order that the pressing claims of the soldiers of the army may be met without further delay.

The agreement of the British Museum to purchase the articles having been accepted in good faith, no steps were taken to dispose of those valuable trophies in any other direction; the troops, depending on the security afforded by the fact that the sale had been effected to a Government department, were content to await the payment of their shares with patience; those who obtained their discharge in the meantime consenting to accept an endorsement on their discharge documents acknowledging their claims to their share of the amount agreed upon (2,000*l.*) when distributed.

It is unnecessary for me to inform you that a departure from this agreement will be treated as a breach of faith, and will be the cause of much discontent amongst the men.

The great delay which has occurred in communicating this decision, while it has in no way deteriorated the value of the articles to the British Museum, has lessened the interest which attached to Abyssinian trophies, and has also greatly added to the difficulty of obtaining sale for them. I have, therefore, the honour to request you to point out to the Trustees that had the refusal to purchase been communicated within a reasonable time the decision would have been accepted at once, but that the long period which has been allowed to elapse, taken in conjunction with your letter of acceptance, cannot but be received as a virtual agreement which the army had every reason to believe would be fairly carried out.

I may add that the officers of the army having resigned their claims to the men, it is in the interest of the latter alone that this matter is urged; and when it is considered how tenacious British soldiers are in any matter which affects their pecuniary claims, I am induced to hope that the Trustees will recognise the very embarrassing position in which the committee will be placed, when it is announced that the expectations which the troops have, up to this time, entertained so justly, will, owing to what they cannot but consider a breach of contract, not be realised, and that the Trustees will consent to re-consider the matter.

I have, &c.
(signed) *T. W. Milward*, Colonel, R.A.,
and A. D. C. to the Queen.

The Principal Librarian,
&c. &c. &c.
British Museum.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to Colonel *Milward*, R.A.

Sir, British Museum, 21 March 1870.

I BEG leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th inst., and to acquaint you that I will lay it before the Trustees of the British Museum at their meeting on Saturday next.

It will materially assist the Trustees in their consideration of the question if you will, in the meantime, be so good as to refer me to the letter from which you infer that the Trustees agreed to accept the crown and chalice at the price at which they are offered to the British Museum.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

Colonel T. W. Milward, R.A.

LETTER from Colonel *Milward*, R.A., to the Principal Librarian of the British Museum.

Sir, War Office, 25 March 1870.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, in which you request me to refer you to the letter from which I infer that the Trustees agreed to accept the crown and chalice at the price at which they were offered to the British Museum, and in reply, I beg to refer you to your letter addressed to me on the 14th July 1868, in which I am informed that by direction of the Trustees you had written to the Treasury asking the sanction of their Lordships to the payment of the sum of 2,000 *l.* for the Abyssinian mitre and chalice.

Assuming that the Trustees, when they recommended the Treasury to pay the amount, had agreed to take the articles at the sum named, I have quoted your letter above adverted to, as the "acceptance" of the terms offered.

I have, &c.
(signed) *T. W. Milward*,
Colonel R.A., and A. D. C.

J. Winter Jones, Esq.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury,

My Lords, British Museum, 29 March 1870.

BY direction of the Trustees of the British Museum, I have the honour to forward to your Lordships, herewith, a copy of a letter, dated the 18th instant, from Colonel Milward, with reference to your Lordships' decision in the matter of the proposed purchase by the Trustees of the crown of the Abuna and of the gold chalice brought from Abyssinia.

The fact that the Trustees applied to your Lordships for a special grant to enable them to make the purchase was in itself evidence that they were willing to acquire the objects at the price at which they were offered; but in all the communications made by the Trustees to Colonel Milward upon this subject, it has been clearly indicated that it was impossible for the Trustees to make the purchase without the sanction of your Lordships; and accordingly when Mr. Stansfeld's letter of the 22nd January, conveying the decision of your Lordships, had been laid before the Trustees at their next meeting, on the 12th of February, a copy of it was by their order transmitted to Colonel Milward without delay.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

The Right Honourable
the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury.
&c. &c. &c.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to Colonel *Milward*, R.A.

Sir, British Museum, 29 March 1870.

I HAVE had the honour of laying before the Trustees of the British Museum your letters of the 18th and 25th instant, on the subject of the gold crown and chalice brought to England from Abyssinia, and offered to the Trustees by the committee of the Abyssinian Prize Fund for the sum of 2,000 *l.*

After considering most carefully your letter of the 18th instant, the Trustees directed me to refer you to the communication which, by their order, I had the

honour to address to you on the 14th of February last, and in which I made you acquainted with the decision of the Treasury with respect to the proposed sale to them of the crown of the Abuna and the gold chalice.

I am also to remind you that in all communications made to you by the Trustees on this subject, it has been clearly indicated that it was impossible for the Trustees to make the purchase without the sanction of the Treasury.

I am, at the same time, to inform you that a copy of your letter of the 18th instant has been this day forwarded to the Treasury for their Lordships' consideration.

I have &c.
(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

Colonel Milward, R.A., C.B.,
A. D. C. to the Queen.

LETTER from the Secretary to the Treasury to the Trustees of the British Museum.

My Lords and Gentlemen, Treasury Chambers, 15 June 1870.

THE Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have had under consideration Mr. Winter Jones' further letter of the 29th March last, on the subject of the proposed purchase of the crown of the Abuna, and the gold chalice brought from Abyssinia.

My Lords cannot admit that there exists, or has existed, any undertaking or understanding on the part of Her Majesty's Government to purchase the crown and the chalice in question; and their Lordships see no reason for altering the decision communicated to you by the letter from this department of 22nd January last.

I am, &c.
(signed) *James Stansfeld.*

The Trustees of the British Museum.

LETTER from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum to Colonel *Milward*, R.A., C.B.

Sir, British Museum, 28 June 1870.

REFERRING to my letter of the 29th of March last, in which I informed you that a copy of your letter of the 18th of March, on the subject of the crown and chalice brought to England from Abyssinia, had been forwarded to the Treasury for their Lordships' consideration, and in which I reminded you that in all communications made to you by the Trustees with reference to the crown and chalice in question it had been clearly indicated that it was impossible for the Trustees to make the proposed purchase without the sanction of the Treasury, I have now been directed by the Trustees to transmit to you the accompanying copy of the reply, which they have received from the Treasury, to the representation made to their Lordships by the Trustees upon the receipt of your letter of the 18th of March, already mentioned.

I have also been directed to request that you will be so good as to let me know where you would wish the crown and chalice to be delivered to you.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Winter Jones.*

Colonel T. W. Milward, R.A., C.B.,
A. D. C. to the Queen.

LETTER from Colonel *Milward*, R.A., to the Under Secretary of State for War.

Sir, Woolwich, 10 October 1870.

WE have the honour to forward herewith a copy of correspondence which has taken place between the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, the Trustees of the British Museum, and Colonel Milward, as the representative of the Prize Committee of the late army in Abyssinia.

This correspondence will doubtless explain the circumstances of the case; and we would call particular attention to Colonel Milward's letter of the 18th March 1870, which briefly sets forth what are considered the just claims of the troops in this matter.

We beg leave, however, to point out especially, that the officers of the army generally resigned their shares of this prize to the men, and that in pressing the just rights of the troops the officers of the army have no personal concern.

We beg also to observe that the crown and chalice were set aside, when the other trophies were disposed of, at the special request of the agent of the British Museum, who accompanied the army, with a view to an opportunity being afforded for articles of such great interest becoming the property of the nation; that with this object they were sent to England, at considerable inconvenience, in charge of Colonel Milward, and that their great value, both intrinsically and as objects of national interest, was at once recognised by the Trustees of the British Museum, which is sufficiently attested by the fact that, without hesitation, they recommended the purchase to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

This being the case, the committee considered that they had every reason to trust to the completion of the purchase.

Had the intention to refuse acceptance been communicated at this stage of the proceedings, or even within any reasonable period, the committee could have taken steps to effect a sale in other directions, and with certain prospect of success, without difficulty.

The articles remained in possession of the Trustees of the British Museum, and repeated applications were made for payment, but without success; these applications had reference to the natural impatience of the men for the closing of the account; but it was never anticipated that, after such a lapse of time, a refusal to purchase would be communicated.

This great and most unnecessary delay had the natural effect of lessening the interest in trophies from Abyssinia, of closing many sources of sale which had existed, and, in fact, "spoiled the sale" of the articles, at least as far as purchasers *in this country* are concerned.

Admitting that nothing contained in the letters which passed amounts to a direct agreement to purchase, such as could be maintained in a court of law, there still exists as between Her Majesty's troops and a public department a virtual agreement, which the former have every right to expect to be fulfilled.

Under these circumstances we have the honour to bring the whole matter under the consideration of the Secretary of State for War, in the hope that he may be pleased to urge the justice of the claim upon the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, in order that this very small award for the hardship and privations they endured may not be withheld from the soldiers, more especially as it is not claimed in the form of a gift, but as a fair equivalent for articles of great national interests purchased by the State.

We have, &c.

(signed) *W. G. Cameron*, Colonel,
4th K. O. Rl. Regt.
T. W. Milward, Colonel, R.A.,
and Aide de Camp.

The Under Secretary of State for War,
War Office, Pall Mall.

LETTER from the Under Secretary of State for War to the Abyssinian Prize Fund Committee.

Gentlemen, 8 December 1870.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Cardwell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 10th October, enclosing copy of a correspondence which has passed between the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, the Trustees of the British Museum, and Colonel Milward, as the representative of the Prize Committee of the late army in Abyssinia, on the subject of the proposed purchase, for a sum of 2,000 *l.*, of a gold crown and chalice taken at Magdala by the late expedition, and requesting that the Secretary of State would urge the "justice of the claim" upon the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

In reply, I am to state to you that Mr. Cardwell has no power to compel either the Trustees of the British Museum or the Treasury to authorise the payment in question, and he does not feel himself entitled to interfere with their decisions respectively.

I am to add, that Mr. Cardwell desires that letters written, especially in so peremptory a tone, to public departments on business not within the province of this department, may not be dated from the War Office.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Edward Lugard.*

The Abyssinian Prize Fund Committee.

ARMY. (ABYSSINIAN ABANAS CROWN, &c.)

COPY of all CORRESPONDENCE which has taken place between the British Museum, the Treasury, the War Office, and Colonel *Milward*, R.A. and C.B., and Colonel *W. G. Cameron*, 4th King's Own Regiment, representing the Army of *Abyssinia*, relative to the Purchase of ABYSSINIAN ABANAS CROWN and a GOLD CHALICE captured at *Magdala*.

(*Colonel North.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed*, 23 *March* 1871.

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
Royal Asiatic Society.
CLASS

ABYSSINIA.

EXPLANATION of Lord *Napier of Magdala* relative to certain STATEMENTS in Mr. *Rassam's* Abyssinian Report.

Commander in Chief's Office, Bombay,
My Lord Duke, 11 February 1869.

THE publication of Mr. Rassam's Abyssinian Report renders it necessary for me to notice its 348th paragraph, in which Mr. Rassam states as follows:—

"We then went with General Merewether to the Commander in Chief's "tent, and read the letter.

"Alaka Ingada read it, and Samuel translated it to me in Arabic, while I "rendered it, word for word, to Sir Robert Napier in English; as Samuel was "ordered by the King to take the answer, and was required to go up and assist "in bringing down to the British camp the European artisans and their families, "he asked what reply he was to take to the King with regard to a present of "cows and sheep which was offered by the King in his letter. On communi- "cating the question to Sir R. Napier, he said, 'I accept them.'"

When Mr. Rassam's Report first came to my notice in England, my own recollection of the details attending the translation of the letter was at variance with Mr. Rassam's account, but my recollection being very indistinct, and considering Mr. Rassam simply as a translator, I felt that I should not be justified in impugning the accuracy of his distinct and deliberate statement on the strength of my own imperfect remembrance of what, at the time, appeared unimportant. I accordingly wrote to the Secretary of State as follows:—

That I was unwilling to rely on my own recollection of the details of the circumstances connected with the oral translation of Theodore's letter from Amharic to Arabic, and from Arabic to English.

That I accepted fully the integrity of the statement of Mr. Rassam, and was entirely responsible for the political and military proceedings of the British force.

That any assent given by me to the offer of the cattle was under the impression that the question referred to a present of a few cows and sheep, similar to the usual accompaniment of letters in Abyssinia, consisting of a few animals as a tribute of respect, the acceptance of which meant nothing more than the civil reception of the letter itself.

That this was consistent with the terms of my first letter to Theodore, in which I maintained the usual forms of civility adopted towards the other Princes of the country, both to indicate that no personal severity was intended towards him, and to avoid exciting any ebullition of fury against the captives.

On my return to India, I requested Sir W. Merewether to state what took place at the translation of Theodore's letter. I quote his account in full:—

"The statement contained in the latter part of the 348th para. of Mr. Ras- "sam's Confidential Report to Lord Stanley is not correct, where he writes, "in reference to the offered present of cows and sheep, 'His Excellency said, "'"I accept them."' I was present the whole time, and am positive no words "were uttered.

"To the best of my recollection, the following were the exact circum- "stances:—

"All the English captives came into the camp on the night of the 11th April but "Mrs. Flad; some of the German artisans, and others, with the whole of their wives "and families, still remained on the mountain. It was arranged by the Commander "in Chief that Mr. Flad and the Germans who had accompanied the released

"English prisoners should return early on the morning of the 12th to bring "Mrs. Flad and all the rest down. Just as they were about to start, on the "12th, Alaka Ingada arrived with the letter from the King, and Mr. Flad was "stayed until it had been read. As stated by Mr. Rassam, I took him and the "messenger to the Commander in Chief's tent, and the letter was read and "explained as described. It was then pointed out by me that, as there was "nothing in the letter affecting the previous arrangement for the departure of "Mr. Flad and the others, and the day was getting on, they had better depart, "and a reply could follow. His Excellency gave orders accordingly, and a "verbal message was sent to the King to the effect that his letter had been "received, and reply to it would be sent afterwards by Dejaj Allema, who would "remain in the British camp for that purpose. All then went away, but almost "immediately, in two or three minutes, Mr. Rassam returned with Samuel, and "asked the Commander in Chief what answer was to be given about the "cattle; were they accepted?

"The Commander in Chief was still sitting in a chair, as when they left "first. Without apparently giving it any particular thought, or attempting to "discuss the question in any way, he simply bowed his head, but *did not utter* "*a word*. On this Mr. Rassam and Samuel went away.

"Evidently the Commander in Chief considered the matter of small import-"ance, not affecting the main point, viz., the terms which had been offered the "King, and which had been more than once communicated to him, uncon-"ditional surrender, when honourable treatment would be accorded him and "his family.

"It was afterwards, when the cattle actually arrived, that the importance "attached to the present by Mr. Rassam became known. The cattle were then "ordered not to be admitted within the pickets.

(signed) "*W. Merewether*."

The immediate connection in Mr. Rassam's narrative between the reading of the letter and my asserted reply lends, no doubt unintentionally, an erroneous colouring to the occurrences. It will be seen from Colonel Merewether's account that the letter had been disposed of, and the messengers dismissed; the subsequent reference to the offered cattle led me to regard them in the same light as those that accompanied every other letter that I had received from chiefs in Abyssinia.

On learning that a large present of a thousand cattle and five hundred sheep were on their way from Theodore, and that their acceptance would be considered a pledge of friendship, I was surprised and indignant, and immediately forbad their admission within the pickets.

Mr. Rassam having passed the night with the released captives, it may be presumed that he must have become acquainted with the circumstances of Lieutenant Prideaux's return, and that I was determined to enforce Theodore's personal surrender; it cannot, therefore, be supposed that he in any way countenanced the construction which Theodore's servants must have put on the question of the cattle, for which they are responsible.

Mr. Flad has assured me that, on his leaving Theodore, he met the messenger returning with the news that the cattle had not been accepted, and that the news of their rejection reached Theodore before all the European artisans had left him.

The principal captives had arrived in camp before Theodore's letter was even written; it will, therefore, be seen that the question of the cattle had no influence on the release of the prisoners.

I have thought it right to address your Grace on the subject, as Mr. Rassam's statement uncorrected might lead to misconception.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Napier of Magdala*,
Lieutenant General, late Commander in Chief,
Abyssinian Expedition.

His Grace
the Secretary of State for India.

ABYSSINIA.

EXPLANATION of Lord *Napier of Magdala*, relative to certain STATEMENTS in Mr. *Rassam's* Abyssinian Report.

(Presented to Parliament by Her Majesty's Command.)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
9 *March* 1869.

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
Royal Asiatic Society.
CLASS

ABYSSINIA.

CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

DR. BEKE, MR. PURDAY, MR. PALGRAVE,

AND THE

FOREIGN OFFICE,

REFERRED TO IN

THE LETTER FROM DR. BEKE TO LORD CLARENDON, DATED JUNE 11, 1866.

Presented to the House of Commons by Command of Her Majesty, in pursuance of their Address dated December 6, 1867.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS.

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RETURN to an Address of the Honourable the House of Commons, dated December 6, 1867;

for—

"Copy of the Correspondence between Dr. Beke, Mr. Purday, Mr. Palgrave, and the Foreign Office, referred to in the Letter from Dr. Beke to Lord Clarendon, dated the 11th day of June, 1866."

No. 1.

The Earl of Clarendon to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 18, 1866.

A LETTER addressed by Dr. Beke to Mr. Purday, the father-in-law of Mr. Stern, and dated from Cairo the 20th ultimo, has been shown to a member of this Office, to whom permission was at the same time given to make such use of it as he thought proper.

In accordance with his duty, that officer immediately laid before me the following Minute in regard to the statements made by Dr. Beke:—

"The passages in Dr. Beke's letter were as follow:

"'Whilst awaiting the arrival of the Marseilles mail, now overdue, I begin my letter for the steamer of next week by acquainting you with the substance of a very curious conversation I have had this morning with Mr. Palgrave. He tells me that he has seen the instructions given by the Foreign Office to Mr. Rassam,* and that they are restricted to the release of Captain Cameron. He added, that if Rassam succeeded in bringing away Cameron he would be quite content to leave the missionaries to their fate. Now if this be true, the Jew Society and Lord Shaftesbury have been deceived by the Foreign Office.

"'I do not see any harm in your communicating this to Mr. Goodhart (or Reichardt) if you think proper, especially as Mr. Palgrave did not speak to me at all in confidence, and I believe he has told the same thing to others. How far he is to be relied upon I will not pretend to say, but his communication appeared to be made *bonâ fide*.'

"Dr. Beke then stated that Mr. Palgrave had told him that Mr. Layard and Mr. Rassam had a personal dislike to Mr. Stern, and he then went on to say:

"'Before dismissing the subject of Mr. Palgrave, I must add that he told me that when Earl Russell sent for him and desired him to go out, he made it a condition (as is not unusual) that he should draw up his own instructions. In these (he says) he expressly provided for the liberation of all the captives; and in fact he made it a condition that all British subjects and all persons under British protection should be at liberty to leave the country. Palgrave added, that when he took these instructions into the Foreign Office to be put into an official form Layard objected to them; but that he, Palgrave, insisted on them as having been approved by Earl Russell, and so carried the day against the Under Secretary. . . . .

"'Palgrave tells me that he is being kept on here at 100*l.* a month, and he expects to remain till Lord Russell finds him something else to do, as the two together have been placed in a false position by Layard and Rassam. He says he has written to several of his friends—the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette" amongst the number, requesting them not to agitate the Abyssinian question, or if they do, not to bring his name up. He does not wish to increase the difficulties of Government, but he hinted rather significantly that under certain circumstances (that is, if Lord Russell does not do something for him) he might be a thorn in their side.'

"Dr. Beke then observes to Mr. Purday:

"'I think that before or soon after the meeting of Parliament, you or Captain Desborough might be able to inserve Lord Chelmsford, Sir Hugh Cairns, or Mr. Whiteside, with some of the particulars thus stated to you. I imagine it will not be long before they bring the matter to the notice of both Houses.

"'There is still no news from Rassam, and I do not expect he will ever do

* See "Correspondence respecting Abyssinia, 1846 to 1868," Inclosure in No. 410, and No. 524.

anything. Do not fear for me, I am far more anxious than you or any one else can be that I should get on, as the character of my mission and of myself are at stake . . . . Let the Jews' Society know the facts I have told you about Rassam's instructions, for their guidance. If they choose to act on the knowledge well and good;' if not, it will be their own fault.' "

The statements thus made by Dr. Beke necessarily require immediate investigation, and I have to instruct you to call upon Mr. Palgrave for an explanation in writing in regard to those statements.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 2.

*Mr. Purday to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received January 22.)**

My Lord, *January* 22, 1866.

YOUR Lordship having kindly promised to inform me whether Mr. Rassam's instructions include the release of the missionaries in Abyssinia, and being anxious to know this fact in consequence of Mrs. Stern's anxiety on the subject, I have taken the liberty to remind your Lordship of the promise given to me about a fortnight since.

I have had other letters from Dr. Beke, who says that no tidings have come to hand of either Mr. Rassam or the captives up to the 6th instant at Suez.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. H. PURDAY.

No. 3.

*Mr. Hammond to Mr. Purday.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 22, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, inquiring whether the instructions given to Mr. Rassam include the release of the missionaries in Abyssinia, and I am to state to you in reply, that Mr. Rassam was distinctly desired to ask for the release of the missionaries; but inasmuch as Her Majesty's Government have no right to make authoritative demands on foreign Powers in favour of any but British subjects, Mr. Rassam was cautioned against making his request on behalf of foreigners in an authoritative manner, such as he would be entitled to do on behalf of subjects of Her Majesty. As Mr. Rassam's general instructions,† however, enjoin him to see that all the prisoners on whose account so much interest is necessarily excited are set free, Lord Clarendon cannot doubt that no exertion will be spared by him to secure this object, the more especially as Mr. Rassam was desired to present to King Theodore a letter from the Queen,‡ in which Her Majesty graciously expressed her expectation that the King would dismiss Captain Cameron, and any other Europeans who may desire it, from his Court, and would afford them every assistance and protection on their journey to the destination to which they desire to proceed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 4.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 13.)

My Lord, *Cairo, February* 1, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I have communicated to Mr. Palgrave your Lordship's despatch of the 18th January§ on the subject of the statements made by Dr. Beke in his letter to Mr. Purday, and I beg to forward herewith Mr. Palgrave's explanation in regard to those statements.

Mr. Palgrave, as your Lordship will perceive, gives the most unqualified denial to

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.
† No. 410.
‡ See "Correspondence respecting Abyssinia, 1846 to 1848," Incl sure in No. 451.
§ No. 1.

most of Dr. Beke's assertions and his explanations as to the remainder will, I trust, exonerate him in your Lordship's estimation from everything except great imprudence in conversing with a stranger on such subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 4.

Mr. Palgrave to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Cairo, January* 31, 1866.

WITH reference to a despatch, dated from the Foreign Office, 18th January, 1866,* and forwarded by yourself to me, I have the honour to give the following explanation:—

The subject of the despatch alluded to are certain statements communicated by Dr. Beke to Mr. Purday, and through him laid before an officer of the Foreign Office, statements chiefly relative to a conversation purported by Dr. Beke to have taken place between myself and him here in Cairo.

Before, however, noticing Dr. Beke's allegations one by one, I beg leave first of all to express my regret, and to apologize for my own indiscretion in having had any communication soever, especially on serious topics, with an individual regarding whose position, character, and intentions I was at the time comparatively uninformed. As it was, Dr. Beke, whom I had never seen before and little heard of, sought out my acquaintance by the ordinary means current in society, and I unadvisedly granted it. I admit my imprudence, and condemn it.

I will now make the necessary remarks on the special points of conversation as they stand reported by Dr. Beke, and to which he has given prominence in his letter to Mr. Purday, and in doing this I pledge my honour as a gentleman not to overstep the precise limits of my memory.

1. Dr. Beke says, "Mr. Palgrave tells me that he has seen the instructions given by the Foreign Office to Mr. Rassam, and that they are restricted to the release of Captain Cameron."

This is not true, for I did not tell him so. What I said was as follows. On Dr. Beke's inquiries as to what was to be done by Mr. Rassam regarding the missionaries in particular, I answered that, to my certain knowledge, he (Mr. Rassam) was to, and would, demand their release; that the first and most imperative stress was naturally to be laid on the release of Captain Cameron for reasons self-evident, but that Government required also the release of all other captives, whether missionaries or not.

I may add that in saying this I did not imagine that I was revealing any secret in the form and tenor of Government instructions, or any new thing, nor could I well anticipate Dr. Beke's constructions.

2. "He added, that if Rassam succeeded in bringing away Cameron he would be quite content to leave the missionaries to their fate."

Not I, added this, but Dr. Beke; he is quoting his own words instead of mine.

Mine were thus: I expressed (imprudently, I admit) a fear lest the length of time involved in Mr. Rassam's movements and correspondence should bring risk of illness or death to those of the prisoners who seem to have been specially ill-treated, viz., Dr. Stern and his companions, and added, that in case of their having died or been put to death, Cameron would still be, if he remained alive as might be hoped, demanded and brought off, though alone. My grounds in thinking delay less dangerous for Captain Cameron than for the missionaries were, that he was the more distinguished character, and hence less likely to be wantonly misused.

But I absolutely deny having said that Mr. Rassam would be content with such a half result; and I know that on Dr. Beke's subjoining something to that tenor, I said, or certainly implied saying, exactly the reverse.

3. "I do not see any harm in your communicating this to Mr. Goodhart (or Reichardt) if you think proper, especially as Mr. Palgrave did not speak to me at all in confidence, and I believe he has told the same thing to others. How far he is to be relied on I will not pretend to say, but his communications appeared to me to be made *bonâ fide*."

That I did not speak to Dr. Beke "in confidence" means that, supposing him, on the one hand, to be a gentleman, and, on the other, not imagining that I was making him any revelations for him to "communicate," I neglected to swear him in to silence,

* No. 1.

or even to mention truth, honour, and the like. I acknowledge my mistake. I had not calculated on gratuitous mis-statements, nor had I any idea of talking with him otherwise than "*bonâ fide*," *i. e.*, as one gentleman talks with what he supposes to be another.

Dr. Beke's belief that I have "told the same thing to others" is as unfounded as anything else he may choose to believe. Neither to him nor to any others did I ever make the statements he ascribes to me in his letter.

4. "Dr. Beke then states that Mr. Palgrave told him that Mr. Layard and Mr. Rassam had a personal dislike to Mr. Stern."

Partly false and partly distorted. Simply false in what regards Mr. Rassam, of whom I never said any such thing, or anything capable of implying it, however indirectly.

Distorted in what regards Mr. Layard. While talking over past events, wholly disconnected from the present Abyssinian business, I alluded to the circumstance of Mr. Layard having formerly met and become acquainted with Mr. Stern in Mosul, I believe, a circumstance generally known, and to which no special idea of "personal" dislike on either side could attach, certainly not in my mind or expressions.

But I did say that Mr. Layard might then have had an opportunity of appreciating Mr. Stern's character and line of action, and consequently of judging how far Mr. Stern was likely to have concurred to the present difficulties in Abyssinia, and to his own in particular, by imprudence, over zeal, and the like; not that I said or hinted that Mr. Layard would make such qualities a motive of "personal dislike" against the unfortunate missionary; that is Dr. Beke's own saying.

5. "Before dismissing the subject of Mr. Palgrave, I must add that he told me that when Earl Russell sent for him and desired him to go out, he made it a condition, as is not unusual, that he should draw up his own instructions. In these he says he expressly provided for the liberation of all the captives; and, in fact, he made it a condition that all British subjects, and all persons under British protection, should be at liberty to leave the country."

The true version of what I did (inconsiderately I avow) say to Dr. Beke, is as follows:—

That when Earl Russell did me the honour of talking over the matter with me, I laid before his Lordship my view of the case, namely, that the liberation of all prisoners belonging to the British flag should be insisted on as absolutely preliminary to any further step with King Theodore. Secondly, that Earl Russell had the goodness to express his assent on this point.

Dr. Beke's version, besides being conceived in a tone and on a key quite alien from mine, and gratuitously supplied by himself, contains two distinct falsehoods.

Firstly. That I drew up, or ever said to Dr. Beke, that I drew up my own instructions, the which were drawn up by, or at least communicated to me, through Mr. Layard.

Secondly. The word or idea of "condition" was mentioned by me to Dr. Beke relative to the King of Abyssinia, not to the English Secretary of State.

Here I beg to repeat my apologies and deep regret for having entrusted any words of mine to the keeping of one capable of so distorting them as Dr. Beke has done.

6. "Palgrave added that when he took these instructions into the Foreign Office to be put into an official form, Layard objected to them, but that he, Palgrave, insisted on them as having been approved by Earl Russell, and so carried the day against the Under Secretary."

This sentence contains three distinct falsehoods:—

First. That I ever said to Dr. Beke that I took any instructions into the Foreign Office.

Second. That I said to Dr. Beke that Mr. Layard objected to any such (imaginary) instructions.

Third. That I either said or implied, having "carried the day" against Mr. Layard.

The real version of what I said is this: That Mr. Layard and myself had, during a simple call on my part (which happened to be at the Foreign Office, because Mr. Layard had already gone thither from his lodgings in Piccadilly, whither I had first gone to call on him, and finding him absent, took the cab on to Whitehall), talked over not any "instructions," but the subject of what route to Abyssinia might be best suited for me to follow, and that he (Mr. Layard) was at first inclined to recommend that of Massowah; but, on further discussion, agreed with me in preferring that of Egypt and Kartoum, an idea already adopted by Earl Russell.

Neither in substance nor in form is this what Dr. Beke has invented and put into my mouth.

7. "Palgrave tells me that he is being kept on here with the pay of 100*l*. a month."

That is, Dr. Beke, while lamenting over his own expenses at Cairo as excessive, inquired, seemingly for his own economical guidance, how I managed to meet the high prices of the Egyptian capital; whereon I, too obligingly, told him that I found 100*l*., the sum liberally allowed me by Government, fully adequate to meet my monthly bills, &c.

8. "He expects to remain till Earl Russell finds him something else to do."

I do not well see what else I should expect or do, in fact, than to remain where placed by Earl Russell till told to go on.

But I flatly deny, as a downright falsehood (while apologizing for the coarseness of the expression, but no other would be appropriate here) what Dr. Beke suggests, namely, my having implied to him, directly or indirectly, that I conceived Earl Russell to be in any way pledged towards me for anything "else to do," beyond the range of the Abyssinian affair, and my instructions thereto relative. I deny also having pretended to know about or to speculate on what Earl Russell's ulterior views or intentions might be. Dr. Beke's words are not a mere distortion of, but precisely contradictory to what I know, and remember well having replied when indiscreetly questioned on this topic.

9. "As the two together have been placed in a false position by Layard and Rassam."

By thus coupling my name with that of the Premier, Dr. Beke does me an honour which I never ventured to do to myself.

Secondly. I deny having said that Mr. Layard or Mr. Rassam ever placed me in any position whatsoever, "false" or true.

The true version of what I did say is this—and I regret having said it—I called my own prolonged delay in Egypt "awkward," even "hazardous," because indefinite, and because particularly exposed to the counter-schemes of intriguers. Dr. Beke is an instance in point. Also, while expressing my hopes, most sincere ones, that Mr. Rassam might succeed, I unguardedly betrayed some anxiety lest he should not. It is possible, too, though of this I am not sure, that I may, while on the same topic, have alluded to Mr. Layard, so far as the Under Secretary was concerned in the guidance of the affair, as hoping success, while fearing the chances of delay and failure disagreeable to all parties, not to Earl Russell alone. More than this, I deny having said—

10. "He says he has written to several of his friends, the editor of the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' among the number, requesting them not to agitate the Abyssinian question, or, if they do, not to bring his name up."

False again. I have not the pleasure of knowing who is the editor of the "Pall Mall Gazette." Dr. Beke may be better informed on that point; meanwhile, in my ignorance of the above editor's identity, I have neither written to him, nor told Dr. Beke that I had.

Now for the truth. The subject of the "Pall Mall Gazette," and its manner of taking up the Abyssinian question being a common topic of every day conversation here, I have incidentally said more than once, and not to Dr. Beke alone, though to him also, that I wished the above-mentioned gazette would let the Abyssinian question alone, because they (*i. e.*, the correspondents who ever they be of the "Pall Mall Gazette," on this score), did harm by writing about what they did not understand; adding, that I had already availed myself of some personal acquaintance with one whom I knew to be a correspondent (magnified by Dr. Beke into an "editor," and multiplied into "several friends"), though not, I believe, on the Abyssinian topic, to let him know this my opinion, and to say that if the "Pall Mall Gazette" needs must talk, I hoped they would at any rate do me the favour of their silence, as I did not wish to see my name in the columns of a paper so violently opposed to Government men and measures. Whatever beyond this Dr. Beke may say or imply was never implied or said by me.

11. "He does not wish to increase the difficulties of Government."

I thank Dr. Beke for a word of truth at last, though put after his fashion. For I never thought enough of myself to suppose that I could increase the difficulties of Government, if such there be, much less to wish it or to say it.

12. "He, Mr. Palgrave, hinted, rather significantly, that under certain circumstances, that is if Earl Russell does not do something for him, he might be a thorn in their side."

This is utterly and, excuse the expression, maliciously false. I never, in public

or in private, "hinted" or said anything of the sort either to him, Dr. Beke, or to any one else; no, nor to my own self, for such an absurdity never entered my thoughts. The idea, no less than the statement, is solely and absolutely Dr. Beke's own, and as strange to me as the rest of his ideas.

What follows in Dr. Beke's letter does not directly regard me nor require comment or explanation of mine. But as it contains some more than "hints" about Parliament, the Jews' Society, W., and implies an intention of maliciously using statements maliciously obtained, distorted, and invented, I feel it to be my duty bound, and the best reparation I can make for admitted indiscretion, to place this letter, through yourself, and so far as Her Majesty's Secretary for Foreign Affairs shall think fit, at the entire disposal of the Foreign Office and of Her Majesty's Government in general, for any use that may by them be judged proper.

Whatever I have written here, I am ready to stand by and confirm whenever and wherever required by the officers of Her Majesty's Government.

In conclusion, I beg—

Firstly, to renew my expression of sincere regret and self-blame for my having unguardedly supplied Dr. Beke with any sort of handle or pretence for his letter, the subject of the present.

Secondly, to trust that Her Majesty's Secretary for Foreign Affairs in particular, and Government in general, will have the goodness to overlook such my indiscretion; and that they will admit, on the word of a gentleman, this explanation and apology. It is difficult, would I add, in every-day conversation, and during an interval of long and anxious suspense, to measure every word so carefully as to give no handle whatsoever to misrepresentation, prepense, and calumny, especially when one supposes, however erroneously, as in this case, that one has a gentleman and a friend before one.

Dr. Beke's intention to annoy, through me, the Government which I have, in some measure the honour of serving, is sufficiently evident. The wrong he has purported to Government interest by his letter will, I hope, be, in the main, obviated by what I have here written. May I venture to hope that any personal detriment intended to myself will be no less obviated by Lord Clarendon's gracious acceptation of this my explanation snd apology.

Begging you to have the goodness to communicate the present letter to his Lordship, and to accompany it by my every assurance of respect and duty, I have, &c.,

(Signed) W. GIFFORD PALGRAVE.

No. 5.

Mr. Layard to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 14, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to inform you that Mr. Palgrave has been called upon to explain the statement made to you by Dr. Beke, which you communicated to his Lordship, "that Mr. Palgrave had told him (Dr. Beke) that he had seen the instructions given by the Foreign Office to Mr. Rassam, and that they are restricted to the release of Captain Cameron," and that gentleman not only absolutely denies having made any such statement, but declares that he told Dr. Beke that to his certain knowledge Mr. Rassam was to, and would, demand the release of the Missionaries.

I am further directed by the Earl of Clarendon to inform you that if you will call at this Office any afternoon, after to-morrow, his Lordship will give directions that a letter from Mr. Palgrave shall be shown to you, in which he answers the other statements alleged to have been made to Dr. Beke.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 6.

Mr. Purday to Mr. Murray.—(Received February 17.)

Sir, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, February* 15, 1866.

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from the Foreign Office, of yesterday's date, signed A. H. Layard, and, whilst I have to express my thanks for the offer

contained in that communication, of showing me Mr. Palgrave's letter, in reply to Dr. Beke's statement, I do not see any occasion for troubling the Foreign Office further on the subject of that statement, as my sole object was to ascertain what Mr. Rassam's instructions were relative to the release of my son-in-law, the Rev. H. A. Stern, one of the prisoners in Abyssinia, on which matter the Earl of Clarendon was kind enough to give a satisfactory reply.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 7.

Mr. Purday to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 17.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, February* 16, 1866.

IN a letter† received by me yesterday from the Foreign Office, dated the 14th instant, I am given to understand that Mr. Palgrave "absolutely denies 'certain statements alleged to have been made' by him to Dr. Beke;" and an invitation is given by the writer, Mr. H. A. Layard, to me to call at the Foreign Office, and see Mr. Palgrave's letter, which I politely declined. I have thought it best, however, lest any wrong construction should be put upon my declining to see Mr. Palgrave's denial, that I should ask your Lordship to give me (at your Lordship's convenience) a private interview on the subject, when I will bring down Dr. Beke's letter, and give such an explanation of his statements as I am able.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 8.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 20, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 15th and 16th instant,‡ declining to call at this office for the purpose of reading Mr. Palgrave's answer to Dr. Beke's statements, but requesting an interview with his Lordship, in order to give an explanation in regard to those statements.

I am to inform you, in reply, that as Mr. Palgrave has answered Dr. Beke's statements, his Lordship is not aware of any further information which it may be desirable for him to obtain from you in regard to them, and he will therefore not trouble you to call upon him; but if you have any additional communication to make, Lord Clarendon requests that you will have the goodness to put it in writing.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 9.

Mr. Purday to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 27.)*

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, February* 26, 1866.

IN taking the liberty to present to your Lordship a copy of Mr. Stern's last letter§ (which I trust your Lordship will read), I am led to make two or three remarks on the correspondence which has lately taken place between myself and the Foreign Office relative to Dr. Beke's statement of a conversation which he had in Cairo with Mr. Palgrave on the subjects of Mr. Rassam's instructions, &c., and Mr. Palgrave's denial of those statements.

Now, if your Lordship thinks it worth while to compare the letter sent to me respecting Mr. Rassam's instructions, with the statements made by Mr. Palgrave to Dr. Beke and to the Foreign Office, your Lordship will find that there have been prevarications somewhere.

As to the other revelations of Mr. Palgrave to Dr. Beke, it is quite obvious that Dr. Beke could not relate what he did not know anything about until Mr. Palgrave

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 5. ‡ Nos. 6 and 7. § Printed pamphlet.

told him. Whether they are true or not, it is not for me to say; but one thing is certain, they are not very creditable.

Begging your Lordship's excuse for troubling you with this, I remain, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 10.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 9, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo,* sending a printed copy of a letter from Mr. Stern, and containing remarks on the recent correspondence between yourself and this Office.

I am at the same time to inform you that his Lordship received a telegram last night from Alexandria to the effect that Mr. Rassam had received letters from King Theodore, inviting him to his Court, and that an escort had been sent to meet him.

Mr. Rassam expected to reach the King's Court on the 10th of January last, and entertained great hopes of a successful issue to his mission.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 11.

Dr. Beke to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 13.)†

My Lord, 4, *Suffolk Street, London, June* 11, 1866.

I TAKE the liberty of announcing to your Lordship that I arrived in England from Abyssinia on the 8th instant, and I avail myself of the earliest opportunity to say that I have heard, to my great regret, that the contents of a letter‡ addressed by me from Cairo to Mr. Purday, the father-in-law of the Rev. H. A. Stern, had been made known to your Lordship, and that you had, in consequence, found it necessary to communicate with Mr. W. G. Palgrave on the subject.

In justice to myself, I trust I may be allowed to offer the following explanation respecting that letter:—

On my arrival in Alexandria last November, I heard openly repeated, in the presence of several English gentlemen (some of whom I believe to be now in England), matters affecting the personal character of two gentlemen who have unfortunately been named in connection with the subject, of which matters Mr. Palgrave was said to be the promulgator.

On November 30th I arrived at Cairo, and on the following day Mr. Palgrave (with whom I was not then personally acquainted) called at the hotel where I was staying with my wife, and as I was not within, he left his card. It was not till several days afterwards that I returned his call, when I found he had quitted Cairo for a short time. I had now occasion to go to Suez, and on my return, on December 11th, I found that during my absence Mr. Palgrave had again called on me. A few days after this, we accidentally met in the street, and were introduced to one another by a mutual friend. On December 20th, Mr. Palgrave paid me a visit, accompanied by another gentleman (a German, whose name I do not recollect), and I received the two in the common sitting-room of the hotel, my wife being occasionally present during portions of the interview. I have entered into these details in order to show that it was Mr. Palgrave who sought my acquaintance, and not I, his; and that, as no previous confidence or privity had existed between us, what he thought fit to communicate to me spontaneously and without reservation on the only occasion on which we ever met, except in the open street, could not be regarded as of a private or confidential character.

With Mr. Palgrave's statements to me your Lordship has been made acquainted. Those relating to the two gentlemen already alluded to were a little more than an amplification of what I had previously heard in Alexandria. I, therefore, owe no apology to any one for repeating what was common talk in Egypt before my arrival in that country; but I do owe it to myself to say that I should not have condescended to advert to such a subject in my correspondence with Mr. Purday had it not been for the

* No. 9. † Laid before Parliament, 1867. ‡ See No. 1.

apprehension (entertained by others as well as myself) that the alleged ill-feeling towards Mr. Stern, on account of what had occurred in Mesopotamia, might have been carried over into Abyssinia.

That the instructions from Her Majesty's Government to Mr. Rassam were specially directed, if not absolutely restricted, to the liberation of Mr. Consul Cameron, I had heard from more than one quarter before I left England; consequently, it was no matter of surprise to me to have this confirmed by Mr. Palgrave. Still, as I was deputed by the relatives of Mr. Stern and other captives to obtain the liberation of the whole of them without distinction, it was of the utmost importance that I should be assured of what the fact really was. Accordingly I suggested that Mr. Purday should communicate on the subject with some Members of either House of Parliament, with a view to elicit the truth; but I certainly did not authorize or desire, nor did I, indeed, in the slightest degree contemplate, any communication with your Lordship or with your department on the subject; and I can only repeat the expression of my regret at such communication having been made, and that your Lordship should thereby have been subjected to any trouble or annoyance.

I do not, however, take to myself any blame for having communicated to Mr. Stern's relative what had been communicated to me under the circumstances already detailed: on the contrary, I consider that I should have been wanting in my duty to him and the other relatives of the captives, and yet more to the captives themselves, had I acted otherwise than I did.

As regards my own Mission, your Lordship will, I am sure, do me the justice to believe that I was, throughout, most careful to abstain from everything at all likely to militate against, or interfere with, the exertions of Mr. Rassam. What I had made up my mind to was the liberation of the captives at all events; and I was only desirous that gentleman should be aware that if, from any cause, his Mission did not make such progress as could be wished for, I was acting independently, though quite harmoniously, towards the same end. The best proof of this is, however, afforded by the reception given by the Emperor Theodore to the petition of the relatives of the captives, forwarded to him in my letter of January 29th. As I learn from a communication from Mr. Rassam himself, the petition touched the Emperor's heart; and when (as Mr. Stern reports) His Majesty said that he had already released the prisoners for the sake of the Queen of England, I have reason to believe that if such had not been the case (fortunately for the honour of the British nation), he would still have set them free, out of compassion for their distressed relatives, on whose behalf I had undertaken my journey to his country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 12.

*Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 19, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant.†

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 11.

ABYSSINIA.

CORRESPONDENCE between Dr. Beke, Mr. Purday, Mr. Palgrave, and the Foreign Office, referred to in the Letter from Dr. Beke to Lord Clarendon, dated June 11, 1866.

Presented to the House of Commons by Command of Her Majesty, in pursuance of their Address dated December 6, 1867.

[*Price* 1½*d.*]

LONDON:
PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

BRITISH CAPTIVES IN ABYSSINIA.

Presented to the House of Commons by Command of Her Majesty, in pursuance of their Address dated August 3, 1866.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS.

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RETURN to an Address of the Honourable the House of Commons, dated August 3, 1866;
for—

"Copies of Despatch from Lord Russell to Colonel Stanton, Consul-General in Egypt, of date of the 5th day of October, 1865, explaining the motive of the Government as to the course taken as to the Abyssinian Captives:

"And, of all the Papers relating to Abyssinia and Consul Cameron, and his Imprisonment, referred to by the late Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on the 30th day of June, 1865."

No. 1.

Consul Plowden to Earl Granville.—(Received August 6.)

My Lord, *Massowah, June 20, 1852.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose some remarks on a few points of the social system of Abyssinia that bear directly upon the Treaty* we have concluded with his Highness Ras Ali. So peculiar is that system; so difficult to assimilate to European ideas—a difficulty felt by Bruce, and the cause, perhaps, of his ill-reception in England,—that each despatch must swell to a volume should I endeavour to explain it in all points of view; nor will it ever be thoroughly understood until, by proximity, a free and frequent communication take place betwixt the two nations.

I may, by affording such information as I possess, induce each to think more, perhaps more favourably, of the other; but no efforts of mine can annihilate the 3,000 miles that interpose, or the more fatal barrier of the Turkish domination along the line of coast.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Remarks on the Social System of Abyssinia, in some points bearing upon the Treaty lately concluded.

IN speaking at all of Abyssinian institutions, it must be remembered, as a general key to their peculiarities, that the form of government and its military spirit are feudal; whilst in the laws and customs, the Jewish institutions are everywhere traceable.

The title of Ras signified, in the times of prosperous and hereditary succession, the Prime Minister and Commander-in-chief of the Emperor, and the highest rank in the Empire.

The Ras now claims the right, as then possessed by him, of appointing all other Chiefs of Provinces, and officers of every kind, at his will and pleasure; and having a sufficiently commanding force at his disposal, is, in fact, master and king of the country, the form even of consulting the Emperor having been disregarded for many years.

Amidst the conflicts, however, of great families, whose members claim the hereditary Chieftainship of different provinces, and whose name will at any moment conjure into existence a numerous army for rebellion or rapine, the Ras is obliged to employ a subtle and tortuous policy, rather than violence, in order to retain his control over those fierce warriors—his equals by birth, impatient of a superior, and in some instances sufficiently powerful to be nearly independent. The resemblance is apparent to the times of Louis XI of France and his rebellious vassals.

Each Chief holding the rank of "Dejajmatch," *quasi* Duke, appointed by the Ras, or as often only obtaining his consent after a successful contest with his own immediate rivals, is entire master of all sources of revenue within his territory, with full power really of life and death, theoretically vested in the Ras alone. His feudal

* Treaty, November 2, 1849; British Ratification delivered to the Ras of Abyssinia, March 1, 1852; laid before Parliament, June 1852.

subjection consists in the obligation to send, from time to time, some presents to his superior, and to bear his shield; that is, to follow him to war with as large a force as he can muster: against private enemies he is generally expected to protect himself. He takes tolls from all merchants passing through his district.

The most powerful of these feudal inferiors of the Ras is the Dejajmatch Oobeay, Chief of Yemen, who, having added by conquest the whole of Teegray and other provinces, has become in point of warlike equipments fully the equal of the Ras, possesses every avenue leading from the interior to the sea, and acts in every respect as an independent Sovereign, though still nominally subject to the Ras, and paying to him a small yearly tribute of 5,000 to 10,000 dollars.

The immediate troops of the Ras consist of a number of petty Chiefs, governing one, two, or more villages, who imitate, as far as they dare, the independence of the greater Barons, and who take the field, when called on, with 5 or 500 men, according to their means.

Besides these, who are numerous, the Ras has his matchlock men, and four or five bands of rude and disorderly soldiery, his guards. From the lax system of government, and the manner of paying these men by quartering them on the country-people with instructions to levy so much grain or other property, it may be supposed that these undisciplined troops, when at a small distance from the camp, are almost equally independent of the Ras, and frequently are simply organized bands of robbers, the rather that after the commission of any profitable crime they have but to reach the camp of some great feudal Chief at a distance from the Ras, and by entering his service obtain perfect immunity, or, would they enjoy in ease their spoil, to take shelter in the nearest well-reputed church, which is inviolable as the "city of refuge" of the Mosaic Law.

Regarding the collection of duties, each Chief claims them as part of his revenues, excepting those levied at Gondar, Adowah, and a few other towns, collected by an officer called the "Negadeh Ras," who pays a fixed sum yearly to the Ras or Oobeay, and extorts as much as he can from the merchants for his own profits.

Custom-houses, or rather passes, have been established in Abyssinia on every spot where Nature in that mountainous country has confined the road to some narrow defile, not to be avoided without an immense détour, if at all, and near some commanding elevation where a good look-out can be stationed, or perhaps at a brook fordable only at one spot; and as the different Chiefs sometimes give orders on the sudden to allow no one to pass, great trouble ensues, not only to merchants, but to all wayfarers. Frequent quarrels, and even deaths, occur at these posts, always kept by armed men, and it requires no little temper and knowledge of the country to avoid these inconveniences, or to send messengers, &c., to any distance in safety.

A merchant starts from Massowah for Basso, the last mercantile station to the southward of Christian Abyssinia; he pays at Massowah the import or export duty to the Turkish Governor: he must then engage a guide from the Shohos, an independent tribe inhabiting the hills near the coast, and in possession of the only passable roads winding through defiles for fifty or sixty miles; according to the agreement made, and his appearance, wealthy or otherwise, he may pay this guid from 10 dollars to ½ dollar. Arriving then in Oobeay's dominions, he will be stopped four or five times before he reaches Adowah, and on each occasion must arrange with those in charge of the tolls as he best can as regards payment, the amount being arbitrary, and the system in fact one of legalized plunder. On arrival at Adowah he pays certain more regulated duties to the Negadeh Ras of that town, a douceur, moreover, being expected as the price of a friendly settlement of dues; after meeting the exactions of several minor posts he will next have to pay at the town of Doobaruk, in the province of Waggera, duties on the same scale with those of Adowah, generally about 1 dollar per mule-load of merchandize, and being then clear of the territories of Dejajmatch Oobeay, enters those of Ras Ali, whose tolls commence at Gondar. Here the duties are nominally somewhat settled, though long disputes almost invariably occur, and after three or four more detentions and payments on a smaller scale in Begemder, he passes the Nile, and arrives in the domains of the Chiefs of Godjam or Dámot. These may be in a state of entire rebellion or of sulky submission to the Ras: as in the latter case they pay him a fixed tribute, he does not interfere with their toll-levying, and the merchant must disburse at some eight or ten more stages of his journey ere he can reach Basso.

It is needless to dwell on the danger to the merchant in the case of revolted Chiefs, who plunder indiscriminately, and from whom, even if captured, the recovery of any property is hopeless. As tolls are taken each way at the places mentioned, all these observations apply equally to exporting as to importing.

A code of laws called the "Feth Negust," said to have been compiled by the Council of Three Hundred, in the earlier ages of the Church, and regarded originally as of almost equal authority with the Sacred Writings, is the guide of the Abyssinian Chiefs in their decision as judges. The twelve "Licks" of Gondar originally formed the Supreme Court of Justice, a Court of Final Appeal; but the office ceased with the power of the Emperors.

The "Feth Negust" is now expounded by some learned priest or scribe, and there are few in the country competent to the task. It is frequently consulted, more after the fashion of the "Sortes Virgilianæ," the book being opened with solemnity, and the first passage found that appears to bear upon the question, being hastily dressed to suit the case in hand, and present an aspect of oracular wisdom; in this light it is at least regarded by the uninformed multitude, that is, the whole nation save the priesthood, and it is invariably set aside when the passions or whims of the presiding Chief seem to require it.

On the accusation of any man in Abyssinia of any crime, he has the right to demand to be heard in the first instance by his own Judge, that is, either the Chief of his village or the master to whom he is attached for the time being, and to be forwarded to his residence, together with his accuser, by any authority to whom he shall appeal in the King's name.

Strangers may be judged by the district Chief or the Chief paramount, as they may choose; in every way the final right of appeal to the Supreme Ruler exists, but the Ras not being strong enough to enforce this right at present in the case of Oobeay, the decisions of that Chief are considered final. The Chiefs of the Agows of Lasta, called the "Wagshoom," and the Chief of Kwora, on the borders of Sennaär, although feudally subject to the Ras, claim also this privilege of final judgment; but with these exceptions the greatest Chief may, on the complaint of a peasant, be summoned from any distance to appear at the Ras's Court, and be obliged personally to answer the charge before the "Af-a-Negoos," or King's mouth, an officer who hears all cases, and reports them concisely to the Ras for his verbal decision.

After an accusation, before the pleadings can commence, both parties must give security approved of by the "Af-a-Negoos." These bails or securities are answerable for the execution of the sentence whatever it may be, or must suffer it themselves should the principals abscond. But at the end of the trial these first securities may declare off in case of doubting their principals, and others must be found; the only alternative to the convicted party being chains.

In all suits, civil or criminal, there is no prosecution by the Crown, and no police of any kind. The party aggrieved must lay the accusation, find out the aggressor, seize him, and convict him as he best may.

The Mosaic law of blood for blood being in full force, when a man is convicted of having killed another, whether purposely or by accident, or in self-defence, he is handed over to the relatives of the deceased to be put to death by them, unless they can be persuaded to accept the blood-money, a similar sum being also paid into the Royal Treasury. It not unfrequently happens that no relation is found sufficiently near of kin to interfere in the matter, and the homicide then escapes scot-free. With the greater Chiefs there is generally a desire to administer justice impartially, when not embarrassed by some political motive.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 2.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received July* 2.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 23, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a short statement of our present relations with Northern Abyssinia.

I have much difficulty in presenting the information I would give, in a concise form, as I know of nothing that I can refer to analogous with the singular institutions of this country.

I have received no reply to my despatch of the 20th June, 1852, with an inclosure, upon similar matters as bearing upon our Treaty with the Ras Ali. I trust that your Lordship will now deem it fit to examine both the Reports, and to furnish me with instructions that shall consider the difficulties that I have endeavoured to point out, and inform me, as far as may be deemed expedient, of the views and intentions of Her Majesty's Government here.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Statement of our present Relations with Northern Abyssinia.

THE power of the Ras of Begemder, Chief of Northern Abyssinia, dates nearly from the overthrow of the Ahtyee or Hâtze, or Emperor of Gondar, by Ras Michael.

The present Ras, though no other Chief is powerful enough to encounter him in the field, can only retain his title by the maintenance of a large army, and constant wars against his rebellious vassals. Of all the inferior Chiefs "whose title is Dejajmatch," the greatest is Dejajmatch Oobeay, who, partly by the concurrence of the Ras, and more by subtlety, fortune, and the force of arms, governs with absolute sway the country from near the coast of the Red Sea to Gondar, and from Lasta to Sennaar.

The only conditions that should prevent him from being regarded as an independent Sovereign being, his title of Dejajmateh, held from the Ras, and the payment of a tribute of money to him yearly as his feudal superior; otherwise, the Ras does not interfere with his rule over these vast provinces, by which he commands every avenue to the interior of the country available for trade or policy.

The Ras is engaged in the siege of a hill-fort in Godjam now for four years; and another Chief in rebellion, after gaining two battles, has pillaged Gondar, and rendered all communication with Godjam circuitous or dangerous.

It is now doubtful if the Dejajmatch Oobeay will be faithful to his allegiance, or rebel in the hope of seizing the supreme power. In the latter case, the whole land will bristle with arms, and all communication become impossible.

Such is the present political state of Abyssinia.

The boundaries of Northern Abyssinia, at present defined as the districts inhabited by Christians, do not reach by 90 or 100 miles to the Red Sea at any point. This interval is occupied by various savage tribes: the Adaiel; the Azobo Gallas; the Areya Gallas; the Danakil; the Taltal; the Shiho; the Habab; and the Arab tribes of the Beni Ameer. These have adopted more or less strictly the Mussulman faith, and are all, excepting the Gallas, wandering tribes, living by their flocks or their camels; governed by no master, and occupied with incessant feuds or combats.

Through the district occupied by the Shiho is the nearest route to Abyssinia, and the most practicable. It is, indeed, the only one desirable, seeing that it bears directly on Massowah, the only good harbour, I believe, in the Red Sea from Sowakin to the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb.

These tribes of Shiho furnish guides to all passers for half-a-dollar each, and even conduct a party for the same sum; rich native caravans pay according to their numbers, but always moderately, and a white man is, of course, considered fair booty, to be fleeced according to the extent of his ignorance or his fears. Though vexatious by their delays, they are never known to rob or ill-treat any voyager; they fulfil strictly their contract of safe-conduct through their territories into Abyssinia, and no reasonable man can find fault with their moderate charge for this. It is true that occasionally the Taltal tribes make an incursion and plunder travellers not well armed, in spite of the Shiho, watching their occasion when the warriors of the latter tribe are engaged elsewhere; but this impugns not their good faith, having never been suspected of collusion.

They acknowledge no superior, save the elders of the tribe in council, now that the Naibs of Akeeko are politically extinct.

The Turkish Government occupying the Island of Massowah, their Pasha here claims also the coast for fifty or sixty miles inland, and forces various feeble tribes in those limits to pay tribute; but, in return, affords them no protection, when

devastated by the Shiho or the ruthless soldiery of Oobeay; these people are therefore sufficiently miserable and poor.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 3.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 3, 1853.

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration the observations respecting your position in Abyssinia, and the difficulties in regard to opening a commerce with that country, contained in your despatches of the 20th of June, 1852, and of the 23rd of March, 1853.

Her Majesty's Government were led by the representations formerly made by you to expect that advantage would result to British interests from the conclusion of a Treaty with the rulers of Abyssinia and from the establishment of a British Consulate in that country. It appears, however, from your reports now before me, that there is little reason to expect that such will be the case.

Nevertheless, Her Majesty's Government having concluded the Treaty and established the Consulate, are reluctant to renounce all hope of benefit from those measures: but their means of obtaining in this country information on which to act are necessarily very limited; and I must have recourse to you for a report as to the possibility of your establishing yourself either at Massowah or any other place on the sea-coast where you may retain an influence on the rulers of Abyssinia, and facilitate communication with the provinces under their government.

The measure which you have taken, as reported in your despatch of the 24th of May, for obtaining a public recognition of the Treaty and of the obligations resulting from it, appears to me to be judicious; but it is obvious from your despatches that the difficulty of dealing with Abyssinia results, in a great measure, from the absence of any place on the coast with which a safe communication can be kept up; and it is to the discovery of such a place at which you may fix your residence that I would particularly direct your attention.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 4.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received November 2.)

My Lord, *Massowah, July* 9, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a Report containing some information on Abyssinia, as directed in your Lordship's despatch of October 3, 1853.

I have endeavoured to give your Lordship a sketch of the laws, customs, government, and position of Abyssinia, with a short account of its neighbours.

I trust that this Report may assist your Lordship in deciding clearly the course to be pursued with reference to Abyssinia.

Struggling with the difficulties of the Abyssinian character and institutions; baffled by their ignorance, and more by the want of any supreme authority; obliged by my position to be recognized as a friend to the Abyssinian nation, yet forced by geographical circumstances to reside partly at a Turkish port, where the Governor necessarily regards me with suspicion and hatred, as one seducing from him the allegiance of his slaves; I can scarcely convey to your Lordship an idea of the difficulties I have had to contend with.

I inclose also a map which gives a rough notion of the northern frontier of Abyssinia.

The course of several of the rivers therein laid down will not be found in any other map, and have been hitherto the subject of much discussion amongst geographers. Your Lordship may depend upon the general accuracy of the map, though I do not pretend to astronomical exactness.

Both the map and the report are compiled entirely from my personal observations.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 4.

Report.

NORTHERN ABYSSINIA is a State isolated from the sea and from the civilized world by surrounding tribes of savages, and is fast lapsing from its former condition as a Christian realm, governed by one absolute Sovereign, into subdivisions of small tribes, that will hereafter retain probably little of religion or civilization.

It is separated also from its kindred province of Shoa by strong and fierce races called Galla, who are independent, notwithstanding the boastful title of King of the Gallas assumed by Sahela Selassie and his successor, whose actual dominions do not equal a fifth part of the Galla territory.

The country that I name Northern Abyssinia, and which is inhabited by professing Christians, is about 400 miles in length from north to south, inclining westerly, and 300 in its greatest breadth, which is from north-north-west to south-south-east, that is, from the neighbourhood of Massowah to the town of Ayjubay in Godjam, and from Wayhaynee, the limits of the Egyptian dominion in that quarter, to the borders of Effat, belonging to Shoa.

Its north-western and western boundary is formed by the Pashalic of Sennaar; partly on the west and to the south-west vast forests, frequented by wild beasts, or hot plains inhabited by negro races, exclude Abyssinia from the navigable part of the Blue Nile. To the south, that river, an impetuous torrent, forms its boundary, almost its safety, from the Gallas—excellent horsemen, whose delight is war. To the east and south-east the Gallas of Borona, Wallo, Worahaimano, and Worra-kallo, separate it from Shoa. The three last are the stronghold of Islamism; and these are again barred from the sea by the savage Adaiel, by whose hordes, led by Mahommed Grayne, Abyssinia was nearly destroyed, when saved by Portugal and the introduction of fire-arms: To the eastward again, more northerly, other tribes of Gallas called Areya and Azobo still interpose between Abyssinia and the sea-coast: and to the north-east and north various tribes with various tongues, Taltals, Danakil, Shihos, Hababs, &c., everywhere seclude that realm and join the dominions of Abbas Pasha, in the tribes of the Beni-Ameer, ruled by the Pasha of Taka.

A circle is thus completed that must somewhere be broken through, either by the Abyssinians themselves, had they the power, or by that nation desiring a free intercourse with them.

The tribes I have last mentioned, that seclude Abyssinia from the Red Sea, occupy a strip of land along its coast of 70 to 100 miles in breadth; and it is here that the Turkish Government has occupied several points, of which mention shall be made hereafter: and although these tribes were formerly Abyssinians, and still, in many places, as at Massowah, speak the ancient Ethiopic tongue, as they are now completely separated, I shall not include them in an account of Christian Abyssinia in its present limits.

Setting aside, therefore, this border along the sea, Abyssinia is a range of vast table-lands and fantastic mountains, alternating and varying in elevation from 4,000 to 14,000 feet above the sea level. Deep valleys, the beds of the larger rivers, intersect this in various directions; but these streams, however circuitous their course, almost all finally join the Blue Nile, or Abäi, as it is termed by the Abyssinians. These are nowhere navigable; and a few mountain torrents only, and when swollen by the rains, find their way to the Red Sea. The abrupt and high ranges from which these torrents descend are seen from the coast at the distance of 80 miles inland, and mark everywhere, as far north as the 16th degree of latitude, the confines of the Christian country.

The climate, on all the highland, is salubrious; but the valleys, at certain seasons, are rendered dangerous by fevers, particularly the low countries bordering on Sennaar, and these valleys produce the richest crops of grain. The tropical rains fall plentifully at the same season with those of Bengal, from June to September, and the soil, extremely fertile, might, from the variety of temperature at the different elevations, produce almost every article of human consumption. Two large inland lakes exist; the one near Gondar, called Tana, the other, in the province of Tehluderree, called Haik. The former is 60 miles in length, studded with islands, and abounds in excellent fish; singular to say the crocodile, that is found in most of the large rivers of Abyssinia, does not infest this lake, which

swarms however with hippopotami. The Blue Nile takes its rise a short distance from this, and after forcing its way through the waters of the lake at one corner, forms nearly a circle round Godjam, the southern province of this country.

The flat and overflowed lands round the Lake Tana, are kept as pasture for cattle, or partially sown with grain; but they are well adapted for the cultivation of rice, or sugar-canes, which both grow wild; or of indigo, which has thriven in Shoa.

The cold plains of Waggera and Godjam, and the lofty mountains of Semen, where the blackberry, the hawthorn, and the fir, now usurp great part of the soil, are fitted for all the productions of northern latitudes. The more temperate provinces would probably be favourable to the growth of pepper, spices, and coffee, which last has already been planted at Korata; and even the coast, and hottest districts, might give crops of cotton of fine quality. Barley, wheat, peas, grain, beans, maize, Indian corn, millet, linseed, saffron, oats, and some kinds of grain unknown to us, are cultivated with little trouble; a small oblong potatoe, called "dennich," and the root of a very nourishing banana, the "ansett," form a great part of the food of some districts.

In the present confusion and supineness not a fiftieth part of the surface is, I suppose, cultivated; while such is the bounty of Nature that Edjow, and other provinces, produce two crops per annum on the same ground.

Fruit-trees, the plum, the orange, the lemon, and the peach, grow wild in the jungle; the vines are luxuriant, and the quality of the wine excellent; numerous streams everywhere irrigate and adorn this agreeable land, whose rich meadows, lowing herds, sparkling waters, golden harvest, and shady trees, often present a scene of European beauty to the traveller.

Gold and copper exist, and iron is found in great abundance; plains of sulphur and various salts, in the province now occupied by the Taltals, supply all Abyssinia with those commodities; and other wealth may lie hid in that volcanic tract. A search for coal would, elsewhere, be probably successful; but to describe the mineral and natural riches of this country should be the task of one better qualified for the investigation.

It is a country that combines mineral resources, a delightful climate, and tropical luxuriance, with so much general salubrity, that no waste of European life need be apprehended from frequenting it.

The temperature of the moderate elevations is very regular, in some places scarcely varying ten degrees throughout the year. Mineral and hot springs abound. All the colder provinces, particularly the Galla, are favourable to horse-breeding; sheep, goats, and cattle, thrive throughout the country; the mulberry has been grown; the potatoe, lately introduced, flourishes; and food is, in general, found too abundantly, as it is found almost without labour.

But while nature has done so much, human energy, or skill, has done nothing. The utter want of roads and bridges—the stagnant, or lawless, nature of the social system—the obstinate attachment to ancient customs—the multitude of rulers, indifferent to everything but their personal enjoyment—the constant wars, and consequent insecurity of life and property—are fast ruining a country of whose beauty and fertility its inhabitants may, with some reason, boast.

The divisions of language in Christian Abyssinia are two, Teegray and Amharic. The former, a slight corruption from the ancient Geez, itself derived from Hebrew and Arabic, and the latter, in my opinion, a distinct language, into which have crept many words from the former. The Amharic is now the written language of the country, the Geez character being used, with some aditions. The Teegray dialect is spoken in the province of Teegray, bounded by the River Takazzee, flowing from the south-south-east to north-north-west, and with some variations all along the sea-coast from Massowah, inclusive, to the port of Aggeek. The Amharic, by the rest of Abyssinia, from the Takazzee to the Abäi: and also in the province of Shoa. In Teegray I include the tribe called Agow, that inhabit a district at the source of the Takazzee, anciently called the Kingdom of Lasta, whose origine I cannot divine, and whose language is totally different; and in the Amhara, the Agows of Damot, whose language is half Galla.

The manners of the Amhara are pleasing; their features are generally of the European or Asiatic, that is, Arab, cast, and they are remarkably quick and intelligent. Their standard of morality is very low; sensual pleasures, as intoxication, are gratified without scruple and without shame, in general, the interests or convenience of the moment are the only rule of conduct; want of tact and ill-temper the

only crimes in his code. Two phrases in the Christian doctrine that suit his careless temper are much insisted on: "that this world is fleeting and valueless," and "that the indulgence of the Creator is infinite," the one to justify his insouciance, the other as removing all check to his follies and enjoyments. Crimes are seldom committed wantonly, but all considerations yield generally to those of interest, in prince or people. They have a great contempt for other nations, and scarcely know, or do not care, if any exist or not; the tribes on their borders they regard as created for the breathing fields of Abyssinian valour; hardly believing that the rain falls, or the sun shines, on other lands, they are persuaded that the world beyond the sea is a succession of barren deserts. The most common question to a European is whether corn grows in his country, and sometimes whether there are women; yet are they manly, generous, usually humane and indulgent, always polite, and seldom coarse. I attribute their faults to ignorance, their virtues to a kindly nature. Except tillage of the ground their pride renders them adverse to labour; but the women are exceedingly industrious.

The people of Teegray are somewhat different in character; with more of the obstinacy of their Jewish blood they are ruder and vainer than the Amhara, noisy, talkative, and quarrelsome. Though nearer the sea they are even more ignorant of other nations; they despise all the human race but themselves, and generally each man, all existing but himself. On the whole, I think them inferior to the Amhara, but they are more laborious, and more trustworthy individually, though politically treacherous.

The Agows have a peculiar character as well as language, they are sterner, harsher, and more resolute than the other Abyssinians, and are proverbial for dissimulation and hardness of heart, as well as extreme selfishness. They permit no interference of the other races in their government or internal policy and laws. They all speak the Teegray and Amharic as well as their own language. They are always governed by a chief of their own race, whose laws, though severe on themselves, are just and even encouraging towards strangers. They acknowledge, as feudal superior, the Ras of Begemder, since the fall of the Empress of Gondar.

The inhabitants of each province in Abyssinia have some peculiar traits; as Godjam and Kalagoozia are famous for union, Teegray Central for the contrary; some are warlike, some cowardly, some faithful, and some treacherous, and so on.

In some respects they are a happy people. They possess in their own land all the necessaries and many of the luxuries of life in profusion; they have great freedom of speech and action, and are always gay, systematically, as by constitution. Their conversation, often sensible, is always witty. A practical philosophy leads them to prefer laughter to tears; the tragedy and the comedy of life are received alike with indifference or a joke. Misfortunes and death are generally met with fortitude. It is hard to convince them that they will benefit either by our science or our wealth.

The most curious point in their character is this, that no one is expected to feel ashamed of any crime or vice; and whereas in other countries men in committing serious crimes are morbidly excited, in Abyssinia they are perpetrated with indifference, and generally recounted, sometimes by the individual himself, certainly by others, with gaiety and laughter. In the same way, females are rarely gross or immodest outwardly, seeing that they need in no way be ashamed of the freest intercourse with the other sex. I have never yet been able to discover what an Abyssinian could be ashamed of, except a solecism in what he considers good manners, or the neglect of some superstitious form of social observance. They are peculiarly sensitive, however, to ridicule and abuse, whether true or untrue, and half the time of an Abyssinian master is passed in deciding disputes on such subjects. Some traits, though apparently of slight consequence, are often very irksome to a stranger; for instance, every man above the lowest rank has a door-keeper, whose duty it is to examine who should be admitted, and when. The insolence of this officer rises in proportion to the rank of his master. The primitive ante-chamber is a court in the open air, without seats, often muddy, always filthy; and as the porter will contrive to keep you waiting, even against his master's orders, this system is most disagreeable to an European. Further, you wait amongst a crowd, and it is pointed out to you that the brothers or sons of the King are there in the same position.

Sometimes the order comes to clear the court, when sticks are used without distinction of persons. The Chiefs affect a trifling and childish manner, to the great annoyance of a white man, who has, perhaps, some important affairs to speak on, and who, from his more energetic feelings, thinks them of greater importance

than they are. I will not dwell on these matters, but the difficulties they raise are not trifling, nor easy to vanquish.

The Abyssinians are superstitious; they believe in the efficacy of amulets; of writings in jargon mixed with Scripture; in the charms of Mussulmans to control the hail and the rain; in spirits of the forest and the river; in omens; in fortune-tellers; and in devils that may be cast out by spells from their human victim, quoting the authority of the New Testament for their belief: to these they attribute epilepsy and other incurable diseases.

One absurdity has, however, led to the death of many innocent individuals; all workers in iron, and some others, are supposed to convert themselves into hyænas, and to prey invisibly on their enemies, and many have been slaughtered in this belief. It is not worth while to enter upon a full account of this singular idea, which is universal and tenacious, and has its parallel in the "loup-garou" of France, and the "wehr-wolf" of Germany.

Gambling appears to be unknown, but they are constantly betting, not, however, to gain money, as the judge of the forfeit receives it from the loser, the winner having thus punished his adversary. This is a fruitful source of revenue to the Chiefs.

In their houses they are dirty, and generally in their domestic habits, though cleanly in person when their means will permit.

Save the door-keeping I have mentioned, much freedom exists in their society: in one room a beggar jostles a Chief and a dirty rag presses against the white turban of a priest, or a thief, perhaps in chains, is seated next to an honest man; nay, the latter will make way for the former with much politeness if an older man than himself. So indulgent are they, that even a madman is never put under restraint and rarely excluded, though perhaps dangerous. Visiting is unceasing amongst the middle classes and hospitality is offered with indiscriminate profusion according to the means of the proprietor.

In Abyssinian society no repugnance is even shown to those afflicted with apparent and loathsome disease, and no man forfeits his position by any crime. Theft is in many provinces regarded as an honourable employment; highway robbery as quite excusable, even if accompanied by homicide; rape is venial; and adultery regards only the husband. This has probably been the national character for many ages, and now that misrule and anarchy are superadded, the Abyssinians are unconsciously retrograding to a savage state, and losing all the advantages they may have acquired from the adoption of Christianity. Yet they still nourish the delusion that they are a nation, as when their kings marched armies into the Holy Land and governed Arabia, while their fleets traded to India, and their African dominions were bounded by the White Nile, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean.

They have in general an aversion to change in their religious observances, laws, and customs; their laws are, however, nearly forgotten, and their manners are changing yearly. This, which is characteristic of the race, is a great obstacle to improvement. Neither the idea of progress nor the word exists; for all absurdities and abuses, even for injustice, the reason "it has always been so" is held sufficient even when the error is admitted. In consequence, as nothing can be stationary, their whole institutions are degenerating.

They are very quick of apprehension and subtle of speech, and as from childhood they are accustomed to select phrases that may be agreeable to the person they are addressing or useful to themselves, are always specious and sometimes eloquent. It is very difficult for a stranger to arrive at the truth by questions.

They are fond of litigation, and most of them skilled in the quibbles and proverbs that are essential to success in any dispute. It is the favourite sport of boys and children, and the smallest difference of opinion furnishes matter for a long and sometimes expensive lawsuit. The obstinacy in trifles is a mark perhaps of their Jewish blood. Notwithstanding the abundance of food in Abyssinia, nothing is more difficult or occupies more time than to provide for the daily wants of an establishment. A chief can obtain anything at once, and often without payment, where a stranger infinitely richer would, without his friendship and assistance, run the risk of starving. Nothing can be obtained by money except at a market, and often at a very great distance. Shops are unknown, and almost all trades must be practised in each household. Water must be carried for household purposes from a distant brook, corn must be converted into flour, cookery must be prepared, bread baked, and beer brewed, in every establishment according to its

numbers, and to no office of domestic utility will a man put his hand for any amount of hire. On a journey where no markets can be found all necessaries must be carried at least to the next large town, involving a very inconvenient amount of baggage.

The Abyssinians, indeed, demand hospitality at each village, and take up their quarters without ceremony, often having to fight for the accommodation.

The personal baggage of a merchant is equal in bulk to his goods. In more dangerous times, when baggage is a serious impediment, this billeting system becomes an imperative necessity for all travellers. On a campaign, the country people having fled from their homes on the approach of an army, money is entirely useless, and the King must either supply the stranger in his camp, which he cannot always do, or the latter has the alternatives of starvation and foraging. Grass is abundant in the country; but some local potentate or band of villagers must in general be propitiated before beasts are allowed to feed, and this cannot always be done by money: nor is the European character usually disposed to the other resource of flattery. An irritable man should not visit Abyssinia.

The greater part of the time of all classes is occupied in eating and drinking. The instant any guest is received, no matter at what hour, he must be fed, and is not allowed to refuse; mead is always produced, or beer, for they love not dry talking, be it at daylight or at midnight. The profusion at their meals, and the large number of retainers and daily guests that are fed by men of rank and wealth, bear a resemblance to the customs of our Saxon ancestors. The parallel may perhaps hold good in other points. The gates are open in the evening to all who demand food and shelter in the name of friendship or religion; rich and poor are seated at one table; in the house of a great chief public singers chant the legends of their heroes, or receive guerdon for reciting impromptu stanzas in praise of their host and his guests; nor does the frequent intoxication weaken the likeness. Feasts are instituted a certain number of days after death, being a point of honour with the relatives of the deceased, and encouraged by the priests, who are guests by privilege, and who live principally by these general banquets; numerous oxen are slaughtered, and for two or three days the streets reel with drunkenness, the white turbans of the pastors being conspicuous. The rejoicings at each wedding furnish equally good cheer; and as it is not difficult to obtain admission, these festivities are a great resource to the scribes and all the poorer classes. I believe the truth of the remark made to me by an Abyssinian who had visited Rome, "that while the rich in Europe could live more luxuriously, there was no country like Abyssinia for the poor;" but he did not perceive that this arose from the scantiness of population, the richness of the soil, and the smallness of their towns.

From constant exercise the Abyssinians have great powers of memory; though a written language exists, they seldom hold correspondence, and when a letter is written it is never signed, sealed, or dated; easy as a forgery would be, I have never heard of an instance. All affairs are conducted verbally; and at a distance by messengers. These messages are usually delivered with fidelity, and the character of the herald is considered sacred.

In the relations of parent and child the Abyssinians are kind and indulgent. The children are obliged by law to share their means with their aged parents, and generally do so voluntarily. No distinction is made between legitimate and illegitimate children, and all share alike on the decease of their father. Marriage is a civil contract between the parties, dissolved at pleasure, and it is usual in old age only to take the sacrament together in the church, thereby pledging themselves to fidelity and monogamy. The people of Teegray are less lax than the Amharas, amongst whom women are regarded as toys, without the trouble of secluding them in a harem.

Friendship is measured by gifts. Each chief begs from his compeer: nay, from his own dependant. Nothing will so much strike a stranger in Abyssinia as their custom of asking without reserve, without shame, for anything they may fancy. They are, however, ready to make compensation; they may be offended at a refusal of their request; equally so, if the return be not accepted. They cannot imagine that this is not the custom all over the world. If an Abyssinian returns a gift and says, "I require nothing but your friendship," the phrase is studiously polite, and means your gift is not of sufficient value. They treat all strangers in the same way. The chiefs beg without ceremony, but in return bestow their friendship, which is necessary, and sometimes more than the value of the gift in their country produce. To specify the minutiæ of this custom, practised by high and

low, rich and poor, would be fatiguing. An embassy to or from a foreign prince, is a mere calculation of value exchanged. The poor make presents to the rich and powerful, and receive ten times their cost in return, protesting, however, that nothing is further from their desire; nay, so organized is this custom, that if a a person bestows a gift on one of equal rank, and does not receive an adequate compensation, he can bring an action against him as though for debt, and will receive damages by law; this is the favourite manner in which they attack the purse of an European, and is a pretty and ingenious way to avoid direct begging. An European envoy to this country must, in the present state of society, exchange presents with the great chiefs, or be regarded as an object of charity, and it must be done with tact to avoid the imputation of timidity or folly.

The ties of relationship are strong, from mutual interest, as a barrier to the exactions of rapacious governors and the violence of the soldiery. They count kin to the fiftieth cousinship, and a man with many relatives has much influence. The military governor is constantly changed, but such a man retains a kind of hereditary power. They do not carry their union to the point of sharing their purse; on the contrary, incessant lawsuits are carried on between the nearest relations for land and property; but in moments of danger they stand by each other like a Highland clan. They muster in thousands to bewail one to whom they refused a loaf while living, and they all unite to avenge his death by violence.

They retain two institutions of Judaism, and cling to them with obstinacy. The Saturday in Godjam is held of equal sanctity with the Sunday, so that water cannot be drawn, nor wood hewn, from Friday evening to Monday morning. Moreover, many animals are considered unclean, as the hare, the goose, in some districts the wild boar, and some other animals.

There are numberless Saints' days in the year, on which no work is done; and in the towns they will not even suffer others to work, which is most irksome to the traveller.

As a nation they have never had any element of progress within themselves, nor do they appear ever to have wished for it. Coinage, and architecture in solid masonry, have never been attempted, though the Ptolemies set them the example of both, as shown by the remains of Axûm, and the gold and copper coins found in those ruins to this day. The Portugese introduced the art of brick-burning, and built towers and bridges of excellent workmanship; no person in Abyssinia can now make mortar. No purely national antiquities of any kind exist. Their kings and their people two thousand years ago, must have passed their lives as now; seeking only for daily splendour or enjoyment, and indifferent to the perpetuation of their memory by any monument.

Though difficult to persuade, no people would be more docile under slight coercion. As soon as a Chief of firmness governs in any district, quiet and order prevail to a surprising extent without any police. The word of the Chief suffices to produce this tranquillity; but it cannot last long, as on his death or removal, the means of disorder are unfortunately in every hand. To a foreign conquest little resistance would be offered; they are too imaginative to dream of patriotism; yet had they any national spirit, the rugged nature of their mountain passes would offer many difficulties to an invading army. This spirit, which is entirely wanting, was supplied in their contests with the Mahomedans by fanatical excitement, and in warring with neighbouring barbarians, by the hopes of plunder.

Individually they are brave, but in masses, being without discipline, are hesitating, and little to be feared. Having no coinage of their own, the only money that passes current in Abyssinia is the German crown of Maria Theresa. This is changed, in Teègray, into pieces of cloth of various lengths, fabricated from cotton of the country or of India: and in the Amhara into blocks of salt, vary in number at each market-place. This salt is cut in the plains of the Taltal, near the Red Sea, and transported far into the interior; it becomes very valuable in the Galla provinces, where eight small pieces are sometimes exchanged for a dollar, and a hundred will purchase a slave. Gold, which under their Emperors was used a currency, by weight, and was abundant, according to tradition, has now almost disappeared. The Ruler of Shoa sent some pounds of fine gold to the Court of Gondar, moulded in the shape of a mule, in token of fealty. This custom was continued till the last forty years.

The whole dress of the people is of white cotton cloths, spun and wove in the country, nor do they consider a foreigner as dressed at all unless he throws one of

their white mantles over his own apparel. It illustrates curiously the character of this nation, so vain and stubborn in trifles, to see the servants of even a well-dressed Europeen follow him almost with shame, and the rest of the populace regarding him with laughter or sneers, nor is this a small matter nor a trifling difficulty. The first impression does much, and ridicule is harder to vanquish than persecution. Socrates, in our modern attire, would scarcely be respected in Abyssinia.

Could difficulties of other kinds be overcome, the disposition of the Abyssinians is on the whole favourable to the establishment of relations, commercial or political. Many of them are liberal, kind, intelligent, hospitable, comprehending and desiring justice, and above all, with no repulsive feelings towards us on the score of religion, except those excited purposely by the priests. If they are lax in morality, it is more from ignorance than a vicious nature; if they cannot always practise the justice they admire, it is for the want of a strong hand on the justice-seat; if they are indolent, it is because little is to be now gained by labour; if vain and conceited, from being in contact with nations inferior to themselves in arts and arms.

Commerce cannot thrive while there is no efficient protection to property, and while their merchants are treated as enemies or regarded as slaves on the coast. Whether they would change for the better or the worse, under the influence of extended trade and European civilization, is a problem that time alone can solve; but a man of liberal mind, while he regrets their anarchy, their ignorance, their fanaticism, and their vanity, may find something to admire in the individual character, under so many disadvantages.

There are no castes in Abyssinia, but the people may be divided into four classes—military, sacerdotal, agricultural, and mercantile: the number that cannot be included in these is insignificant—a few workmen, as tanners, saddlers, and blacksmiths, disproportioned even to the wants of the community, and some idlers who live by the produce of their farms.

The military is the most numerous and powerful. All men, save the priests, are armed it is true; but those who follow arms as a profession, and roam from the standard of one chief to another, are easily distinguised though they have no uniform, by their air of military license. The regular armies, or masses of men assembled under chiefs, are numerous, and throughout the country must amount to at least 200,000, and as their system renders a large following necessary 500,000 of idlers prey upon the rest. These troops consists of horsemen, armed with lance, shield and swords, footmen caparisoned in like manner, and matchlock-men: they have no artillery. In some provinces, as in Edjo, every man capable of bearing arms is a soldier, at least on his own land, where he fights and ploughs alternately. Here is also found the institution of the tournament somewhat simplified. Once or twice a week, by mutual accord, the youth of the country, with any strangers that wish it, meet at some river on foot or horseback, to fight *à l'outrance;* but also with much chivalrous courtesy. Female singers in shrill recitative, stimulate them to deeds of valour, and offer their charms as a reward to the bravest.

A constant enmity exists between the military and the population in general. Wages being very irregular, the former indemnify themselves often by indiscriminate plunder. As each chief retains his power by the strength of his army only, the soldiers know their own value, and change masters without ceremony; moreover, any fortunate soldier may hope to rise to the highest dignities. A chief, after a reverse, or even should his adversary obtain a high reputation among the men, is in much danger of being deserted by his army. Certain bands of soldiers are placed under officers appointed by the most powerful chiefs, whom for distinction I shall call Ras, and these act as his guards and messengers. There is no attempt at discipline or exercises; the names of the men are never registered, their numbers are scarcely ever known. These troops are generally favoured, as they are relied on to suppress any mutiny by the rest. Besides these, the Ras having distributed his territories amongst his followers, they raise forces according to their rank and revenues, and follow their feudal chief. With rare exceptions, such appointments are not hereditary; indeed, one man seldom retains one long, but are conferred on any fortunate favourite or soldier. The will of the Ras can in a moment deprive any chief of all his power, even of his private property, when, with one or two followers, he becomes a hanger-on at the camp, awaiting with patience some glimpse of royal favour, or, if of a more fiery temper, will probably throw himself into some wild district where he has family influence, and set his master at defiance.

The army thus composed is directed in its general movements by the Ras; on a march no order is observed; the whole mass presses on to the next camp, baggage and women, horse and foot, in indiscriminate confusion; at a precipitous pass or narrow ford many accidents happen. In the order of camping some regularity is observed, the tent of the Ras being in the centre, and advanced and rear-guards occupying the front and rear. The Ras also hold a council of war, and a plan of attack is laid down and followed up as far as regards the position of the forces of each chief; but that done, every man fights much as he pleases: the footmen advance or stand still as their courage leads them; the horsemen charge in large or small numbers, when and where they think fit; the matchlock-men take advantage of the ground and fire when they please, and each man when he has killed an enemy shouts his war-cry and displays his trophies instead of fighting. Plundering begins on the first trifling advantage, and it is often very difficult to discover on which side is the victory. This desultory manner of fighting does not prevent considerable loss of life. The soldiers, when the campaign is ended, are dismissed to roam about their respective districts arms in hand, exacting from the peasantry until again summoned to the field; in return, the country people slay remorselessly all fugitives of either side from a field of battle.

The chiefs keep more or less discipline amongst their troops when on the march or in quarters, according to their personal character. When provisions become scarce in the camp, some district is ordered for plunder, and the soldiers are very expert in discovering hidden stores.

The military despise all other classes save the priesthood. They love splendour of dress in battle, and some of their costume is rich and tasteful.

In the intervals of international quarrels, the troops are kept in good humour by expeditions against the nearest tribes of barbarians, not generally with any views of permanent conquest, but only in search of spoil, and that the soldier may revel in bloody trophies (the foreskins of the Philistines)—the height of his ambition. These trophies are equally sought for in the battles of Christian against Christian, and I am uncertain if it be an ancient custom or introduced only by the Gallas, but incline to the latter opinion. After an engagement these disgusting tokens of success are heaped before the tent of the King,

The soldiers seldom receive regular pay, but rewards are distributed to the bravest, and the more fortunate receive appointments from their respective chiefs. On a campaign they are fed by a tax in corn on the friendly provinces that are occupied, and which, as the soldiers are the tax-gatherers, is soon doubled, or by general plunder.

A silk shirt bestowed by the Ras is the distinction of the Abyssinian nobility, and this belongs only to the military class. Once bestowed, the honour is for life. The highest rank in this nobility is that of Dejajmatch, who is entitled to beat drums before him in the battle, to inflict all punishment save death, and often this also, and who governs one or two provinces almost independently. "Kainajmatch" and "Gerajmatch" are slightly inferior; then come the "Feetwarari," or chief of advanced guards, with some other titles not worth inquiring into, and then the crowd of "possessors of shirts," who may govern from ten to thirty villages when the Ras pleases to bestow his favour. All this system is the relics of some complicated but exact institutions of the Empire of Abyssinia, wherein the Emperor being the fountain of all honour, every great officer of the household had a title, and with that title a particular province or district. Since the divisions of the kingdom have taken place, the Abyssinians themselves have found it impossible to preserve the rules, and have neglected or forgotten the scrupulous ceremonials of the Court of Gondar. While the lances of the Galla have robbed Abyssinia of its fairest provinces, their manners and customs are superseding all its ancient institutions.

There is something of a chivalrous tone in their international warfare, apart from one savage practice that I have mentioned. An interchange of civilities constantly takes place between hostile camps; messengers are respected and prisoners generally well-treated, if of any rank even with courtesy. So polite are they that a chief will send news to his adversary, if not in the field, of the defeat of his army, and the messenger will receive a handsome douceur. Cruelty and brutality are rare; after a battle, as before, all is good humour and laughter, and the vanquished generally share the feast with their victors. No violence is offered to women that are captured; and even the ransom is usually fixed with amenity. Severities are sometimes practised towards those who are regarded as rebels, but

in general an Abyssinian conqueror is merciful. With barbarians, indeed, as the Shankallas or Taltals, the word is kill; but herein they have persuaded themselves that they only exercise an undoubted privilege of Christianity.

To retain the affection of the Abyssinian soldier nothing is necessary but profuse generosity; his heart is in his stomach, and the chief that slaughters many oxen daily and pours out mead in torrents, is the god of his idolatry. Each meal in a camp resembles a feast, and many festivals must also be held, to which all are admitted almost indiscriminately. At these carousals, when gorged with raw meat and excited by huge draughts of mead, they recite their own warlike deed, make the most vaunting promises of future heroism, and often obtain rich gifts in such moments from their superiors. Though all are armed and intoxication is general, accidents or quarrels seldom occur. These great banquets are the life of the soldier, and their barbarous plenty and military license is not unimposing.

Not being accustomed to rely on each other, they are absurdly subject to panics. I have seen a whole army running at night from a single man, who charged into the camp, shouting his war-cry. Disciplined, they would make good soldiers.

They have no distinctive dress, but different ways of plaiting their hair to denote the number of men each has killed with his own hand. Certain ornaments are also permitted only to men of great personal bravery. The slaughter of each dangerous beast of the forest is equivalent to a fixed number of human lives; and those who have never killed are not permitted the distinguished privilege of plaistering their heads with fresh butter.

All the servants of a chief are soldiers; the terms become synonymous in a camp; and the proudest chief is termed the servant of his feudal superior, and is ready whenever they meet to perform for him any menial office. In general they are proud, mutinous, and insubordinate; frequent fights occur in the camp of the Ras between rival bodies of soldiers, though a little severity would soon ensure obedience. On a late occasion his guards on the field of battle, instead of marching forward, lay down on the ground, alleging that they had been insufficiently fed for some months. The Ras (Ali), with unwonted energy, led a charge of cavalry over them as they lay.

The soldiers of Teegray are almost all foot, and their matchlock-men are very skilful and brave.

The Galla regiments of the interior are fine horsemen, and, with discipline, would be a formidable cavalry. As it is, they face fire well, and, like the Parthians, dispersing themselves in flight, suddenly wheel round and inclose a rash pursuer. They have a fine breed of horses. The horse and weapons of the soldier, whether given him by his chief or purchased by himself, are his own property. All who can procure them ride mules on the march, the horses being always led on the road. Each soldier that can afford it keeps a lad to carry his shield, a donkey for his provisions, and a small tent, and a wife to bring him water, make him bread, and wash his feet after a march. As he is entitled to a monthly allowance of corn for each of these attendants, besides extracting all he can from the peasantry, and feasting often in his General's tent, or wherever else the door-keeper is his friend, it may be seen that his condition is not disagreeable; and, in fact, it is the most attractive style of life that the country affords. A common soldier with a good reputation for courage is everywhere respected; he is flattered and caressed by many chiefs, who all strive to secure his services; his name is sung in ballads, and he considers himself, with reason, as equal to the proudest in the land. Such a man will enter the tent of any chief on the day of festival, assert his right to the finest portions of meat, and demand the strongest mead, not only without reproof, but with a cordial reception. And it is the passion for such individual distinction, leading to immediate and solid benefit, with the certainty that any one of them may, by good fortune, arrive at the highest rank, and command where he obeyed, that inspires a love for war in the Abyssinian breast. At the same time the pride engendered by this Republican soldiering induces a fiery impatience of control, and an ambition that leads to unceasing rebellions and distraction.

The great chiefs have generally much dignity of manner, and some of them might be models of tact and polite suavity, particularly those who have any pride of ancestry; but engrossed with the sensual pleasures afforded by their wealth and power, and uncertain how long they may enjoy them, they never dream of improving the condition of their subjects, though often just and indulgent in their rule, as far as the paramount necessity of conciliating their armies will permit.

The Turkish troops have a gread dread of the Abyssinians; though it is probable that 5,000 disciplined soldiers would beat them anywhere in the field, and 10,000 suffice for a permanent occupation of the country. The Abyssinians are convinced that no other nation can compare with them in war. One Chief named Kasoi has lately introduced some improvements into his army, which I shall notice in another place.

While the nobility of the country is entirely military, there is a kind of middle class, composed of the more influential proprietors; these, however, from the exigencies of the times, are also warlike, and must protect their homes and their ploughs, often by the lance and the sword. The most powerful of these are found in the deep valleys of the Nile, the Takazzee, and other large rivers. These rivers form vast clefts in the face of the country throughout their course, of several miles in width, at the bottom of which, at a depth of 3,000 feet, they plough their way betwixt high and precipitous walls of rock. The valleys thus formed are intercepted by rugged water-courses, whose torrents are unfordable in the rainy season. The soil is most productive, and the parts not cultivated are clothed with almost impenetrable jungle. The paths that conduct the traveller through these regions descend along the face of several ranges of precipices, over masses of rock, and frequently through passes that a hundred men might make good against an army.

From these peculiarities that present conversely the difficulties of a mountain territory, the character of the inhabitants is brave and independent, and, led by some great proprietor, they often defy all the efforts of the military chieftains. This proprietor is usually a large cultivator, and possesses numerous cattle; he is judge of the district by common consent, and without appeal. The elders, however, always give him their advice; and as he does not pretend to any superiority, save that of wealth and courage, and is always simple in his habits, there exists a real liberty and equality throughout the society, with the advantage of union under an acknowledged head in moments of danger. Under his orders the youth of the district make predatory expeditions against the Gallas or other neighbouring nations, or prosecute their endless blood-feuds with some adjacent Christian clan. These agricultural lords are of great importance to the military rulers, who, finding it difficult to seduce or force them to submission, flatter and caress them into an occasional contribution; but their valleys being rich depôts of corn, when provisions become scarce one of them is marked out for plunder, and, by secresy and surprise, the attempt is sometimes richly successful, though often the troops are overwhelmed and cut to pieces while toiling up the steep and gloomy passes and thorny forests by the equally well-armed and more active peasants. They generally also receive the "shirt" I have mentioned, or robe of silk, to give them military rank, and attach them to the party of some chief. Occasionally they will follow him to war, but rarely on any distant expedition. They are rich, hospitable to a proverb, proud and manly, and usually skilled in the chase, as these provinces afford ample hunting-grounds, abounding in large game.

The peasants of these districts enjoying a genial climate, live almost in the open air, and, though hardy in youth, soon grow old; they manifest the same impatience of restraint and love of liberty as mountaineers in other lands.

There are also rich proprietors on the plains and high lands, with family influence and some wealth; but these, from their constant contact with the soldiery, who despise and insult them, supply the want of strength by politic wiles, and have not the manliness and simplicity of their compeers of the low country.

The cultivators of the soil—the small farmers and peasantry—though struggling with many difficulties, form a numerous class. In spite of bad government, military oppression, and the constant devastations of war, they bear directly or indirectly the whole burden of taxation and the large standing armies. Though seldom wealthy, they are rarely in distress, and appear attached to their way of life. Soldiery are constantly quartered on them, except in some districts that always turn out *en masse* to resist, and where the troops dare not venture.

Villages may be seen everywhere in Abyssinia, perched on hills, hidden in most inconvenient hollows, and far from water. There are two good reasons for this: in the valleys the borders of the streams are infected with malaria; and on the plain, if they are too easy of access, they are nightly infested by crowds who demand an exact hospitality. On any frequented high road many a ruined hamlet may be seen, deserted by its inhabitants on this account.

In seasons of war and anarchy an influential countryman becomes more valuable as a friend than any Chief; and can, through the ties of relationship, forward goods

and messengers in safety to a distance, when a soldier dare not quit his camp. These are generally entrusted with the collection of revenue, and are often made responsible for it; they are a kind of Zemindars.

A whole province of cultivators, in times when the military are engaged elsewhere, will meet by accord, and some thousands of them will attack another province, destroying, burning, and bequeathing feuds to distant generations. In their culture they would be laborious, were it not for the priestly device of Saints' days, which forces the whole population to be idle for a third of the year. They plough with oxen, and weed with some care; they leave their fields fallow or change the crop, as experience or rather tradition has taught them; and dig, where they cannot plough, the sides of almost precipitous mountains. The most productive crops are obtained on the ground most covered with stones, which they are careful not to remove. During the rainy season a rich verdure clothes every part of Abyssinia that has any prospect of reaping the harvest in tranquillity. Irrigation is practised wherever necessary, the numerous rivulets rendering it an easy task. No fences are ever made; and during the night, when corn is ripening, boys with slings keep up a constant warfare with the wild boar, the addax, and the porcupine; in some districts large fires are necessary to scare the herds of elephants, and everywhere the watcher is placed on a high platform, to be in safety from the hyæna and the lion. In general they are intelligent, but ruder than the soldier.

From their present industry, I think that in this matter of cultivation they might improve, if they had a more peaceful Government and some security for property, and could be persuaded that men may improve upon their fathers—that it is better to cross a river by a bridge than to wade through a dangerous torrent; or that a mill is preferable for grinding corn to a slave girl. The fields in the neighbourhood of the towns, where military license is in some degree checked by the priests and the ravages of war are less felt, are highly cultivated; land there sells at a good price and is eagerly sought, showing that the sweets of tranquil labour are at least appreciated. If, however, the Government were not strong as well as peaceful, even tranquillity might have its dangers, especially in Teegray. As soon as the country people gain large profits, and mead or beer inflames their blood, the violence and pride of their disposition lead them to aim at power, and without regard to their means, to attack and disorganize society. They express this "inflation" by one word in their own language, which serves as the apology for almost every act of folly, and the inhabitants of Teegray have become a proverb in this respect. I am tempted to give one anecdote to illustrate the phrase: A few years since seven men of Hamazayn, with no other following, marched through 100 miles of country to Adowah, to overturn the existing powers and establish their own sovereignty, shouting war-cries and invoking the assistance of the Virgin. This is an extreme case, but describes well enough the disposition of this curious people. Each man considers himself as born to great destinies, and the smallest spark sets fire to his ambition. This is now owing to the long continued weakness of the Government and the absence of any body of proprietors who are interested in keeping order. Here almost every one thinks he has something to gain by anarchy.

The prosperous or adverse condition of a village depends almost entirely upon the rapacity or moderation of its immediate chief; and the ryots of a harsh master would soon leave him to contemplate empty fields, but for a law that empowers him to seize them and force them to cultivate or to give security for their share of all imposts. The villagers are further interested in preventing desertion, as, though only three inhabitants should remain, they must pay the whole sum at which the village was originally assessed. The imposts are numerous, but vary according to the traditionary customs of each village. They pay a certain portion in kind to the Ras, or other great Chief, and sometimes a regular tax in money; besides this they must furnish oxen to plough the King's lands: their immediate Governor then takes his share in kind of every grain—say a fifth, and feeds besides a certain number of soldiers at the expense of each householder; he has rights to oxen, sheep, and goats, butter, honey, and every other requisite for subsistence; he must be received with joy and feasting by his subjects whenever he visits them, and can demand from them contributions on fifty pretexts—he is going on a campaign, or returned from one; he has lost a horse, or married a wife; his property has been consumed by fire, or he has lost his all in battle; or the sacred duty of a funeral banquet cannot be fulfilled without their aid.

There is in each village one hereditary officer, that cannot be displaced on any

pretence; and it is this institution alone that preserves some appearance of order, in the absence of all written documents, amidst the whirl of revolutions, and the rapid succession of dynasties and Governors. This humble officer takes one-tenth of all that he collects for his Chief. When the latter is changed, he informs his successor what is left of the last year's revenues, of the boundaries of his land, of the amount of imposts, of his various privileges, and all the little secrets of the community, so that in a short time the new Governor is as much at home as the old one. The amount of traditional knowledge and memory of these persons is often extraordinary. The boundaries that he has to define are very simple; a brook, a bush, or stone, mark the limits of a village; but when their neighbours' fields, as often happens, are interlaced, it is a complicated task, and gives rise. to endless litigation, often to violence. In forest or plain, covered only with grass and jungle, and here and there a heap of ruins, should a village be rebuilt and cultivation resumed, some such ancient peasant is soon found, who demands his post, and points out from memory the boundaries; the descendants of the former inhabitants are sought out under his directions, and under a lenient Governor all is restored to its former condition. When land or houses are sold, numerous little children are called to receive a handful of peas, and are useful afterwards as witnesses from these juvenile recollections.

Though the feudal power of the military Chiefs is so great, it may be doubted if the influence of the priesthood be not more important. That body holds in chains the mind of the people, moulds at will customs, morals, and all the social ties, which have consequently remained almost unchanged, amidst the change of dynasties, the ruinous shocks of international war, and the gradual crumbling away of a wide and Christian Empire.

The spirit of Protestantism, or free inquiry, is not more welcome in Abyssinia than in other primitive churches; but from the less eager spirit of its people, it has not been found necessary to check it by any penalties. Going to the fountain-head they teach but one book to the children of the laity, "The Psalms of David," and, without forbidding other learning, discourage it, confining it as much as possible to the clergy and the scribes. Their great numbers, the almost superstitious reverence of the multitude, and the practice of confession and absolution, have enabled the priests to pursue this system with success.

All the larger towns are entirely under their control, and being cities of refuge, sacred even from the Ras, are filled with dissolute and dangerous characters.

This institution is probably a remnant of their Mosaic law, and gives them great power over the bodies, as the ceremony of confession, and the dreadful thunder of excommunication, do over the imagination, of an ignorant race.

The Christianity professed and taught in Abyssinia is much materialized. The religion that is elsewhere the companion of progress, is here made the stumbling-block to improvement; stress, for the most part, being only laid on its ceremonies, and many being added that in no way belong to it.

Though they detest the Church of Rome, and indeed despise all save their own, quarrelling even with the Alexandrian from which they receive their Aboona, o high Priest, through their love of contradiction, they may be thought to have taken some good lessons from the former, on the means of retaining the population in blind submission.

All church service is conducted in the Geez tongue, unknown saved to the learned. The Psalms are also in that language, and the pupil, while encouraged to read them, is persuaded that he should not seek to understand them, but that he fulfils a high duty by gabbling over a number of them daily. No one save the priest himself is ever instructed in the gospel in any tongue. Great adoration is paid to the Virgin Mary, and to numberless saints and angels. Their churches are filled with pictures, to which, when unveiled, the multitude bows with reverence. Fasting is rigidly insisted on, sometimes however compounded for by money. These fasts embrace nearly two-thirds of the year, and most of those who keep them are convinced that they will be weighed against their sins, though this doctrine is not officially taught. So much do they attach importance to this and other outward forms, that a man of "Hamazayn" will slay his near relative, and returning home calmly, will be horror-stricken should his wife have ground flour on a saint's day, or prepared his meal before the hours of fasting have expired.

The churches are very numerous, and each church is itself an object of

devotion, as it is firmly believed that the saint whose name it bears, actually resides in its sanctuary. The stones are kissed with awe, and offerings are deposited, which the priest receive; vows are registered and prayers are made, with equal fervour to the Virgin, our Saviour, or some traditional martyr of the Abyssinian church, from which they expect immediate benefit in this world as well as salvation in the next. Miracles I need scarcely say are not unfrequent, and certain spots of peculiar sanctity perform them almost daily. Whenever offerings slacken, and the numbers that kneel at the shrine decrease, a picture rolls its eyes, a leper is cleansed, or the blind are restored to sight.

Great respect is paid to all who wear the white turban, the mark of priesthood; they are always addressed as "father," and as superiors in the second person plural, even by chiefs of the highest rank. Any person dying without having chosen a father confessor, is denied Christian burial, and so jealous are the priests of this great means of power, that they extend the rule to strangers. The confessors of the great men are usually indulgent, and they are permitted to compound for their frailties by the endowing of a new church, or handsome gifts to an old one. Nor are monasteries wanting to complete the resemblance to the Roman Catholic Church, and to the middle ages, where every immorality is practised; nor solitary hermits who dwell in gloomy forests, feeding on roots, and exposed to ferocious animals, and who are sometimes as sincere as they are useless. Nunneries alone are absent from the picture, though vows of celibacy are sometimes taken, if rarely kept, save at an advanced age.

Christianity is reduced to the simple form of obedience to the priest. The Gospel is forbidden in our translations into the modern Amharic tongue, nor is there one man in ten thousand who knows the commonest precepts of his religion. If some few moral ideas are not denied, they are never inculcated or insisted on, and absolution can always be obtained for money. So blindly devoted is the Abyssinian laity to these astute fathers, that even the almost daily spectacle of their drunkenness, excesses, and immorality, nay, the knowledge that the confessional means "seduction made easy," excites no feeling of disgust and astonishment.

Thus it is not wonderful, if lying, sexual intercourse, intoxication, or manslaughter, are regarded as venial—things that might be considered curious as the daily occupation of professing Christians, were it not for the ignorance in which they are studiously retained under meshes too cunningly woven to be burst by any efforts of their own. Their present immorality does not argue a bad nature in the Abyssinian; on the contrary, I am astonished that good and moral men are still found: and it is certain that Christianity, even thus debased, has hitherto saved them from the wantonness of crime and excess of cruelty that stains the records of almost all African races, and of some in other quarters of the globe. It is necessary for the strangers in Abyssinia to propitiate the church, or at least to be very careful how he attacks it in his conversation. Should an outcry be raised on such points as his want of respect for the priests, his not fasting, his eating with Mahomedans, which is regarded with horror, or the like, he will find it difficult to resist the storm, though the Abyssinian persecutor is generally content with banishment. It was by these means that the English Protestant Mission was unceremoniously ejected, when it was found that it was introducing the New Testament to notice in the Amhara language, and announcing truths dangerous to priestcraft.

One-third of the lands was originally set apart for the church, but this portion is now much reduced, though its share is still large.

The native head of the Abyssinian church is called the "Tchegee," and resides at Gondar, his house being a place of peculiar sanctity; but the bishop, called "Aboona," who receives a reverence almost amounting to worship, is always a Copt. He is sent by the Patriarch of Alexandria on consideration of some thousand dollars collected and forwarded by the Abyssinians for his journey. The present Aboona is said to be the one hundred and eighteenth, and is named Salama. His chief residence should also be at Gondar, but there have been fierce disputes in the Abyssinian Church, and the gifts of Sahela Selassie, of Shoa, prevailed on the Ras Ali to banish the Aboona, who has since been living near Adowah, where he has still large possessions. All churches must be consecrated, all priests and deacons ordained by him; crowds of pilgrims are always waiting in his courts, sometimes intermixed with men of rank, some to obtain a blessing or to be assoiled from deadly sin, a great number to made deacons. Worn with a journey of

perhaps months, priests are there in flaunting red garnments, carrying a mysterious box, wherein is kept the "Holy of Holies" of each church, like the ark of the covenant,—waiting for the blessing of the Aboona, which is equivalent to the consecration of that church. His sentence of excommunication is much dreaded, and he has great influence in all the political or warlike movements in the country. His residence is an inviolable sanctuary.

From time to time the Church of Rome has made great efforts to induce the Abyssinians to recognise the Pope of Rome as their spiritual head. The Jesuits at one time having nearly succeeded, and having lighted up the flames of civil war in the time of the Emperor Socinios, failed at last, and were massacred or banished. At this time the struggle is renewed by several missions under three bishops to gain a footing in this territory.

The Aboona by interdict, and when that fails by inducing the chief to expel these intruders, carries on a war with them with various success; as to his prestige, they oppose money. These missions are under the protection of France.

Even the Aboona, influencial as he is, finds it difficult to assert his authority over the banded priests when they differ on any doctrinal point; nor dares he announce a truth that may oppose any strong national prejudice. Should he say that a Christian is permitted to eat what he pleases, he would raise a storm from which his sacred character would scarcely protect him. Priests are permitted to marry one wife, but not a second time, except the Aboona and Tchegee, who should lead a life of rigid celibacy.

The only interference of the chiefs in church government is in the appointment of a civil officer in each town, who settles all disputes, orders church ceremonials, and receives large profits. He must have some learning, and is called "Alika."

The priests have no pay, but the profits on the land attached to each church are divided in proportion to their several dignities. Then the father confessors extract what they can, according to the wealth of their patients; the pious bestow rich offerings for their spiritual welfare, and the laity are mulcted on the occasions of births, christenings, marriages, deaths, registers of sale and purchase, burials, and the like; so that besides their continual feasting at the public expense, they are usually well stocked with money, and from their numbers have been compared by the Abyssinians to locusts.

It is just, however, to say that they have preserved the Christian faith impure, indeed, but still alive, in the midst of foreign invasion, domestic degradation, and the extinction of Government, and that it is under their protection that agriculture flourishes and villages are built where deserts would else be seen. What learning exists has also been preserved by them from utter extinction. But as they become themselves daily more corrupt, society more disorganized, and the law more inefficient, church and people will be lost in utter barbarism, unless Providence have preserved those embers of civilization to be cherished into life by some more generous and powerful nation.

Their learning is limited almost to the books of the Old and New Testament, into which some are admitted that we consider apocryphal; besides these there are some monkish legends, a code of laws, and the chronicles of their kings, containing in a mass of rubbish a few sentences worthy of notice. All these books, written by monks with much labour, were formerly eagerly sought for, but are now neglected, almost forgotten. The art of painting is nearly lost; and ornamental missals may now be found very cheap, as there are scarcely any purchasers; the number of persons that can read and write is diminishing daily, and the code of laws is becoming a mystery to the most learned. There are about four hundred works in the country, of which eighty-one for the Bible.

Numbers of Abyssinian priests and monks visit Jerusalem yearly, and it may be deemed singular that these, receiving much kindness at the hands of Europeans, do not awaken their countrymen to some knowledge of the world beyond, and some better feeling towards their fellow Christians than contempt or indifference.

It is one of the difficulties of an Envoy, that while the Turk regards his intercourse with a jealous eye, and the fanatic Mahomedan hates him as the friend of the Christians, the Abyssinian too generally regards him as a man without religion, that is, without those outward forms that he is taught as more important than either morality, truth, or humility. These pilgrims generally disclaim the reception of any kindness, and declare that Franks have no religion. They all eat meat of any kind on their journies, but are most fanatic on their return against intercourse with the Mussulman, and fervently deny having tasted the abhorred flesh of his shambles,

declaring that what is killed by an European is also contaminating, his Christianity being most impure.

Yet these monks have faith, and energy in their faith, though ill-directed; for 1,500 years numbers have worshipped at the tomb of the Saviour, have braved persecution, and devoted themselves to certain death. Many of them now risk their lives to visit some forgotten shrine, once a church belonging to their fathers, and the centre of population and culture, now a few shapeless stones in a howling wilderness, the lair of wild beasts, and surrounded for many a weary day's journey by hostile tribes of Arabs or negroes, who slay the pilgrim that they may not return home with unbloody hands.

Scribes or "deftaras" are often more learned than the priests, and equally take advantage of the general ignorance. Their principal gain is by writing amulets, and charms against every disease, almost against death; it is believed that some of these men, by their spells can invoke demons and spirits from the waters, they being careful to nourish the delusion by juggling exhibitions from time to time. They also profess medicine, and as they do not much analyse the effects of their drugs, many an unfortunate falls a victim to some poisonous plant administered as a love philtre. Most of them are hangers-on of the different churches; they are generally cunning, debauched, and mischief-makers.

Jews are still found in some numbers, and though despised are not persecuted; this may be owing to their poverty. They know nothing of the Hebrew tongue; but some read the Mosaic books in the Geez, and are as scrupulous in their ceremonials as their brethren elsewhere. They are the best masons in the country. They have no peculiar physiognomy.

The Koomants, found only in the neighbourhood of Gondar, are acknowledged by neither Christian, Mussulman, nor Jew, and have a bastard creed, a compound of all three. They are skilful carpenters, and supply all Gondar with wood. They are despised, but being very courageous, and having lately shown an inclining towards Christianity, it is not improbable that their distinctions will soon disappear, many even now have ceased a practice which was the chief separating cause. They hung heavy weights in the lobe of the ear of the girls, who were thereby excluded from any chance of marriage with Christians.

The "Wytos" are a small class, who live by hunting the hippopotamus; they eat the flesh, and sell the hide and teeth. They call themselves Mahomedans, but are not recognized by the other followers of that creed. They principally reside near the Lake Tānā, and are a very handsome race. They are regarded with as much aversion as the Jews. But all these classes are permitted the free exercise of their own religious faith.

There are many Mahomedans in Abyssinia, and in all large towns they have a separate quarter, with mosques and public prayers. From the advantage that their commerce in slaves gives them over their Christian competitors, the Mussulman traders are the most wealthy, and are, therefore, generally appointed to the high post of Negadeh Ras, or collector of all customs, literally "head of merchants." To enforce their authority these keep large bodies of armed men, and confidently predict the final triumph of the faith of the Prophet in Abyssinia. The Abyssinian Mussulmans, as distinguished from the Galla, are all traders; they will not eat meat killed by Christians, and are frequently their superiors in morality and intelligence. They live on terms of equality, good humour, and friendship with the Christians, openly defend their creed, and receive any proselyte that offers, and do not appear to think that the restrictions in the Koran respecting strong drinks apply to them at all. Mahomedans and Christians do not intermarry. One cannot but admire the toleration of this people, though it does not extend to other Christians; however, no one can be molested on account of his opinions, and a small concession will always mollify the church. There is no distinction in dress between those who profess different creeds, and are all subject to the same law.

The Mahomedans, like the Christians, do not in general seclude their women; and the latter maintain in general the important privilege of displaying their charms. This formerly was done by females of all ranks and religions, but lately, to imitate the great chiefs, who secluded their wives, from jealousy, the custom of a harem is being gradually adopted in the towns and by the wealthy. I may add here that, in spite of the prevalence of Christianity, and the abundance of its professing teachers, Mussulmans are not alone in the doctrine of plurality, almost every man keeping as many handmaidens as his means will permit.

The mercantile community are not very numerous, and are looked on with much contempt by the military, but patronized by the chiefs, whom they conciliate by rare presents, in addition to the duties they pay. The Mahomedans of Abyssinian extraction, not Galla, follow rarely any other pursuit, and three-fourths of the trade are in their hands; of wealthy Christian merchants, there are scarcely twenty in the whole country. The rich caravans travel in large numbers, and well armed, and are as well used to hard fights as the soldiery, especially those who reach Enarea. They have no traits which distinguish twem from any other class of the community; and the merchant must stuff his followers with meat and mead like the military chief, paying, in addition, regular wages.

The countries richest in commercial produce are the Galla provinces of Enarea, Djimma, and those adjacent. They abound in ivory, zibbad, excellent coffee, wax, and spices; gold is found in the sands, and these districts are accustomed to trade with the Abyssinian caravans. Their products find one outlet through Shoa and the Adaiel, eastward into the Indian Ocean, at the port of Zeyla; another through Abyssinia, by various channels, northward, and passing either through Gondar and Sennaar, to Egypt, or through Adowah and Massowah, into the Red Sea. A third route is frequented by the traders who, following the course of the White Nile, also reach Khartoom, and there meet the caravan from Gondar.

The caravans to the Red Sea are swelled on the route by small parties with the produce of Abyssinia—wax, coffee of an inferior quality, ivory, buffaloes' horns, hides, ghee, honey, and mules. The list may appear limited, but little inducement is offered to the trader, either by his own unsettled and oppressive Government or by Turkish apathy on the coast; and provinces are left desert that are capable of growing many valuable articles for commercial purposes, while those that exist are but half-known, and the quantity of those in use might be multiplied fifty-fold by encouragement. Amongst the products of Abyssinia, not considered as of value at present, I may mention aloes, aniseed, castor-oil, senna, ebony, gum, hippopotamus' teeth, saffron, and sulphur.

Pepper and other spices are now imported from India, while there are numerous districts fit for their growth between the Red Sea and Enarea. The quantity of coffee might be immensely increased under a tolerable Government. Among the nomad tribes on the coast, an extensive trade in hides, salt-meat, and horns, might be created. Should means of destruction become more generally known, the quantity of ivory would be much increased. Gold and copper veins might be found. The valuable zibbad, now monopolized by the King of Enarea, might be reared all over Abyssinia, where, though the cat exists in a wild state, no one has ever thought of domesticating it, which would be an innovation.

Cotton cloth is the universal and only dress of the country, and cotton is imported from Cutch, while Abyssinia should be capable of producing largely for exportation of a much superior quality. Besides the tropical rains, the means of irrigation are everywhere abundant; while the excellent quality of the soil and the mildness of the climate would render that resource unnecessary for most plantations. Owing to bad government, fertile lands near the sea have been abandoned to flocks and herds for a breadth of 100 miles between the coast and Abyssinia; and plains of sulphur at seventy or eighty miles from Massowah are unknown to the Turkish Governor, that article being imported in small quantities from beyond the sea.

Everything is transported on horses, mules, or donkeys; and the large caravans, moving very slowly, are often a year from Enarea to Massowah, a distance by the road of about 750 miles. The slowness of their progress is owing partly to the natural difficulties of a rugged and mountainous country, without roads, but still more to the embarrassing institutions of the tribes or nations through which they pass. The despots of the monarchical Gallas, as Enarea—where, as I have said, the richest produce is found, and which town is the great mart of this part of Africa—must be propitiated by presents and flattery. The Slave Trade is a great source of revenue to those Kings; and for this reason the Christian merchants seldom transact business so far in the interior, leaving those wealthy reservoirs to the Moslem traders in human flesh, through whose influence all that part of the country is gradually adopting the Mahomedan creed.

Enarea is frequented by traders from Zanzibar and Sajoora, from Massowah and Khartoom, from Darfoor and Khoordoofān, and, it is said, even from Darsālā and Timbuctoo; but even the frequenters of that depôt seem to know little of any tribes on the Equator. Constant as are the wars between tribe and tribe, the

merchants are protected by all, and escorted to the limits of each province, where they are received under a temporary truce by their friends in the other. Should there be an intervening wilderness, the trader must trust to his own weapons and a stout heart.

When the caravans having left the dominions of the King of Enarea, on the road for Massowah, which most concerns us at present, enter the territories of republican Gallas, not only each tribe, but each influential individual, and each one who has a hut on the line of march, must be paid and caressed. As the best way of effecting this, the merchants camp on the frontier of each district, under the protection of some influential inhabitant, and there make their bargain with all those who have claims along the line of road. These claims being all settled, which may occupy a month or six weeks, they make a stretch into the next district, and with each tribe the same operation must be repeated. This system continues until they reach Basso, the southern province of Abyssinia on that road. To reach this halting place, they must cross the River Abbāi or Blue Nile, through which valley is the most dangerous part of their progress. This wilderness, a hunting-ground for wild beasts, hot and desolate, contrasts strongly with the fertile crops of Gooderoo that they are leaving, and the fresh pastures of Godjam that they hope to reach—a hope not always realized. Hundreds of Galla horse lay hidden on the long grass and thorny thickets apprised by numerous scouts of the numbers and quality of the approaching caravan. The Abyssinian Chief of Basso, it is true, furnishes a strong escort, but not unfrequently convoy and caravan are cut off almost to a man, and that fatal spot, yearly the scene of deadly combats, is dreaded by the merchant, and rouses all the energy of the traveller. Such are some of the labours and dangers of the traders to Enarea.

After reaching Basso, the trading depôt being named Ayjubay, they are in comparative safety; but the perils they have passed are almost preferable to the endless vexations and exactions of the Abyssinian institutions.

The system of customs is in fact a struggle betwixt the merchants on the one hand and on the other the Negadeh Rases, who farm the duties in the large towns, and numerous small military governors, who exact what they can at other posts—this system leading necessarily to loss of time, smuggling, and often bloodshed.

A Negadeh Ras, or chief of merchants, is appointed in six towns of Abyssinia—Ayjubay, Derrita, Gondar, Sokota, Doobaruk, and Adowah. In five of these the officer is a Mahomedan; at Doobaruk, somewhat inferior in importance, a Christian. Paying fixed sums to the great Chiefs, they are permitted to screw all they can out of merchants, and keep in their pay large bodies of armed men to enforce their severe regulations. They are also obliged to do feudal service for the Chief when called upon. Each Negadeh Ras establishes numerous minor posts, where the merchants are harassed for small sums, and with the military claimants they must compound as they best can. The right of pasturage and trespasses are fruitful sources of contention and delay. It is true that the richer traders are generally on good terms with the great Chiefs by constant presents and flattery, and escape pretty easily from his followers; but those on a small scale are plundered unmercifully, and their whole property sometimes confiscated on the plea of smuggling, true or false. All are despised by the military, and for fear of future consequences are obliged to receive nightly in their houses insolent and riotous soldiers, who, even when receiving hospitality, scarcely deign to disguise their contempt. They are also in constant fear of being claimed by the Chiefs to extort money. In the desert parts of the country, if any rebels or robbers are in force, they have not unfrequently to fight in defence of their goods in Abyssinia, as amongst the Gallas; and the merchants from the Province of Walkait, bordering on Sennaar, have another danger to encounter; bands of negroes, called Shankalla, in bodies of 500 and 1,000, often occupy the road in ambush, and sometimes succeed in surprising and slaughtering and entire caravan. This feud is uninterrupted, and no quarter is ever given. When the merchant has settled for his vexatious tolls, and averted with success all human enemies, he has also to encounter the difficulties of raging floods, precipitous mountains, frightful roads, and wild beasts that destroy his mules. Their situation would be much bettered were Abyssinia under one master, instead of being ground by so many Chiefs, each of whom frames despotic laws in his own province, and often makes the forced friendship of a merchant for his rival, or the compulsory exactions of a rebel whom he himself cannot subdue a pretext for a heavy fine. The frontier provinces of Teegray towards the sea, Kalagoozāi and Hamazayn, are now disorderly republics, save a tribute forced on them by the

arms and the fortune of Oobeay, and will probably soon entirely detach themselves from the shaking fabric of Abyssinian society; and here there is no law or protection for the trader, save such moderation as self-interest may teach the villagers on the road. Combats are not unfrequent; but as it is known that the caravans will fight to the death in behalf of their property, being generally all they possess, even the most rapacious are afraid to push matters to extremity. The merchants also make friends of the most influential proprietors. On arriving amidst the Shiho tribes, between these provinces and the coast through which they must pass to reach Massowah, they suffer great extortions under pretence of guides and permission to pass through this territory, inhabited by Mahomedans, who acknowledge no sovereign, either Turk or Christian, and amongst whom each man claims a share of the booty. Having scrambled through these valleys, the produce of Enarea at last arrives once in the year at Massowah, where the merchants, if Christian, were formerly subject to insult, violence, and injustice; but of late years, if not encouraged, have at least been treated with decency and moderation—a result to which I may, without vanity, believe myself to have contributed.

A caravan at each halt, makes a camp near some spring or river. The packages are piled up to the height of four or five feet, with spaces left at intervals; the long sticks with which they drive the mules are thrown across these to form a roof, and soft hides are laid over all, making a series of waterproof cabins, in which the wealthy nestle among their goods; the followers erect temporary huts all round, and in the centre the mules are tied at night. Numbers of young men are sent to cut grass; others to trade with the nearest villagers for supplies. Strict watch is kept all night by the light of large wood fires. At daylight they resume their journey, and a caravan of two or three hundred mules will be off in less than half-an-hour. The small traders who carry goods from market to market, disperse themselves at night in the villages amongst their friends; as also do those who cary salt. Great numbers of men are employed in this important commerce, salt being the current money of the kingdom, and found only in the Taltal district not very far from Massowah. Small blocks are cut of eight inches in length, and slung over the back of a donkey to the number of 150 or more; being first brought by camels from the arid salt plains into Teegray. Hides are placed over as a protection from the rain, and these traders then hurry with great speed to every market in the kingdom, and young girls may be seen on journeys of several hundred miles, carrying 60 pieces on their backs, to work out a dowry for themselves. The salt having to pay constant toll, becomes rapidly more dear, and while in Teegray 200 pieces can be obtained for a dollar, in Godjam 30 are considered a high rate; and in the Galla provinces salt is one of the chief luxuries of life.

The manufactures in request in Abyssinia are almost all British; red cloth, calico, silks and velvets of all kinds, printed cottons, &c., are all imported from Bombay, as well as red and blue Indian bunting, raw silk, Surat tobacco, and Indian manufactured silks. English sabres and fire-arms are much in request, but are prohibited by the blockade of the Turks at Massowah. Matchlocks only were admired formerly, but of late years percussion guns are in great demand. In all things they cry out for English goods. Some kinds of Egyptian cloth sell in large quantities, and also American drill. Trieste sends glassware and beads, which are required principally for the slave-dealers; and the frankincense of Arabia supplies the Abyssinian churches. I have already furnished an exact list of the exports and imports of Massowah.

It is unnecessary to dwell at present upon the probability of developing the commercial resources of the Gallas. That they possess them in abundance unknown to themselves is certain, but their most important districts are so distant from the coast that no European merchant could risk in person so hazardous a journey. Nothing but the establishment of a firm Government and an enlightened system in Abyssinia can much influence the condition of these tribes. The Abyssinian merchants will, however, communicate whatever impulse they may receive from the coast and push on into the furthest provinces with increased vigour. The Abyssinians are greedy of gain, and a desire for European luxuries already exists. The stimulus of capital and protection on the coast would soon cause a great change in their domestic policy, convert their grass wildernesses and thorny forests into thriving plantations, and create as large a commerce as can exist in a country where water carriage is hopeless, and even the introduction of waggons must be

the task of years, owing to national prejudice, rugged elevations, abrupt valleys, and the utter absence of roads and bridges.

The ancient form of government in Abyssinia was a despotic monarchy, with many Persian forms and Jewish institutions. This, while powerful, was preferable to the present state of lawless violence, and afforded an appearance of unity, however ill the law may have been executed, as appears by their records. Long before its fall, the inroads of Mahomedans on the coast of the Red Sea, and of the Gallas on the southern and eastern boundaries, had much reduced the ancient limits of the Empire; and the Royal Family had ceased to be regarded with respect or fear, even in the few provinces that their arms could still defend.

This monarchy was finally overthrown by Ras Michael of Teegray, shortly after the visit of Bruce to Gondar; and that Ras was next attacked and defeated by the Gallas, under pretence of avenging the Emperor. The son of Ras Michael having been afterwards slain in battle by the Mahomedans from Edjo and Worrahaimano, in the general confusion that ensued, a young man of no note from the former province named Gooksa, seized the province of Begemder, and received from the deposed but still recognized "Ahtiee," or Emperor, the title of Ras. Here the power of the Church was felt, and though by the aid of Mussulman sabres he had overthrown Christian forces, and felt himself strong enough to portion out the country amongst his followers, and to contemn the royal shadow at Gondar, he was obliged to profess the Christian faith, not daring to risk the holy war that would otherwise have been kindled by the priests.

He then became virtual Ruler of Abyssinia, as far as subtlety and force could confirm his title; but in the north, Teegray acknowledged only its native princes, and Godjam, in the south, kept him occupied in constant wars with various fortune. From that time, nearly seventy years, this Galla dynasty has held Begemder, and if not acknowledged Sovereigns were most powerful pretenders. It is owing to this revolution, and the consequent number of claimants for power, none of whom have succeeded in establishing a permanent and hereditary authority, that relations with Abyssinia have been since so difficult and fruitless.

Ras Ali, the grandson of Gooksa, having received tribute and a professed allegiance from the other Chiefs, including him of Teegray, became the sole Ras. Nevertheless, all men having arms in their hands and many leaders heading large armies, the whole period of his reign the Ras was in the saddle, and his palace was his tent; being engaged in pursuing those who fled into impregnable mountain strongholds or pathless wildernesses, or in striking down others who withstood his arms in open fight, during a period of twenty-two years. Before proceeding to a sketch of late events which have hurled the Ras from his throne, I will endeavour to give some outline of his career, the manner of government, and the administration of justice, since the fall of the Gondar monarchy

Ras Ali has, during his reign, overcome three powerful cabals of the northern and southern chiefs combined. During the government of Ras Gooksa, the Ras Welda Selasee, in Teegray (to whom an embassy was sent by England), and Ras Gibree, in Semen, were independent. Oobeay, the grandson of Ras Gibree, slew Dejaj Sabagardis, the successor of Ras Welda Selasee, who also contemplated a strict alliance with us; and after that victory, conquered Teegray, which province he has held in subjection for twenty years. Although Dejaj Oobeay became, by this acquisition of territory, a formidable rival, after several severe struggles he was forced to recognize Ras Ali as his Chief, to pay him tribute yearly, and to send a quota of troops as feudal service. All others being apparently vanquished, the Chief of Godjam, Dejaj Birro, alone held out unconquered through the whole period of Ras Ali's power. After repeated victories over the troops sent against him, an overwhelming force, headed by the Ras in person, drove him for refuge to his mountain, where he remained shut up for five years. During this period was my Mission; and while the Ras might thus be said to be, in one way or other, complete master of Abyssinia. But this mastery, however proud a position for himself, secured by a turbulent and licentious army, was necessarily factitious; and the numerous bands of Gallas, his relatives, brought by him to sustain his precarious power, with the difficulty of feeding the immense army he kept up, in no way added to the security of property and the tranquillity of the land. Indeed, he had many troubles even in his camp; for the great Chiefs, though from fear, and yet chafing at the obligation, they rendered him feudal service, still asserted almost sovereign rights in their several provinces; and many of them, who claimed descent from the

Royalty of Gondar, or whose ancestors had held high offices under the Empire, considered themselves with some reason his equals. Others, again, of inferior pretensions, plundered the country, or exacted contributions in proportion to their force. The Ras, could all his vassals be united, might have mustered at one time 50,000 men of all arms; and his rival, Oobeay, 30,000; yet many a petty adventurer, their equal in birth perhaps, with only 500 or 1,000 followers, trusting to the strength of his mountains or valleys and his local influence, continually braves these rulers; and though, after much bloodshed, many of them have been reduced to obedience, enough are always under arms to render the roads unsafe without a military force, or the escort of a strong caravan of merchants. It may easily be conceived that each Chief, in proportion to his importance, deals pretty much as he pleases with travellers or merchants on his own ground; and in these matters the Ras is too powerless, or too careless, to interfere, inasmuch as it is easy to provoke a rebellion amongst a soldiery that regard inaction as a penalty and war as a delight. Little vigour is shown in suppressing these outbreaks, the Ras generally caring little if his own supplies are not cut off, or his revenues seriously diminished. He generally makes terms with his rebellious vassals, preferring policy to force.

The feudal sovereignty of the Ras having been established by the sword, and depending at any time on the issue of a battle, in appointing a "Dejajmatch," or Governor of a province, he is obliged to be attentive to the claims of the great families, who, from their hereditary influence, must be either rulers or rebels in their respective districts; the doubtful alternative of destroying them he was always too merciful to adopt. These chiefs follow him to war, and give him a portion of their revenues; they bestow on their retainers, districts and villages as they please; and the pay of each is the revenue he can extract from these allotments.

The Ras reserves for himself a number of provinces, to provide for his household officers and troops. The soldiers are paid an uncertain sum of money occasionally, and have a monthly allowance of corn. This corn is sometimes measured out from the Ras' granaries; but more often a half-plundering license to quarter themselves in the reserved provinces is given. This is not always patiently acquiesced in, and bloody struggles ensue, in which the peasantry sometimes succeed in expelling the soldiery; the weakness of the Ras, generally, obliging him to overlook such an affair.

The petty household of a Chief who has three or four villages, is an exact imitation, on a ludicrous scale, of that of one who musters at a word 5,000 horse. He has all officers, and no servants; his "king's mouth," his major-domo, his grand butler, his chief of commissariat, his jester, his master of the horse, and so forth; this, with an establishment of perhaps thirty persons, each system revolving round its sun or candle. Yet, as every military man who is courageous or well connected may hope with reason to reach the highest grade, they practise state without thinking themselves absurd. The Ras is, truly, only the most powerful of a number of competitors; several of those who acknowledged him as feudal superior, maintaining their right to judge without appeal. It is one favourable trait in this long rivalry, that poison, or assassination, have rarely, if ever, been resorted to; their warfare being open, often chivalrous.

The Chiefs are generally so far just as the paramount need of feeding and conciliating their armies will permit; and, of course, where their whims and personal interests are not concerned. But though the judgment may be just, the poor do not often profit by it. Almost all the subordinate Governors being rapacious, justice must be sought at the fountain-head; and then, with the distance they have to travel, over the worst roads, the net-work of retainers and favourites about the great man, who render it difficult to obtain admission, and the local influence of the Chief against whose decision they appeal—they seldom return home without, in some shape, repenting their success. Still it gives them pleasure to succeed; nor is there any nation that so delights in litigation—a proof that, while under a badly organized military oligarchy, they are obliged to trust often to arms for their defence, they would yield easy obedience to the law when administered with vigour and regularity. It is not an uninteresting sight to witness the Ras' Court filled with suitors of all classes; the multitude in attendance seated on the grass, no one excluded; and the highest noble, the meanest peasant, standing, pleading on equal terms before his judges or himself, and using entire liberty of speech. But this well-intended impartiality is nullified by the manner of procuring testimony.

The first step in every cause is to call on both parties to find security. These securities must be persons whom the judge is certain of being able to seize if necessary. If the charge be serious they must be persons of property, and are

liable both for the appearance of their principals, and for the sentence whatever that may be. This custom obtains both in civil and criminal law. In default of such security, each party is chained by the wrist; an additional expense, as the chains must be hired, and the jailor, that is, the person to whom he is chained, paid a sum fixed by law. This bail is the prop of Abyssinian society; no commercial or market transfer takes place without it. In this manner is ensured the payment of debt or interest, and of the King's revenue. The Abyssinian judge or creditor cares nothing for the principal in a cause; the bail is seized, and in self-defence produces his man; and it is an honourable trait that the principal rarely absconds. A friend will thus become security in cases of murder, though rendering himself thereby liable to suffer death, or to pay the price of blood; to them a fortune.

After both parties have given security, the plaintiff only is allowed to produce his witnesses; the defendant can, when they are called by name, admit or reject their evidence; in almost every case great indulgence being shown in this respect. The plaintiff stating then that he can produce witnesses for his statement, demands a "travelling judge." This judge is furnished by the Ras, usually a common soldier of his guards, on rare occasions an officer. His duty is to collect testimony orally, wherever the question may have arisen, perhaps 300 miles distant. The parties travel with him, mostly on foot, chained, if they have not furnished bail, over this extent of ground, and on his return, he reports from memory all the evidence he has collected by examination of the witnesses of the plaintiff; the defendant may cross-examine these witnesses. The report is generally faithful. The parties are then severally demanded if it be true, and if they assent, final judgment is given; if they differ, or the Chief finds anything suspicious in the case, or if he wishes for more information thereon, they must all start again, and are sometimes kept travelling for a year or more.

It is clear what advantage the rich has over the poor, by bribery or endurance. As for false witnesses it varies in different provinces; in some scarcely known, in others proverbial. If the defendant can expose any flaw in his antagonist's argument or evidence, even if accidental, he triumphs at once. An Abyssinian suit is much more a trial of wordy skill than an elucidation of the truth, and the reason is obvious, from the system of "Daignanet" judgment in all tribunals save the highest. This is the sum paid by the losing party to the judge, whether military or civil, and large according to the importance of the case. This is occasionally a safeguard to the poor, inasmuch as it is the interest of the judge to decide against the one that can afford to pay, when other reasons, such as fear or bribery, do not outweigh this. The sum is arbitrary; and the only check upon their rapacity is the fear that if too exacting, the country people will cease to dispute, or will decide all cases before elders or friends. Moreover the Judge has certain perquisites, varying as usual in each province; on each slip of the tongue, on each oath that is taken on the Gospel, nay, even should excitement cause a movement of the hand or a change of position during the pleadings; besides this, his retainers gain by messages, by bribery, and many other ways: it is therefore obviously his interest that each case should endure as long as possible, even if he be disposed to give a just decision in the end.

There being no police, it may seem curious how any offender is brought to justice, but in ordinary cases this is easy, although a daring and decided criminal has generally little difficulty in escaping. In a strong case, as that of public manslaughter, the bystanders will seize the homicide, not to give a pretext to the chief for levying heavy fines on the village or district, and deliver him over to the authorities, and so on with other serious and criminal cases. In small affairs, such as a sudden dispute on the high road, the meeting of an absconded debtor, or any civil matter, the first decent person to be found is obliged to act as a temporary judge, if adjured by the "death of the chief" paramount. He must then place the accused in bonds, which is done by tying his cloth to that of his accuser, and escort or send them to the nearest magistrate, who, should the accused demand it, must in like manner forward him to his immediate master or chief, where the case is first heard, the plaintiff having right of appeal; the law in this being however highly favourable to the defendant, the plaintiff not being always disposed for a long journey.

Their code of laws is a bad translation from the code of Justinian; three parts of it being occupied with church affairs and regulations. and a small portion only with the civil and criminal law, this latter being also much mixed up with the institutions of the Pentateuch. Bad as it is there are probably not twenty persons

in the country that are conversant with it; and some singular judgments are given on its authority, much after the fashion of the "Sortes Virgilianæ." Though it is consulted with much ceremony, and considered a sacred volume, law is in fact simplified to the will of the chief. Still the fact of there being a written law has assisted in retarding the degradation of the people.

Usury is permitted according to the agreement of the parties, but is checked in practice, and has no ill results from the merciful nature of the law for debt. It is generally ruled that a debtor shall pay small sums according to his means, and he cannot be kept in durance when he has nothing. Affairs of this kind, however, are generally on so small a scale that they are settled by arbitration.

The institution of elders that I have alluded to is not perhaps conducive to discipline, but in the existing uncertainty of the law is well worthy of notice, and agreeable to witness. The decision of these elders cannot be reversed by any judge as both parties solemnly agree that it shall be final; it costs them nothing, and such arbitration is seldom refused, even by the most testy, urged as it generally is in the most good-tempered manner. Their mediation can be employed in every case where blood has not been drawn. Should any of these men be by on the commencement of a dispute, they separate the angry, and after patient investigation give their opinion, and decide the amount of compensation. The decision is usually considered sufficient, and it is a point of honour for the triumphant party not to receive the fine awarded. The conclusion is that the disputants should demand pardon of each other, and accord a mutual forgiveness, which is generally cordial and hearty. This system would scarcely succeed amidst the complicated interests of civilized society, or with the enduring energy of European passions, but it is to me a redeeming trait in the Abyssinian character. It prevents crime and tumult more than their military law; it carries out the precepts of the Gospel; and I cannot believe that the nation practising it merits no better name than savage. Wife and husband, father and son, brother and brother are either reconciled in this way, or if that be found impossible, separated with amenity; and the custom being bowed to by the highest equally with the lowest, the asperities caused by the inefficiency of the law are much softened. These peacemakers are not appointed by any Government but by common consent: the influential and wealthy inhabitant, the good tempered, the most moral, and particularly the aged, take the office on themselves. This custom, though universally accepted by the Abyssinians, Christian and Mahomedan, is of more weight in the Amhara country than in Teegray, owing to the greater good temper and good sense of the former people.

The office of a judge is rather to settle and profit by disputes brought before him than to punish offences against the law. In case of murder, for instance, unless the victim has some relative, who acting as accuser, seizes the homicide himself, proves the crime, and is ready to slay him with his own hand, the culprit will be untouched; justice furnishing neither accuser nor executioner. The said relative may also compound the matter for money at his pleasure, the judge receiving a similar sum. Add to this the numerous means of escape by joining the first band of robbers, or any rebel chief, or taking sanctuary in the nearest church, and the insecurity to life is easily accounted for.

In the absence of police, should you seize a robber with your own hand, and in so doing inflict on him a fatal injury, however flagrant may have been his guilt, the relatives of the man, everywhere save in Godjam, will demand from justice the right to put you to death in cold blood, so rigidly is the Mosaic law of "blood for blood" interpreted, save when the rare good sense of some chief induces him to interpose an arbitrary veto.

Insufficient and embarrassing as are the Abyssinian laws, it would be well if even these were always observed. No sooner has a chief turned his back on a distant expedition, than the whole population seizes the occasion for settling private grudges, whilst those who have no particular quarrel amuse themselves by indiscriminate robbery, or by making incursions against weaker barbarians by a republican levy. These disorders may cease on the return of the chief, but inquiry is seldom made, or punishment inflicted. Even in times of comparative tranquillity travellers are obliged to be well armed to insure their safety; and in periods of disturbance the roads are in a state of blockade, save to large parties of armed merchants.

Strangers of any nation or creed, are freely permitted to settle in Abyssinia, and to purchase land or houses. They have the same rights as other inhabitants, being also subject to the same liabilities. The Abyssinians in general and the

chiefs are more jealous of those who pass through their country than of those who remain in it; but if Europeans were to settle in any numbers it is probable that fear would induce suspicion. It is this theoretical equality of all foreigners in the eye of the law, as well as of Abyssinians of all grades with each other, that renders it difficult for the mass to understand the immunities of a Consul or other officer; though the chiefs comprehend it when they choose to lay aside their affectation of superiority. In most cases there is nothing that delights the Abyssinian more than to assert his equality with the white stranger, and to bring him before a court of justice; the latter being, however, sure of a lenient, often of a most favourable, construction.

The great chiefs inflict the punishment of death, but rarely, except in cases of repeated opposition or rebellion. More frequently the hands and feet are lopped off, or eyes, tongues, or ears mutilated. Dangerous political opponents are chained often for life in a mountain fort; but chains are in no case considered as a punishment, but merely as used for security. The most frequent penalty used indiscriminately towards all ranks and classes of the community is flogging; this is performed with the ox-whip, and is very severe, but no disgrace is attached to its infliction.

The wasteful government of a military oligarchy, the incessant struggles for mastery, and uncertain tenure of all power, the careless sensuality of the chiefs, the wretched administration of the law, the utter decay of learning, and the selfish corruption of the priesthood, have ruined a nation that has suffered little from national convulsions or foreign conquest. Individuals are found who feel that their nationality is lost, that internal feuds are fast dissolving them into petty tribes as savage as their neighbours, and that their chiefs still claiming the high sounding title of kings, are no better than powerful robbers. But it is to be feared that this decay cannot be checked by any efforts of their own, and that the boast of the Mahomedan, who points at the few remaining Christian provinces for his, will be verified.

Dejaj Oobeay, governing Teegray and all the provinces to the north of Gondar, in independent state, save a yearly tribute to the Ras Ali, and the latter being, apparently, lord paramount of Abyssinia, having blockaded his last enemy in a mountain stronghold in the south of Godjam during five years, and reduced him to extremity, matters appeared to have some chance of a pacific settlement under one ruler, when an unforeseen and sudden storm destroyed these hopes, and plunged the land once more into a confusion as great as had followed the dethronement of the Royal Dynasty.

A chief named Kasai, having great family influence in the provinces bordering on Sennaar, forced his way by the sword into some notoriety, and married the daughter of the Ras Ali. Of a proud and impatient spirit, after alternate rebellion and submission, and having defeated in numerous battles all the troops that were sent against him, he at last threw off all mask, and openly defied the Ras Ali and his adherents. Having in some measure disciplined his troops, for the first time in this country, by the assistance of a few Turkish soldiers, he suddenly appeared, after extraordinary forced marches, in the neighbourhood of the Ras' blockading camp, and fairly challenged him to the combat on the plains of Godjam, favourable as they are for cavalry, the Ras's pride.

A pitched battle took place, in which the Ras was completely defeated, and barely escaped, hotly pursued by his adversary. In a second battle he was entirely driven from the territories conquered by Gooksa, and forced to take refuge in his natal province of Edjo. Dejaj Oobeay, in the north, had not even gained time to collect his troops when Kasai threatened him with his whole force, and obliged him to fly to his hill-fort in great fear. The victory, however, obtained by Kasai over the Ras had set free the daring chieftain Birro, son of Gosho, from his mountain; and the latter, to add to the complication, enemy as he was of the Ras, had a still more deadly feud with Kasai, on account of his father's death, slain in battle by the latter.

Kasai, therefore, patched up a temporary peace with Oobeay, and hurried to meet this formidable rival; since when all parties have feared to enter into decisive conflict. A chief of the Teegray Dynasty, Balgud Areya, had taken advantage of the confusion to raise the standard of revolt against Oobeay, but the return of this latter has, for the present, repressed any serious disturbances. Affairs now stand in a singular position: the Ras Ali has returned to Devra Tabor, but without any power beyond the range of his foragers. Dejaj Kasai and Dejaj Birro threaten

each other in Godjam, with large armies, not having yet dared the encounter; and Dejaj Oobeay has reoccupied Teegray, after having seen by how feeble a grasp he holds his power. Numerous other chiefs have all their faculties on the alert to seize any chance that may offer; and it is difficult to say in whose hands the reins of power may finally remain. In the meantime it is certain that the roads are unsafe, commerce checked, justice paralyzed, and diplomatic relations impossible; and it would be idle to hope that the anarchy consequent on these events will soon cease.

Some notice of the character of the four principal competitors in the present struggle may be useful hereafter.

Ras Ali is a humane man, very vain, too indulgent, but intelligent, agreeable in his manners, brave, averse to change, and of a very whimsical character, affecting, and, I believe, feeling great indifference to most things, including his own power. He is very difficult to lead, as he has no prominent passion to work upon, and will admire no idea that does not appear, at least, to emanate from himself. He does not care for flattery, is not ambitious, has no pride, is indifferent to reputation, and can by no means be excited to anger. Good-natured selfishness is his principal characteristic.

Dejaj Oobeay is acute, inflated with pride, far-seeing, and ambitious; disagreeable and overbearing in manner, but straightforward and decided in business. He is cowardly in person, but morally brave, very observing, grave; cruel when he deems it necessary, but not wantonly, and liberal. He is much more feared than the Ras; but being proud and susceptible, is far more easy to deal with, some caution being, however, necessary, as, when roused, he is capable of any extremities.

Dejaj Birro, of Godjam, is the most remarkable, perhaps, of these chiefs; as proud as Lucifer, of surprising talent and penetration, daring, patient, resolute; he has a wonderful command over men's minds for love or fear; he is cruel, reserved in public matters, yet personally gay, noble in appearance, profusely generous, and fond of splendour. His untaught intellect may vie with a high European standard; and had his lot been cast in Teegray, where he might have had communication with us, he would, perhaps, have been the regenerator of his country. With but a small province he has preserved his independence; but there his efforts must end, and all his abilities be consumed in ceaseless wars and harassing intrigues, both the delight of his fertile and brilliant mind. His father, Gosho, who lately fell in battle, had well earned the title of "Father of the white men," by his conduct towards the few that enjoyed his society, or were obliged to his unbounded kindness.

Dejaj Kasai is vigorous and subtle, daring to a fault, and, perhaps, more disposed to innovation than any. He has abolished in his army the practice of mutilating dead bodies; taught his soldiers some discipline, makes war without baggage or camp-followers, and encourages foreigners. Though proud, his manner is all humility; he is severe, liberal, and usually just, but breaks out now and then into unaccountable acts of violence, which indicate a somewhat unsettled temperament; he commences enterprises with more vigour than he pursues them, and is much under the influence of prophets and fortune-tellers.

Should any one of these four chiefs attain supreme power, I do not think that he will have the courage to attempt that radical change in their feudal system which must precede all reform, all hopes of order, or of useful foreign alliance. Upon the whole, Dejaj Kasai would be, I think, the most desirable.

The Slave Trade is carried on by the Mahomedans alone. Christians buy for domestic purposes, but are not permitted to sell, and the penalty of death by hanging is affixed to the act of selling a Christian child. Slaves, so-called in Abyssinia, are of two races, Gallas and Shankallas. In Egypt and Turkey the Abyssinians themselves are ranked in the same category. The Gallas are the most valued,—the boys for their intelligence, and the girls for their beauty. The Gallas are sold by their despotic Kings in the territories of Enarea and Djimma; but amongst the Republican Gallas no trade is carried on, save when poverty accepts the gold of the merchant; and even this is unheard of amongst the proud Gallas of Azobo, though so near to Massowah. Female prisoners taken in their constant raids are also sold, the male being never spared on those occasions. The Shankallas are all taken by predatory expeditions; and on such occasions the soldiers are sometimes, though rarely, permitted by an Abyssinian chief to sell their booty.

The Gallas seem to adopt the religion of Islam with a fierce avidity, and look

back to their own country with an affected contempt, too proud to acknowledge their love for the beautiful land they may no more hope to see. It is singular to see how readily they agree with those who have torn them from their homes, and how they hate the Christian who has never harmed them.

The Shankallas are generally indifferent as to their creed, and very susceptible of kind treatment. They look back with longing to their own land, and often women, as well as men, effect the most hazardous escapes. They seldom become fanatical in the new faith imposed on them. All slaves that are brought to the Red Sea are usually well treated on the road, and the only cruelty practised is when a brutal master, for love of gain, prepares some unfortunate boys to guard the Turkish seraglios, tripling their market value. Those who follow the course of the White Nile, or by Gondar to Khartoum, through countries where water is scarce, undergo great hardships, and perish in numbers. The Gallas being purchased for a few beads in the interior, this traffic is very lucrative.

The Abyssinians are very sensitive to the suspicion of being born of, or descended from what they are pleased to call a slave, having a shrewd idea of the absurdity of such an appellation from themselves; and since the conquest of Begemder by Ras Gooksa, the Gallas of Edjo and Worrahaimano have been counted as citizens; these, moreover, having fully adopted the Mahomedan faith, and performing duly their pilgrimage to Mecca, are excepted by the dealers.

These latter, however, never omit an opportunity of stealing infants of any creed; and near the coast a regular trade is in this manner carried on by means of the Shihos, who declare that it is lawful for them thus to supply the market, the custom having been bequeathed to them by their fathers.

A firman by the Sultan Abd-el-Medjid was lately publicly read in Massowah, for form's sake, whereby the sale or reception of stolen Christian children was prohibited; as a matter of course, the Consuls were not informed of this, and equally of course, no steps being taken to enforce the order, it was disobeyed the same day, and totally forgotten in three.

The most important of the other races that occupy this portion of Africa is the Galla. These Gallas have, at different periods, for some hundred years past, seized upon the most fertile provinces of the ancient Empire of Abyssinia, and have spread themselves from the Red Sea and the Blue Nile to the equator. They are divided into numerous tribes, having the one common characteristic of being undaunted horsemen. So strong is this propensity, that the tribe of Azobo Gallas, who occupy a territory between Teegray and the Red Sea, purchase horses from the colder provinces of Worrahaimano and Wallo, and mount 10,000 horse, in a district unfavourable to the existence of the animal, and where it is never bred.

Could these tribes 50 or 60 in number, unite, nothing could withstand their numbers and impetuosity, and they would trample under foot, like a Scythian host, all the land as far as Khartoom; but, occupied as they are by intestine wars, there is little probability of such a torrent, unless a Chief should arise amongst them like Mohamed Gryne, that famous warrior, who led the armies of Adaiel, renowned for strength and swiftness of foot, even to the vicinity of Gondar; and would 350 years since, have extinguished the Abyssinian name and faith, but for the timely succour of Portuguese skill and valour.

The southernmost provinces of the Galla, Enarea, Djimma, Goma, and others, are governed despotically by their several chiefs, and supply, by arbitrary coercion, slaves for the Turkish market. The Tribes bordering on Abyssinia are nearly all Republics of the purest description, and do not engage in that Traffic. South of those Gallas are Kingdoms of Djindjero, Kaffa, and Worata, each having a different language. The people of Djindjero are uncouth in feature, and rude in manners. This province was probably the boundary of the Portugese trade from Melinda; and the report is prevalent amongst the Gallas that cannibalism is still practised in those parts, as it certainly is by their neighbours on the confines of Zanzibar. They are said to be very numerous and brave; they have something of the Malay feature; they are Pagans, but little is known of their habits or ceremonies.

Kaffa is a wealthy and fertile kingdom; the inhabitants are proud and handsome; the women often fair and very beautiful—even in slavery they are remarkable for independence and hauteur. They still retain a recollection and traces of the Christian faith, and still venerate the ruins of their churches. The Galla with whom they are incessantly at war call them, in derision, "Sydama,"

originally signifying Christian; and it appears that, being a numerous and warlike tribe, when abandoned by the receding limits of Abyssinian dominion, they must have been strong enough to repel the tide of Galla invasion. It is said, moreover, that they ardently desire priests and instruction in their ancient faith—forgotten, save by name. It is to this point that a special mission of the Church of Rome is now directed; and they hope, with some reason, to establish a hierarchy in that distant land. So little intelligence can be obtained of any tribes to the southward of these, that I am tempted to believe that towards the Equator there must be large tracts of uninhabited mountains and impenetrable forests.

The province of Worata is south-west from Enarea, and extends, I believe, to the White Nile, about the point where the expeditions of Mohamed Ali stopped, and where there is a large mart for traders from Sennaar. This route is, however, practicable only for the Arabs of Sennaar, who are fever-proof, and are received as brethren by the fierce nations that line the banks of the great river.

The despots of Enarea, &c., govern their tribes with absolute sway; life and death are in their will; and when in want of money they cut off the heads of some of their poorer subjects, and sell the whole family into slavery. The King of Enarea monopolizes the breed of the civet-cat, possessing about 3,000, and is thus very wealthy. Feasting, hunting, and war are the occupations of the King and his nobles; while the rich crops, produced with little labour, and the abundance of pasture, combine to cheapen all the necessaries and some of the luxuries of life, and diffuse an air of general prosperity throughout the country.

The Gallas of a district named Follo pay a heavy tax to the King of Djimma, for permission to purchase boys, and prepare them as eunuchs for the Turkish harems; the Gallas in general looking on this practice with disgust, and being seldom guilty of it, though very lucrative.

It is in the immense forests on the banks of the Deedaysa—a larger tributary of the White Nile than even the Abbai—that the finest ivory is found. Herds of buffaloes abound; and there the black panther, the fiercest and most beautiful of animals, is slain for his skin, highly prized, even where most abundant.

Amongst the Republican Gallas, taxes are unknown; and each man is lord of his hut and the plot of ground before it, inherited from his ancestors; he acknowledges no law; owes no military service; and in a general assembly, held in the open air, each one, with his horse's bridle on his arm, and scouts watching for the enemy, may freely offer his opinion. Fighting is his delight and daily occupation; and scenes recounted of the Trojan war may be seen daily enacted, apart the luxuries of gold and chariots, amongst a race not deficient in chivalric courage. Every man who can afford to buy a horse is a warrior; and each warrior armed, sallies forth daily to protect his crops or his castle. When the cry resounds that the enemy is in sight, those who have lingered at home fling themselves into the saddle, and gallop to the contest, with more or less speed, according to their love of honour or their fear of death.

The Gallas are noble in appearance, more grave and thoughtful than the Abyssinian, eloquent, strong, and generally handsome; with the pride of a nation of warriors, but very courteous and amenable to reason. Their women are not concealed, and mix freely in society; they are often beautiful—almost always graceful; liberal of their smiles and favours to the brave, and scorning the coward. I have heard that those tribes to the southward are more chaste than these Republicans, but I much doubt if they anywhere attach a particular value to the exercise of that virtue. Each Galla takes as many wives as he can afford to keep. Their features when unmixed with other races, are European. They have no religion, but, without being conscious of it, retains some forms of Christianity, as fasting once in the year, observing the feast of the Cross and other. They perform also some rude pagan rites, and have a superstitious veneration for certain large trees, to which they sacrifice animals. One word serves for God and sky; and while they believe that a Supreme Being created them and the world, and orders everything according to his will, they have not the least idea of the immortality of the soul, nor any credence of a future state. In the monarchical provinces the faith of Mahomed has made much progress, and the Roman Catholics are making a vigorous effort to plant the religion of Christ amongst those other Gallas who are on their road to Kaffa. As these races have, as yet, no priesthood to blind them, and no strong prejudices to render them deaf, the chances of success are considerable.

Smiling as is the climate and fertile the soil of Christian Abyssinia, nature has

been still more bountiful to the Gallas. Green meadows, rich cultivation, troops of horses and brood mares, lofty trees at intervals with magnificent spreading foliage, gentle undulations of hill and dale, a serene air unpolluted save in Enarea by large towns, cleanly and picturesque huts studding the whole landscape, and a salubrity proved by the aspect of both sexes—such are some of the features of these charming lands; and many a scene of pastoral beauty, of bright streams and lowing herds, is daily defaced by the trampling hoofs of charging horse, and the bloodshed of combats where no quarter is given, and no result obtained.

The southern bank of the immense valley of the Nile is in the hands of the Gallas, and divided throughout its length into many districts; the difficult passes and steep precipices present an inverse resemblance to a strong mountain country. The inhabitants are usually at peace with the Abyssinian lowlanders immediately opposite, and at feud with all others. The Christianity and paganism of the two races are becoming gradually blended; their languages are spoken indifferently; markets are weekly frequented on either side of the river; intermarriage is common, and these relatives and neighbours alternately hold revelry and meet in mortal fight. Through the bottom of this valley (an isolated kingdom) the Abbai forces a tumultuous passage, receiving many tributaries from either side, till it swells with its flood the White Nile at Khartoom. The bed of the river is from 2,000 to 3,000 feet below the level of Godjam; the soil is singularly productive, though the ravages of fever balance the advantage.

All the Gallas speak the same langurge with slight variations; it is unwritten, and bears no resemblance to Ethiopic, Amharic, or any tongue with which I am acquainted; it is soft and pleasing in sound, but limited.

Following the course of the Abbai northwards from the Enarea caravan road, which passes through the province of Gooderoo opposite to Basso on the Abyssinian side, are the Provinces of Horro, Amoro, and Shinna.

The Amoro Gallas are the most distinguished of all this race for courage, stature, ferocity, and hatred of the Christian name. The commerce with this district is carried on entirely by Mahometans; though nearly all the principal families of Damot and Agowmiddur (where is the source of the Blue Nile discovered by Bruce), acknowledge their origin from this tribe, and are now under Christian rule.

The Shinna Gallas do not come in contact with the Abyssinians, the Abbai taking there a westerly slope; a large extent of plain intervenes, occupied by negro races called Shankalla, and the Galla tribes cease in that direction. Further along the course of the Blue Nile, mingled with these Shankalla are found the Shageyas, who submitted, after many a bloody struggle, to the discipline of the Egyptian armies; and the unconquered Shiloks, who still defy them, and who, if description be true, must be one of the handsomest and finest of African races. I may notice here that there is a rumour amongst the Gallas and others that a white race exists somewhere in the interior; I do not think it at all unlikely that the report has some foundation.

Passing from Gooderoo eastward, and then northward along the banks of the Abbai, the Provinces of Koottai, Jarso, and some others, are still republicans; and the horsemen of Jarso, calculated at 20,000, have set at defiance every effort of the Abyssinian rulers to impose even a slight tribute. The King of Shoa is, however, making large strides in that direction from the eastward, and is much feared by the Gallas in general. On the eastern boundary of Godjam, the Abbai still dividing them, is the vast territory of the Borona Gallas; their Chief, Ali Wedajoo, has established nearly a despotic authority, and with his numerous cavalry keeps at bay the King of Shoa, and meets on equal terms the armies of Northern Abyssinia. The Boronas are pagans, and call themselves Christians, though in what their faith consists it would be difficult to say. Their northern frontier is occupied by the most formidable of the Galla races, the Wallo. Here brown heaths and chilling fogs mark an elevation of 12,000 to 13,000 feet above the the sea-level, and the hardy mountaineers, who have engrafted the faith of Islam and the fanaticism of its followers on their native ferocity, wages pitiless war with the King of Shoa and the Borona Gallas, the Abyssinians of the province of Amhara, and the Gallas of Worrahaimano and Worrakallo, their northern boundary. They have placed themselves under five or six chiefs, distinguished for valour or sagacity, and in case of a formidable invasion sometimes unite their forces.

In general, however, they are always fighting with each other; or, as one told me, it is their daily meal. There is still much freedom in their institutions, and their

chiefs dare not attempt any arbitrary act. Here, as amongst the Arabs, are found men who have sworn never to fly, and who often suffer a cruel death at the hands of the Shoa Christians, as merciless as they are cowardly, when taken on the field. Though blood-thirsty, they are honest and hospitable in the extreme, but should never be tempted by the sight of fire-arms, for which they have an uncontrollable desire.

The Gallas of Worrahaimano, Worrakallo, and Edjo are all Mahomedans, though some Abyssinian Christians still retain their lands here, as in the monastery in an island of the Lake Haik, in the province of Tehuladerree. The present Ras of Begemder having sprung from these tribes, they have become in a measure incorporated with the Abyssinians, and all speak the Amharic language. Their singular tournaments I have elsewhere mentioned. North-east of these follow the Areya Gallas; and northernmost of all the Gallas of Azobo, betwixt the provinces of Inderta and Wojjerat, in Teegray, and the Red Sea, from which tribe they are only divided by the tribe called Danakil. These Gallas are constantly at feud with the inhabitants of Teegray, whose chiefs have in vain attempted to subdue them. They are republican, and have a similar character to all the others, though almost isolated. They have not yet become Mahomedan.

From the Shinna Gallas, west of Damot, to the Gallas of Azobo, east of Teegray, this race sweeps round Abyssinia in an unbroken semicircle, dividing it from its cognate Kingdom of Shoa, and waging with its inhabitants at all points continual war. Had it not been for the introduction of fire-arms by the Portuguese, the whole country would long since have been overrun by them, and as they are now beginning to appreciate and adopt those weapons, it is not improbable that they will soon succeed in overwhelming the Abyssinians—a conquest necessarily followed by the introduction of the Mahomedan faith. The Chiefs of Worrahaimano were at one time in correspondence with Mahomed Ali to this end, and now repeat the assurances of the Governor of Massowah, that troops will soon be sent by his master the Sultan, to take possession of Abyssinia, his lawful inheritance.

I have stated that a line of country some seventy miles in breadth or more, separates Christian Abyssinia from the Red Sea, being occupied by more barbarous tribes, and reaching from the Gallas of Azobo to the dominions of Abbas Pasha, north-westerly from Massowah.

The northerly neighbours of the Azobo are the Taltals, lying east of the district of Agamee in Teegray. They are nomades, as all that I have now to describe, and call themselves Mahometans, though their creed is far from orthodox, and I do not suppose that there is one that can read the Koran. It is certain that by their unceasing feud with the Abyssinians, they have acquired a strong hatred of Christians. They eat little or no corn, and never sow; living on milk and the flesh of goats and oxen. These are generally thriving, as they have the benefit of two rainy seasons, and luxuriant pasturage nearly all the year round. The rains of Abyssinia extend to within fifty or sixty miles of the sea in the months of June to September, and the rains of the coast are variable till the end of March from October or November. They are unacquainted with horses, and are remarkable for bodily vigour and speed of foot. In this province are the plains of salt and sulphur that supply all Abyssinia: the road from thence to the sea is nearly a level plain, and the direct port is Amphylla. This was the road that Mr. Salt proposed to open. It was traversed at great risk by an Englishman, Mr. Coffin, who still lives in Abyssinia, and by him alone. The English Government had, I believe, consented, when the death of the Ras Welda Selasee, and subsequently that of Mr. Salt, prevented the further progress of the affair, which was afterwards lost sight of. Mr. Coffin performed this journey, I believe, forty-five years ago.

The Taltals are now treacherous and blood-thirsty, even towards each other; to strangers implacable and dangerous. They are hospitable from pride and custom; but a hospitable reception by no means insures the life of the guest; and when a Taltal enters the hut of his relative, he lays his sabre across his knee, and places his spear and shield ready for his grasp. I attribute something of this fierce character to the heating nature of their diet; and it may be generally observed amongst the tribes who eat no bread. They are impatient of all yoke, and live independent of all law, with here and there a man possessing, like the ancient patriarchs, some influence from age and wealth in flocks and cattle, or in youth from sagacity and daring.

These people scarcely know the value of money, and the Turkish Government

at Massowah of course makes no attempt to encourage any communication. They are therefore totally ignorant of the world without, save the nearest districts of Abyssinia, but under better management would no doubt crowd to the market of Massowah, which is now often unfurnished with the necessaries of life; and their province would soon be as safe to visit as any other part of the country. Their sulphur should form a valuable article for trade, and their territory might be highly cultivated, and would afford much produce for export, besides bread for the inhabitants.

Many years since a small body of Turkish troops were defeated and destroyed to a man by the Taltals of Kherto; having ventured to advance inland from the port of Amphylla. The attempt has never been renewed, and they have no garrison at that place.

The Danakil, who extend along the sea coast for a hundred miles or more, speak a dialect of the Taltal language, and have much the same character, being only poorer, less vigorous, and less courageous than their neighbours of the mountain. Not many years since both these tribes purchased stolen Christian boys, and sacrificed them in some superstitious rite. And although one of their Chiefs assured me that this practice was discontinued, I doubt him much.

Camels are bred in great numbers here, and the cattle and sheep of the Danakil are also numerous and in good condition, but never appear at the Massowah market, though within six hours' sail of a dull craft. Ostriches abound, but are little hunted, fire-arms being totally unknown. Elephants are plentiful, but are only killed by a few Abyssinian hunters, and in small numbers. The wild asses are numerous on the coast, and the zebra is said to exist in the interior, as well as the rhinoceros. The wild ass is sometimes taken in pits, his flesh being highly prized by the Arabs of Yemen as medicinal food.

The salt lake of Boorree, near the coast, formed of a filtered deposit at a lower level than the sea, furnishes that article for consumption to the Shihos, and some provinces of Teegray, but it is not used as a circulating medium.

To the northward of the Taltals is the powerful tribe of Shiho, now divided into two branches, called Assaworta and Torā. Through their territories pass all the roads now in use from Abyssinia to Massowah. Their language is said to bear a close affinity to that of the Adeial, and there are in it many words of Galla origin. Partly through fear of their Abyssinian neighbours, and partly from their love of gain, acquired by being on the direct road for commerce, they suffer merchants or travellers to pass in safety, furnishing guides for a payment proportioned to the wealth of the caravan. The road for fifty miles is in their undisputed possession, and includes lofty mountains and narrow defiles, that only require fire-arms to render them formidable; but though these Shihos are constantly at Massowah, and see the Abyssinian merchants purchase those matchlocks whose force they have often felt, but one instance is, I think, known of one of this tribe possessing a musket.

The mortal fear of innovation afflicts them like all of Abyssinian race, so they invest their money in cows, living miserably that many of these may be slaughtered at their death, and devoured by a weeping assembly upon their tombs. They are scrupulous Mussulmans, not even touching any intoxicating liquor. In keeping faith they are more scrupulous than the Taltals, and a guide who requires and gives the oath of good companionship may be perfectly relied on. Though thieves by profession elsewhere, they seldom steal in their own district; but they are very pestilent beggars, their begging not being confined to those in distress, but practised by the whole tribe, the most wealthy being the most pertinacious, saying it is a right they have inherited from their fathers. They are annoying, but not dangerous, except if any one attempts to pass through their country without a guide, when he will be lucky if he escapes with the loss of his property.

The name of merchant is a scandalous reproach amongst them, and till very lately, agriculturist also. For the last few years they have been attempting to cultivate barley with success; a wonderful step, still limited to a few individuals. They always eat bread when they can obtain it, exchanging the salt of Boorree for the maize of Kalagoozai; with which Province of Teegray they are usually on very good terms. This is a matter of mutual interest, as the cattle of the two districts thus enjoy the benefit of the double rainy season. They are constantly at war with the Taltals with various success. They also live in a republican fashion, with certain elders elected by themselves to settle disputes, and as the pay of the guides goes into a common purse, these elders receive a large portion. Owing to the

influence that riches must always secure, these elections generally fall on the same families, and the office has thus become almost hereditary; but they are obliged to be very careful in exerting their power, and the rest of the tribe lose no occasion of wordily asserting their equality, nor allow any interference in their private affairs.

The Shihos are kidnappers by profession, and avow it openly. Hundreds of Christian children are stolen by them every year; when they can, they sell them secretly at Massowah, if not, they are disposed of at Zeyla, from whence they are sent to Amphylla, and smuggled across to Yemen, if not purchased by the Taltals. Sometimes they are kept until they forget their origin and religion, or become too resigned to demand any change, and are then sold at Massowah as Gallas. These tribes still have a respect for the Naibs of Arkeeko, who kept them in some order till their own power was destroyed by the Turks, who have substituted nothing in its place. Zeyla is a large village about three hours' journey inland from the ancient sea-port of Adoolis, a city probably founded by one of the Ptolemies, opposite the Island of Dissee, purchased by Lord Valentia. The ruins of Adoolis are visible. The proper pronunciation of Zeyla may be written thus in German, "Zühla." Its inhabitants pay a small sum occasionally to the Turks, perhaps a hundred dollars, when threatened, and are then left to smuggle and govern themselves as they please. The Shihos have no camels, and are not so rich as the Taltals, being also less fierce and intractable.

On the plains betwixt the Shihos and the sea are the Bedouins; their name is somewhat used as a term of contempt, as though one should say the "wanderers" or "miserables." These tribes, though unwarlike, are numerous; but as all their many enemies are superior to them in force, and as they have no strongholds for retreat in their level country, resignation or flight are their first and last resource under all difficulties. These, like the flying-fish, are preyed on by all. Paying a small revenue to the Turkish Pasha, who, after extorting what he can from their poverty, does not pretend to protect them, plundered or slain by the Abyssinian Chiefs whenever leisure or the prospect of booty invites them, and frequently beholding their flocks and herds harried by the Shihos, or the peasants of Hamazayn, they have little repose and no profit. Their days are few and evil, being passed in poverty. degradation, and toil; and when old they are sent by their younger relatives to guard the goats or camels, until death finds them at the task. To these evils they oppose a patient stupidity worthy of their own camels, and the fatalism of their creed; they have moreover by nature so gay a temperament, that dance and song are for ever resounding through their villages. They are not ashamed to work, and are far more useful than all their conceited neighbours.

This race is the only one in these parts willing to submit to any government, and demanding only protection and tranquillity; acknowledging at once Turk, Naib, or Abyssinian, king or kaiser, as they may offer; they not unfrequently add a sigh in wishing for the mild equity of the English, having, in spite of Turkish jealousy, heard fabulous tales of the splendour of Aden under our rule.

With the exception of some villages on the coast that serve as a rendezvous for the small traders who supply the Island of Massowah with provisions, and whose inhabitants supply by their camels, wood, grass, and other necessaries, they are in general a wandering race, camping wherever pasturage is to be found, and stretching as far as Hamazayn when permitted. The constant exactions of the Turks, if they have impoverished, have at least rendered them mild; and I scarcely think that, had they as much courage and independence as the adjacent tribes, they would be much better; as it is, they are inoffensive and invaluable as a labouring class.

The language of the Bedouins, as of the natives of Massowah, is a corruption from the ancient Geez, with a large infusion of Arabic. Infanticide is common among them, and spoken of with indifference. The Turkish Pasha of course does not interfere, as his revenues are not affected. The practice is confined, I believe, to their illegitimate children.

Passing on to the northward from the Shihos and Bedouins, we arrive at the last relics of the ancient sway of Abyssinia; shattered and separated from that realm and from each other, the tribes of Memsa, Senhāit, Hallal, Māira (a corruption from Mary or Mariam), the Hābāb and their subdivisions. All these tribes ar shepherds within their own limits, eat not bread, do not cultivate the ground except in Senhāit, are all robbers beyond their own district, and of course are constantly at war with each other.

They are far more wealthy than the Bedouins, possessing numerous camels, herds, and flocks that whiten all the ground. The soil, generally adapted for the richest produce, is left barren from the insecure tenure of all property, and the fact that Senhāit is almost yearly plundered from the attraction of its harvests, is not calculated to stimulate the rest to husbandry. These tribes not having felt directly the pressure or blessing of a Mahomedan government, and being abandoned and regarded as savages, fit only to be despoiled by their brethren in Abyssinia, their religion partakes of the indefinite character of their position; their language is, however, perhaps the purest dialect of the Geez now spoken, not excepting Teegray. They call themselves almost indifferently Christians or Mahomedans, have no scruples regarding their butcher, do not fast with either party, and a Christian may be found bearing the name of Ali, a reputed Mussulman that of George or Paul. A half-ruined church still appears here and there, seeming singularly out of place, but no priest capable of reading or who knows anything of the faith he professes. In some districts, as Māira, the Koran having slightly the ascendant, Sheiks, and Fokeras predominate, and doubtless the latter will win the day, as the Abyssinian armies regularly ravage and slay their weaker brethren, who are consequently beginning to hate the name of Christianity, which they only see accompanied by fire and sword.

Of all these tribes the three families of Hābāb are the most powerful and warlike; their territory extends all along the coast, from the confines of the Bedouins, about eighty or ninety miles north of Massowah, to Aggeek, which is the boundary between the Sultan and the Pasha of Egypt. The breadth of this province, from the coast to the river Ansubba, is about sixty to eighty miles, and embraces a great variety of climate and elevation. The tribes of Hallal and Māira occupy a bold range of mountains that stretches out to the northward like a spur from Hamazayn between the deep valleys of Ansubba and Barka. Memsa, Biddayl, and other small districts are nearer to Abyssinia, and are remorselessly plundered by all parties.

The province of Billayn, on the western bank of the Ansubba, comprises the districts of Mogos, Senhāit, Mugari, Beejook, Halhal, and others; its inhabitants speak the language of the Agows of Lasta; but no tradition is preserved respecting the period or the manner of their separation from the present tribe.

This province may be considered as the frontier of Modern Abyssinia in this direction; but the race of the Beni Ameer, that occupies all the low countries and the whole length of the torrent Barka, is also undeniably of Teegray origin, though called Arab by the Egyptian Governors of Taka.

The Beni Ameers do not know a word of Arabic, but speak a dialect of the Geez. Having no mountains to retire to, and being thus exposed to all attacks, they have adopted the Mussulman creed, and now pay tribute to Egypt. They still, however, think themselves entitled to the privilege of private war, and make expeditions against the Christians of Billayn.

Halhal, the northernmost district of Billayn, has been on several occasions ravaged by the Egyptian troops, the villages destroyed, and the women and children sold into slavery; unassisted by their natural ruler, the Chief of Teegray, and having no refuge, it is now five years since they declared themselves Mahomedans. The divisions of Mogos, Senhāit, Beejook, and all the others nearer Hamazayn, still hold out after having been twice plundered; the details of the last expedition have been furnished in my despatches.

They are still resolute to retain the religion of their fathers; and with our assistance the boundary of Mussulman invasion may at least be fixed here.

On the eastern bank of the Ansubba, opposite to Māira, the district called Aseguddee Bukla is now possessed by the Hābābs. This was anciently the seat of an Abyssinian Governor, whose sway extended to Sowakin, and heaps of ruin still exist, but without any inscriptions or other data.

The Hābābs as I have said are converted, and are nominally ruled by the Pasha of Massowah, but are in reality quite independent.

Several chiefs of these tribes have said to me that they would gladly resume their ancient creed were they assured of protection by the occupation of Massowah by a Christian Power. All parties and all religions in this part of Africa unite in their cordial detestation of the Turks.

To the southward, and on the same spur of mountains, adjoining to Hamazayn, the province of Memsa is exposed to the same dangers as Mogos. On the one hand, the troops of Massowah are close at hand; on the other the River Ansubba affords an easy access to those of Taka.

Unless we interfere, this district will soon be rent from the Christian commu-

nity; Dejaj Obbeay being unable to defend these distant outskirts of his dominions. If assured of protection, a few intelligent teachers might soon infuse sounder moral notions into the breasts of the rising generation, and no strong prejudices or associations of cunning priests would here obstruct their efforts as in Abyssinia Central.

Memsa is so elevated as to produce excellent wheat and barley. In Mogos, maize, Indian corn, and tobacco, are cultivated with success; under better auspices its surface might be covered with vines; and it would produce coffee and spices, the climate being even and temperate. Though the mountains at a distance appear abrupt, excellent levels for roads are everywhere found. Wood and water are abundant. What hidden mineral wealth may exist I am not competent to say. There were two churches in Mogos, one of which has lately been burnt by the Turks; but no officiating priests. An ancient church, dedicated to the Trinity, still exists on the grand mountain of Tsad Amba, the "White Mountain." This rises square and massive from the valley of Barka, and on the summit reside some monks, who alone possess the secret of the ascent; all the roads being overgrown with jungle, and the path in one spot passing, it is said, over a rocking and narrow slab that bridges a fissure of immense depth.

The mountains of Devra Sinai, in Memsa, less rugged and more lofty, is also the site of pious devotion and the abode of several anchorites. Here bright and ample fountains water large meadows of pasture, and are sheltered by enormous masses of stone. In one of these stones, forty feet in diameter, two chambers have been hewn and adapted to the purposes of a church; the holes in the rocks around shelter the hermit from the weather, or are filled with the bones of pilgrims. This spot, and indeed, the greater portion of Memsa, would form a delightful senatorium for residents at Massowah.

These provinces, like all that have been gradually severed from Abyssinia, have no regulated government, and have assumed, from the necessities of their position, a resemblance to the Arab Kabyles. Each tribe, or family, is under some influential man, who, though he cannot order summarily, can generally succeed in persuading, and who is usually the richest and most talented of the race. To him is intrusted the power of inflicting such punishments as the obligations of social life have, by common consent, forced them to adopt, but which, however, are rarely necessary; he also, with other elders, decides disputes regarding property and exercises considerable power, though with no state and a disagreeable amount of vociferation; he also takes care of his own cattle, seldom possessing the luxury of a servant. This latter is, indeed, almost unknown to these simple races, each man depending on the assistance of his children, and regarding them as his truest wealth. One trait is honourable to the inhabitants of Mogos; the highest respect is paid to strangers, not outwardly, but in fact. The Hābābs are proverbially treacherous; and the Beni Ameer were certainly so, till restrained by the strong hand of Egypt.

Three hundred men would be sufficient for the government of all these districts.

The people of Māira are of Bedouin race, and claim kin with those near Massowah; other tribes, as those of Barea and Aliguddee, to the westward of Barka, it would be useless for me here to describe. The Hābābs have, for a long period, been nominally at least submitted to the Massowah Governor; but, I think that the restoration of Halhal, so recently conquered, to its former independence, as a part of the Christian province of Billayn, might be demanded; and that province, with Memsa, should be declared to be a portion of Teegray, under our protection.

The only other race that, on the northern frontier of Abyssinia, intervene between that country and the Arab tribes subject to Egypt, is the Shankalla, partly of negro origin, or Nubian. These Shankallas possess a large and fine tract country between the rivers known in Abyssinia as the Murrub and Takazzee, and called by the Arabs El Gasch and Shayteet; their principal village is on the former torrent, and known as Maidaro or Belga; they have no form of government, each village being quite independent, some elder selected by the rest acting as arbitrator; nor do they even assist each other against a common enemy.

By nature I think they are docile and intelligent; but long-continued enmity and warfare with all the surrounding nations has rendered them as blood-thirsty as the beast of prey that abound in their dense forests. Their hand is truly against every man. In spite of the incessant attacks of Turks, Arabs, and Abyssinians, they are so prolific and tenacious as to retain their native land, and often do they

inflict injuries as great as those they suffer. Patient, strong, and enduring alike of fatigue or hunger, they proceed many days' journey in search of booty or revenge, and often, from their ambush, cut off a whole caravan. No one has yet been able to approach them on terms of friendship, but in my opinion they have the elements of a more social existence abundant amongst them, In the Egyptian provinces I found many Abyssinians, whose country and family I knew, that had been sold into slavery by these Shankallas.

They cultivate the ground and possess cattle and flocks in abundance; they live also in great measure by hunting and on the wild honey that is found in vast quantities. They have in general no idea of trade, but lately have begun to sell ivory through the medium of some neutral Arabs on their frontier, in return receiving chequered calicos and cloths of native manufacture; money is not in use.

On all sides Abyssinia is surrounded by barbarous tribes. The monks who visit Jerusalem conceal or falsify their knowledge of other nations; and the only point at which the merchants can meet with other Christians is at Massowah, during their annual visits; for they are not permitted to cross the sea with their goods; the Turks being also interested in preventing too strict an amity with Europe.

Few Europeans have visited the interior, so that it is not surprising that so vain a nation should have a contempt for the Christian races, equivalent to their ignorance of them. The Turks they utterly despise, and having the advantage of fire-arms in their contests with the Gallas and others, they rate themselves as the first, almost the only, nation. In general they have a faint conception that a few white men exists beyond the sea, on a spot of ground not worth mentioning; but they do not believe that Kings or Kingdoms, fruitful soil or genial climate, are found save in Abyssinia. A few exceptions of intelligent men there certainly are, but these dare not enlighten the rest, and are laughed at if they attempt.

All, even these, are convinced that as a military power, none can approach them. These traits are, it is true, common enough amongst ignorant races, but they are curious, if we consider that no religious differences separate us, and that the stream of pilgrimage, uninterrupted for fifteen centuries, has brought no fertilizing waters of knowledge to this sterile soil. This shows either singular apathy, impenetrable vanity, or sustained deceit; probably all three in pretty equal proportions.

Europe has almost ignored the existence of Abyssinia. The Abyssinians who formerly ruled Yemen and traded to India, were deprived of their conquests by the immediate successors of Mahomed, and, their own sea-coast being soon wrested from them, were shut up in their rugged mountains, before the progress of arms and civilization enabled Europeans to inquire into the affairs of distant nations. Since then no great effort has been made to open a communication, save once for the purpose of establishing the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, which disastrously failed, and the Abyssinian, amidst the abundance of his own country, soon forgot the little he ever knew of others.

It is certain that Europeans are at present but little considered in Abyssinia. An individual, by imitation of their manners, by courage, addresses in warlike exercises, and a perfect knowledge of their language, may gain some influence; but all that is European in manners and dress, often even in ideas, is purely ridiculous in the eyes of this people. For instance, they do not much admire strength of mind or firmness of purpose, even when conjoined with a rare forebearance and suavity. Indeed, the word used by them is also a synonym for obstinate and disagreeable. They admire more a man who yields with courtesy to the entreaties or reasoning of others, whether persuaded or not.

The great difficulty for an European is to steer between too much decision and too much facility. The former will confer on him the appellation of a brute and general dislike; the latter, of a coward, and general disrespect. They themselves having no pride, though much vanity, are very apt to estimate what we call manly spirit or resentment as ridiculous haughtiness. A man who loses his temper is at the mercy of the cool and witty Abyssinian, who (at least the Amhara) will probably overwhelm him with polite excuses; think of him, if he takes that trouble at all, as one without good sense or good manners; wonder what brought him so far from his own country to get in a passion; and then give orders to admit him no more, unless he hopes to profit largely by him. Directly a white man appears,

the chiefs begin to calculate the amount of presents that they may possibly obtain from him, and the best way of extracting them, according to the character of the victim, in divining which they are singularly adroit; and the soldiers, with watery mouths, hope for the day when so rich a booty may become theirs on the highway —a hope which they often express before the party principally concerned. It is no easy task to maintain a dignified position against the combined efforts of ridicule, ill-disguised contempt and unblushing cupidity; and an European envoy, unless strongly supported by a native monarch, can hope to reap little benefit from his mission.

Unhappily the country, a prey to so many masters, offers not this support; and the fall of Ras Ali, who at one time bid fair to obtain a power that might be called sovereign, has again swept away all prospect of stability. Up to the time of Bruce's visit, white men were favoured, provided they did not rouse the enmity of the priesthood by daring to shake the veil of deceit and darkness thrown around the people with so much art; but, though strangers were received well, there was always a reluctance to permit their departure. In later days the chiefs of Teegray, the Ras Welda Selassie and Dejaj Sabagardis, showed themselves friends of progress and entered cordially into the views of Mr. Salt. Death, in both instances, prevented a solid friendship, and probably some lasting fruit.

After these Oobeay, a stranger, conquered Teegray, and adopted a contrary policy. When not contemptuous, he has always been indifferent to foreigners, nor would he listen to tales of improvement and innovation. During this period, the general idea has been to profit by our purses, and to reject all serious purpose or prospect of future benefit. Sometimes, through incredulity or indifference, more often from a sense of the uncertain duration of their own power, the Ras Ali had good intentions; but sure of nothing beyond his own camp, accustomed to temporize, and govern by policy rather than vigour, he could do little, even in Christian Abyssinia, to assure the position of an Envoy or Consul—nearer the coast, nothing. It is evident that some means must be found, if possible, to furnish the majority of the nation with a more clear idea of the weight of our enmity, the value of our friendship, and the reality of our advances; to render the wild tribes between Abyssinia and the coast amenable to some authority, and to raise the Turkish blockade at Massowah. These results are only to be obtained by a nearer approach which shall place the Abyssinian in daily contact with the European. It remains, to be seen if such approximation be feasible.

As the route viâ Sennaar to Egypt does not concern us at present, though at some not distant period it may, the facilities afforded by the Indian Ocean or the Red Sea must be examined.

The Red Sea, from Suez to the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, is a Turkish lake, and the Turks have possession of every harbour worth mentioning on either shore. On the African coast they have garrisons at Sowakin, Aggeek, and Massowah, the only harbours where ships can lie in comfort and safety; some intervening ports may be found, but these can only shelter Arab boats, and are not worth the consideration of an European Power. I consider the harbour of Portuguese Bay, as it is commonly called, one mile and a-half north from Massowah, as included under that name.

Massowah is, from its position, the natural outlet for Abyssinian commerce in the Red Sea and the only one.

Amphylla, sixty miles to the southward, is a bad roadstead, and a worse landscape; very unfavourable to shipment of goods, and with little water, and of bad quality. This would otherwise, after some trouble with the fierce tribe of Taltals, be the nearest point to Teegray; and when these were subdued might be rendered the depôt of Abyssinian commerce. But the disadvantages are insurmountable, and the Turkish Government claims the whole coast. Of the arrangement between the British Government and the Ras Welda Selassee respecting Amphylla, proposed by Mr. Salt many years since, and I believe partially agreed upon, the Foreign Office will probable furnish more exact records than my hearsay.

It is my distinct opinion that whoever possesses Massowah can command the whole commerce of Abyssinia and the Gallas, in the Red Sea; Teylay, in the Indian Ocean, being the only other port worth consideration, but this latter does not bring the European so closely in contact with Christian and friendly tribes.

The Egyptian Government along the northern frontier of Abyssinia at least merits the name, and rules, in some order and tranquillity, many ferocious and treacherous Arab tribes; but the Turkish Government at Massowah, dependent on Constantinople, of which I have now to speak, is not a Government but a blockade

just sufficient to prevent others from enjoying that which itself cannot pretend to profit by, and to maintain a condition of hopeless stagnation in all the surrounding provinces.

The right of Turkey to Massowah is, so far as ancient conquest can confer it, indisputable; but their right to anything beyond the island is more to be doubted. The Sultan Selim sent his fleets and armies beyond Bab-el-Mandeb, occupied Massowah, and built a fort at Dohono; Aden also receiving a Turkish garrison. When the Empire grew weaker, the troops were withdrawn from all these places; Aden was taken possession of by an Arab Chief, and Massowah by the Naibs or lieutenants, a powerful family, originally dependent on the Emperors of Abyssinia, who, having partially shaken off that yoke after their adoption of the Mahomedan faith, were again subjected by the Turks. When these latter withdrew, the Naibs became almost sovereign rulers, but were forced to pay a tribute yearly to their powerful neighbours the Chiefs of Teegray. One of these Naibs, to increase his importance, or for some other reason, requested from Jeddah a guard of thirty men commanded by an Aga; which request was granted with joy. Bruce's account shows that the Naib acted as an independent ruler at that time. Many years afterwards, in consequence of family disputes, an arrangement was entered into with the Pasha of Jeddah, whereby the latter bound himself to pay to the Naib 12,000 dollars per annum, in consideration of which he was allowed to maintain an Aga and sixty men in Massowah, and to receive all the duties paid by the Abyssinian merchants.

The Island was thus again ceded to Turkey, the mainland remaining in the hands of the Naib; so much so that when the French appointed an Agent at Massowah, the Naib refused him permission to land, and demanded large sums likewise from all missionaries proceeding to Abyssinia; nor had the Turkish Governor of the island any voice in these matters.

The Naibs, finding their family feuds becoming more entangled, at last adopted the fatal step of demanding a firman from the Pasha of Hedjaz, insulting one of their number; this took place nearly twelve years since. During this time also the tribute to Dejaj Oobeay, Chief of Teegray, was fixed at 2,000 dollars a-year; the Naib possessing some villages im that province.

Such was the state of affairs when I returned to England in 1847; during my stay there great changes occurred, which I then pointed out to Her Majesty's Government. Massowah was handed over for a year to Egypt. I have reason to think that there was then an understanding for the invasion of certain provinces of Teegray at least; at any rate, Massowah began to rise in importance. Instead of an Aga, with 60 soldiers, who smoked away their time in the island, an energetic Governor, with the title of Bey, and 600 good troops, was sent. He immediately refused the payment of 1,000 dollars monthly to the Naib; and when the latter in return stopped the water supplies, he attacked and burnt the village of Dohono, built there a port, and proclaimed that all the country along the sea, and for forty miles inland, belonged to his master solely; the Pasha of the Hedjaz still receives his title of Pasha of Abyssinia.

Since that time, the Naibs have become null. The government of Massowah was again handed back to Constantinople, and instead of a Bey a Pasha was sent direct from the seat of government; but the change from the vigorous administration of Mahomed Ali was soon felt. The Governors from Constantinople, though of high rank, have but one thought, the extraction of money. They have a Naib, whom they pay 30 dollars a-month, and send right and left to demand revenue from the neighbouring tribes; and that done, the country beyond the island is left to its own resources, and to fight its own battles and appoint its own local chiefs. Having destroyed the power of the Naibs, the whole land is without law or security.

The Chief of Teegray, impatient at the loss of his usual tribute (which the Naib could not and the Turks would not pay), several times ravaged the whole coast, even within sight of Massowah and the Turkish fort; and has only desisted latterly, owing to my representations.

The state of interregnum thus established renders the road between Massowah and Abyssinia Proper disagreeable and dangerous; every man must there protect himself. Under the infliction of Abyssinian confusion and Turkish supineness, these regions have become mostly gloomy forests without settled inhabitants, without law, and without a judge, and haunted by robbers and plunderers from every neighbouring tribe.

Such is the state of the coast; but as the Pasha of Massowah must give some account of the twenty provinces supposed to be submitted to his authority, every few months he procures the signature of a number of people in Massowah to a paper setting forth that perfect order and tranquillity reign everywhere in the Sultan's extensive possessions in this part of the world. In a manner hitherto believed to be peculiarly Chinese, this despatch is always sent when the neighbourhood is most disturbed and when marked disorders have occurred in the town.

The internal administration of the laws in Massowah and Dahono, the only spots really in the power of the Pasha, depends of course on the personal character of each Governor.

Under the present one crimes have been unusually frequent; the town is burnt down three or four times a-year; the soldiers have been repeatedly in a state of mutiny, insulting the Pasha to his face with scarcely even a reprimand, and are now restrained only by the firm conduct of their immediate officers; many robberies have occurred, and none have been traced; there is no police; and his justice may be briefly illustrated by his having put in prison a respectable merchant who complained of a burglary for the reason that it was impossible such a crime could have occurred under his administration, and therefore the complaint must be false.

The greatest jealousy of all Europeans has invariably characterised every Governor; every attempt is made to discourage merchants that wish to settle; and every effort that cunning can suggest has been made to lower the position of the Consuls in the eyes of the natives and the Abyssinians, and to keep up the illusion that stills prevails here that the Sultan is Lord of the world.

My late despatches will have shown the annoyance and insults to which we are sometimes subjected. The Abyssinians being in contact with the Turks alone of the white races, and these occupying the only practicable approaches to Abyssinia, the foreign policy of that country resolves itself into three questions: whether it is better that Egypt and Abyssinia should be under one sovereign; whether the Turkish Government should be obliged distinctly to recognize the independence and limits of Abyssinia, and to afford every facility and protection to a transit trade, and to the residence of European and Abyssinian merchants in their territory for that purpose; or whether, and much better, we ourselves should break through this blockade, and by securing a point fit for the free intercourse of the two races, and where European intelligence, wealth and enterprise might produce their full effect, should throw open these rich and secluded realms to the efforts of the statesman, the merchant, and the philanthropist.

No. 5.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received November 3.)

My Lord, *Gondar, June 25, 1855.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a report, being a short account of the recent change of Government in Abyssinia; the present state of the country; the character of the King Theodorus; his reforms and ideas; and of my interview with him, and its results.

I trust that instructions will be sent as soon as convenient, the state of my health having for some time required medical advice that I cannot obtain here.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Report.

IN my last report I represented Northern Abyssinia, independently of Shoa, as being ruled by three Chiefs, who were generally at variance with each other, and whose feudal vassals were most often in a state of secret or open rebellion. A remarkable man has now appeared, who, under the title of Negoos or King Theodorus, has united the whole of Northern Abyssinia under his authority, and has established tolerable tranquillity, considering the shortness of his career and the hazardous wars in which he has been and is still engaged.

From his earliest youth, Dejajmatch Kasai regarded his present elevation as assuredly

destined, but concealed his designs with prudence equal to his daring until ripe for execution. First he denied the authority of the Queen, mother of Ras Ali, under whom he governed the provinces near Sennaar; defeated in succession all the troops she could send against him; and lastly, herself, with tenfold his numbers: he protested, however, that he was still the faithful servant of Ras Ali, but refused to surrender except on certain conditions of peace. The Ras then sent against him an immense force; the armies camped opposite to each other for some time, the Ras not wishing to drive matters to extremity; and in the interval Kasai fought several minor battles, detected and punished some traitors in his own camp, and introduced a little discipline into his army.

The Ras having sworn to do him no injury, he surrendered and came to Devra Tabor, where he so completely lulled all suspicion that he received all his former honours and provinces from the Ras; the Qucen being in a measure disgraced. He returned to Kwora and attacked all the low countries towards Sennaar, Shankallas or Arabs accustoming his soldiers to war and hardships.

His projects not being yet matured, on several occasions when it was confidently reported that he had rebelled, he baffled his accusers by suddenly appearing in the Ras's camp, and following him to war in Godjam with about a third of his forces, thus quite winning his heart, though I ventured to point out to the Ras his dangerous character.

At last, about two years and a half ago he threw off the mask, and the Ras having sent against him Dejajmatch Goscho, that Prince was defeated and slain in battle.

The Ras now became seriously alarmed, and ordered half his army under his best commanders to attack him; he also called upon Dejajmatch Oobeay, Chief of Teegray, for assistance, and that Prince furnished a very large contingent. Though numbers were so overwhelming against him, Dejajmatch Kasai met these forces and gave them a signal defeat, killing most of the Chiefs; shortly after he took the daring resolution of attacking the Ras, and arriving by forced marches near the camp of that Prince in Godjam in the rainy season, sent him a defiance, and met him, though so far superior in cavalry, in the open plains. The Ras fought with the utmost courage in person; the loss of life was considerable on both sides, but Kasai's determined valour again won the day, Ras Ali escaping.

He then retired from Godjam, and afforded to Birro Goscho, who had been for five years besieged by the Ras in his mountain fort of Soma, an opportunity of leaving that stronghold.

During some months Dejajmatch Kasai remained tranquil, amusing Dejajmatch Oobeay at first with friendly proposals, afterwards demanding of that Chief the Aboona Salama, who had been banished by Ras Ali, with menaces in case of non-compliance. Oobeay becoming alarmed sent, first, his son with proposals, and, subsequently, the Aboona; the latter was reinstated in his dignity at Gondar, and a peace was made between the Chiefs. Dejajmatch Kasai then pursued Birro Goscho even to the Galla provinces, where he had assembled a large force, defeated and took him prisoner.

He was now strong in guns and troops, and on his return camped in the province of Waggera, from whence he declared war against Oobeay, reproaching him with his falsehood, which was proved, in having sent letters to encourage Birro Goscho. With some reluctance Oobeay at last put himself in motion to oppose Dejajmatch Kasai, who had advanced into Semen; the latter, by forced marches, fell suddenly upon his rival, and in two hours defeated him, taking prisoner all his sons and generals with himself; without delay he invested Oobeay's strongholds, which surrendered at once.

The fruits of this last victory were large treasures accumulated for three generations; the submission or imprisonment of almost all the Chiefs in Abyssinia, and the coronation of Dejajmatch Kasai by the Aboona Salama, under the title of Theodorus, King of Kings of Ethiopia.

Discovering a plot against his life, the King only placed in durance those concerned, displaying in all things great clemency and generosity, and the ransom of Dejajmatch Oobeay was fixed at 120,000 dollars.

With scarce a week's delay, and in spite of the murmurs of his soldiers, the King marched against Mahomedan Gallas, who had, during his absence, burnt some churches, and assembled all the forces of Christian Abyssinia, Teegray included, in the province of Dillanta, on the borders of Worrahaimano, where I found him.

He may have from 50,000 to 60,000 men of all arms.

Such has been his adventurous and warlike career. I shall now say a few words on his personal character, the reforms he has effected, the designs he is contemplating, and the condition and prospects of the country.

The King Theodorus is young in years, vigorous in all manly exercises, of a striking countenance, peculiarly polite and engaging when pleased, and mostly displaying great tact and delicacy. He is persuaded that he is destined to restore the glories of Ethiopian

Empire, and to achieve great conquests; of untiring energy, both mental and bodily, his personal and moral daring are boundless. The latter is well proved by his severity towards his soldiers, even when these, pressed by hunger, are mutinous, and he is in front of a powerful foe; more so even by his pressing reforms on a country so little used to any yoke, whilst engaged in unceasing hostilities, and his suppression of the power of the great feudal Chiefs, at a moment when any inferior man would have sought to conciliate them as the stepping-stones to Empire.

When aroused his wrath his terrible, and all tremble; but at all moments he possesses a perfect self-command. Indefatigable in business, he takes little repose night or day: his ideas and language are clear and precise; hesitation is not known to him; and he has neither councillors nor go-betweens. He is fond of splendour, and receives in state even on a campaign. He is unsparing in punishment—very necessary to restrain disorder, and to restore order in such a wilderness as Abyssinia. He salutes his meanest subject with courtesy; is sincerely though often mistakenly religious, and will acknowledge a fault committed toward his poorest follower in a moment of passion with sincerity and grace.

He is generous to excess, and free from all cupidity, regarding nothing with pleasure or desire but munitions of war for his soldiers. He has hitherto exercised the utmost clemency toward the vanquished, treating them rather as his friends than his enemies. His faith is signal; without Christ, he says, I am nothing; if he has destined me to purify and reform this distracted kingdom, with His aid who shall stay me: nay, sometimes he is on the point of not caring for human assistance at all, and this is one reason why he will not seek with much avidity for assistance from or alliance with Europe.

The worst points in his character are, his violent anger at times, his unyielding pride as regards his kingly and divine right, and his fanatical religious zeal.

He has begun to reform even the dress of Abyssinia, all about his person wearing loose flowing trowsers, and upper and under vests, instead of the half-naked costume introduced by the Gallas. Married himself at the altar and strictly continent, he has ordered or persuaded all who love him to follow his example, and exacts the greatest decency of manners and conversation: this system he hopes to extend to all classes.

He has suppressed the Slave Trade in all its phases, save that the slaves already bought may be sold to such Christians as shall buy them for charity: setting the example, he pays to the Mussulman dealers what price they please to ask for the slaves they bring to him, and then baptizes them.

He has abolished the barbarous practice of delivering over murderers to the relatives of the deceased, handing over offenders, in public, to his own executioners to be shot or decapitated.

The arduous task of breaking the power of the great feudal Chiefs—a task achieved in Europe only during the reigns of many consecutive Kings—he has commenced by chaining almost all who were dangerous, avowing his intention of liberating them when his power shall be consolidated. He has placed the soldiers of the different provinces under the command of his own trusty followers, to whom he has given high titles, but no power to judge or punish; thus, in fact, creating generals in place of feudal Chieftains more proud of their birth than of their monarch, and organising a new nobility, a legion of honour dependent on himself, and chosen specially for their daring and fidelity.

To these he gives sums of money from time to time, accustoming them to his intention of establishing a regular pay; his matchlock-men are numbered under officers commanding from 100 to 1,000, and the King drills them in person. In the common soldiers he has effected a great reform, by paying them, and ordering them to purchase their food, but in no way to harass and plunder the peasant as before; the peasantry he is gradually accustoming to live quiet under the village Judge, and to look no more to military rule. As regards commerce, he has put an end to a number of vexatious exactions, and has ordered that duties shall be levied only at three places in his dominions. All these matters cannot yet be perfected, but he intends also to disarm the people, and to establish a regular standing army, armed with muskets only, having declared that he will convert swords and lances into ploughshares and reaping-hooks, and cause a plough-ox to be sold dearer than the noblest war-horse.

He has begun to substitute letters for verbal messages. After perusing the history of the Jesuits in Abyssinia, he has decided that no Roman Catholic priests shall teach in his dominions; and insisting on his right divine over those born his subjects, has ordered the Abyssinians who have adopted that creed to recant; to foreigners of all classes, however, he permits the free exercise of their religion, but prohibits all preaching contrary to the doctrine of the Coptic Church. To the Mohametans he has declared that he will first conquer the Gallas, who have seized on Christian lands, devastated churches, and, by

force, converted the inhabitants to Islamism; and after that, the Mussulmans now residing in Abyssinia will have the option of being baptized or of leaving the country.

He is peculiarly jealous, as may be expected, of his sovereign rights, and of anything that appears to trench on them; he wishes, in a short time, to send embassies to the Great European Powers to treat with them on equal terms. The most difficult trait in his character is this jealousy and the pride that, fed by ignorance, renders it impossible for him yet to believe that so great a Monarch as himself exists in the world.

In his present campaign he proposes to subdue or exterminate the Mohametan Gallas, and perhaps Shoa. Next year he will devote to the settlement of Teegray, including the tribes along the coast, and meditates the occupation of Massowah. After that he wishes to reclaim all the provinces lately conquered by Egypt along his northern frontier; even Khartoum, as his by right: nor does his military ardour hesitate to dream of the conquest of Egypt, and a triumphant march to the Holy Sepulchre.

Some of his ideas may be imperfect, others impracticable; but a man, who rising from the clouds of Abyssinian ignorance and childishness without assistance and without advice, has done so much and contemplates such large designs, cannot be regarded as of an ordinary stamp.

The King is now, I hear, wasting Worrahaimano with fire and sword; the Abyssinians but lately accustomed to his vigorous sway, and in no way comprehending the grasp of his ideas, already fancy that he will not return, and bring about prophecies and discontents, fostered by Galla emissaries. The country is disturbed; but there is only one open or dangerous revolt, headed by the son of Dejajmatch Oobeay in Semen, who, owing his life and freedom to his King's mercy, now gives out that he himself is the destined Theodorus. He has gathered together a considerable army, and occupies the road between Gondar and Teegray.

The King is confident in his strength, and with his usual unhesitating courage, looking only to the enemy of most importance and in his front, will not, at present, condescend to notice this ebullition; but if he returns crowned with victory, no mercy will be shown to these rebels, his enemies will disappear, and tranquillity will be at once restored.

He will hereafter be quite capable of carrying out his views with regard to Massowah, though he will be unable to contend with the Egyptian forces.

Should he unite all the Gallas and Northern Abyssinians, Shoa to Tajoura and Zanzibar, Teegray with the sea-coast and Massowah, into one government as he purposes, and a frontier arrangement be made with Egypt, Abyssinia may, under his rule, rank as a Christian kingdom; this is the last chance for negotiation and Treaties.

Should he now or at any time fail in his designs, or fall in battle, the misrule and anarchy that must ensue will baffle all human calculation, and render peaceful interference impossible: Abyssinia must then be left to her destinies, until some European Power shall think it worth while to conquer and instruct the most fertile of African provinces.

On approaching the camp, the intervening country being dangerous to traverse on account of the Gallas, I requested an escort; the King, to do me honour, sent four of his generals with several companies of gunners, who accompanied me to the camp with ceremony, the King's flutes and drums playing before me, and fired a salute of musketry when I approached his tent. The tent was filled with all his officers in handsome dresses, and the ground was entirely covered with carpets; the King was seated on a couch, splendidly attired, with his crown on the pillow and his sword of state held behind him: the Aboona and the Tchegee were seated on high chairs to the right and left—every one else standing. He received me with great politeness, and caused me to sit down on a carpet near himself. After a short conversation respecting my journey, and on the forms of government in England and other countries, he told me to retire, as I must be fatigued, causing a large tent to be pitched for me.

The next day I saw him again early in the morning. After my visit, an Abyssinian of the Roman Catholic persuasion was brought to trial; this man the King ordered to dispute publicly on his religious creed with the Aboona, saying that if his reasons were the best he himself would become a convert. The monk refused to recognize any authority there present, and said he would dispute only before the Pope of Rome: the King sent for me, and as the monk persisted in obstinate silence, the Judges after some discussion gave sentence of death for contumacy to his Sovereign; which sentence the matchlockmen were called out to execute immediately. There were above 1,000 persons present; but even the Aboona, who wished to save the man, dared not speak. I rose and obtained his life, but could in no way persuade the King to banish him or release him from his chains.

The evening before the day fixed for my departure the King sent to me to know the object of my coming. I replied that I had not come on the part of the Government or in any official capacity; but that as I was about to visit England, it was important that I should know and report His Majesty's disposition respecting the establishment of a Consulate, and friendly relations generally; I hinted also at what had been arranged with the Ras Ali. The King said, "I know nothing of what Ras Ali may have done; I am young and inexperienced in public affairs; I have never heard of a Consulate under the former Kings of Abyssinia, and this matter must be referred to my Council and the principal people of my Court."

The next day being sick myself, I sent Mr. Bell, who is much trusted by the King; and after several messages to and fro the King finally replied as follows, "I cannot consent to a Consulate, as I find in the history of our institutions no such thing; but for anything else that you wish for, now or hereafter, for yourself or other English, I shall be happy to perform your pleasure, and could I receive any Consul I should wish for no one more agreeable to me, or more esteemed by me, than yourself."

I had ventured to hint that the sea-coast and Massowah might possibly be given up to him on his consent; but though his ambition was roused at this, he feared the clause conferring jurisdiction on the Consul as trenching on his prerogative, and the time for consideration was so short that though half inclined to say yes, he was too much startled at my proposals to do so.

The next morning he offered me some hundred dollars for the expenses of my journey, and begged me to pass the rainy season in Gondar; I replied that had he received me as Consul I should even have followed him in his campaigns, and have shared his dangers; but that after his refusal, my duty was to return to my country as soon as possible, and that as for the money I could not receive it, as I was paid by my own Sovereign. He spoke to me in the most affectionate manner, gave orders for my honourable reception every where as far as Massowah, and said, "In refusing your request for a Consulate, my only reason is that it appears an innovation, but do you not forget my friendship for you, and cause your Queen also to regard me as a friend. After the rains I shall send to Her Majesty an Embassy and letters, and when these wars are finished I will give every favour and protection to Englishmen who may visit my country: do you also visit me and write to me."

The Aboona Salama tried in every way to assist me in this negotiation; and it will be seen that the King's refusal is hardly a refusal, and that he does not wish to break off all Treaty with us, but rather the contrary, being only startled by the clause about jurisdiction of Consuls.

I left the camp with all honour, the King adjuring me twenty times not to forget to write to him constantly wherever I might be, and giving me his own mule to ride as a proof of his friendly feelings. I told him that I should report all our conversation, and receive the orders of my Government in consequence; that I should then report the answer to him, which was all that I was authorized to do.

The matter was much hurried, as the King was on the eve of starting against the Gallas, with whom his outposts were indeed daily skirmishing; and my state of health would not permit of my encountering the fatigues and privations of such a campaign. Neither did I think it advisable to appear too eager at first, as that might arouse his suspicions, and confirm him in an obstinate refusal.

I told him that I was sorry for his decision rather on his account than on mine, but that he was perfect master in his own dominions, and to decide as he pleased.

There is no doubt that the Roman Catholic Mission has caused much jealousy in regard to Europeans, and not unnaturally, as that Mission obstinately persists in usurping the functions of the Aboona and the Abyssinian clergy, so the King has an undefined but not unreasonable fear that we wish in like manner, and by friendly appearances, to usurp the political rights of the Sovereign; or rather, his Councillors wish to persuade him to this effect.

I see much to hope for in these conversations. It is well to find a King in Abyssinia proud of his dignity, alive to his responsibility, capable of considering grave matters, and of replying with decision, not lightly giving assent to a things he does not understand, and yet seeking for our friendship in all ways that he can understand. Nor is it very important to obtain a direct accord until such a time as his power shall be firmly fixed. Whenever he does sign a Treaty, to whatever effect it may be, he will fully appreciate his obligations, and faithfully fulfil them to the extent of his authority. Any other Abyssinian would have temporized in the hope of obtaining presents, as did the King of Shoa, Sahela Selassie; but this man has a noble disdain of falsehood or covetousness.

It is apparent from the honourable and friendly manner in which I took my leave,

and from the King's expressions, that he does not regard his refusal as a matter that should break off our correspondence, or give offence. He has refused rather the form than the substance of our proposals.

The Aboona Salama and Mr. Bell, who has ever exerted himself in my behalf with the utmost zeal, will lose no opportunity of explaining to the King the nature of a Consulate and of our other propositions; and I think that the objections he has taken will be somewhat modified ere long. He in fact only wishes to treat on equal terms, and considers that his own laws and administration of justice should suffice for all strangers; and that a Treaty, if made, should be carried out by himself without the Envoy having judicial powers, though he would not object to an Ambassador to represent the interests of a foreign nation, without those powers.

Two of the principal difficulties that we have hitherto had in negotiating with Abyssinia are now in a fair way of disappearing: one vigorous Sovereign may replace the feudal oligarchy, the proud and rebellious chieftains, that have hitherto bewildered all my efforts: the interregnum on the coast belonging neither to Turk nor Abyssinian may disappear, and those wild tribes that acknowledge no law but their will, no faith but their swords, and that hold the passes into Abyssinia, may be taught to acknowledge a lord and master. The one difficulty that will remain is the want of a sea-port in the hands of either England or Abyssinia.

In the present state of affairs, there are three ways of acting:—

One, to withdraw altogether the Consul from Abyssinia, and to cease all communication with that country.

The second, to consider that the King proposes to attack the Egyptian territory, at least where the Egyptian troops have occupied any portion of the ancient limits of Abyssinia; and also that he will probably seize on Massowah, unless the Turkish Government should defend it with such a force as will render it a heavy burden on the finances: therefore to await in silence the course of these events, when probably he will recognize the value of our friendly proposals, and seek himself for a renewal of them.

The third, to accept his proposition of sending Ambassadors, and to trust to their report of their reception and of our greatness, which information may very likely induce the King to accord all we wish; he being already half-disposed to listen to us.

On the first Her Majesty's Government must decide, after examining this report, which is not so full as I could wish; in consequence of my unwilling detention in Gondar, and the near approach of the rainy season, which makes me fear to delay the departure of my messengers. I trust that this measure will not be decided on, at present.

With regard to the second, I think that should the King agree to our proposals hereafter, it would be better for all parties that Massowah should be given up to him on condition that he appoint an European in his service as Governor. The Turks cannot keep that island in future, if the King's power increases, without large garrisons; but the King can stop their trade as he pleases, and can harass them continually; he would reduce to obedience the half-civilized and ungoverned coast tribes, would reclaim the Hababs and other numerous Christians, abolish all interior duties on English imports, would need but a small force there for purposes of police, and would there learn the value of trade and of foreign intercourse.

On the other hand, should the Turks remain in an expensive and precarious possession, the state of disturbance and anarchy along the frontier will always exist as at present, or be doubled, unless indeed they should follow up their large garrisons with large armies, for which the attacks of the Abyssinian King will soon afford them a pretext, and then attempt the conquest of the country.

As regards the frontier towards Egypt, the King will probably soon receive there a check, that will induce him to seek for our mediation, and which will conduce much to the enlargement of his ideas. Egypt may be made to abandon some of her more recent conquests on the frontier, and Abyssinia with a seaport of its own, a settled boundary, and a King with civilized ideas, will be worth treating with on something like equal terms.

The third proposition as to receiving the King's Ambassador may be entertained at the same time with these ideas suggested by the second; and it is in my opinion the most feasible: always supposing that the King returns with success from his Galla wars, consolidates his authority, extends it over all Abyssinia as I expect, and sends Ambassadors of such rank, manners, and intelligence as may conduce to his own honour and subsequent enlightenment.

I trust that the road will be clear to Massowah by the time that I receive a reply to

this dispatch and instructions. If your Lordship is of opinion that the Ambassadors from the King should be received, I shall in escorting them take advantage of the leave of absence already accorded to me, and in case of different orders I shall also profit by that leave, after having by letter communicated your reply to His Majesty.

In the case of such an Embassy, I request also to be informed if passage by steamer and railway, hotel bills, and such expenses as will scarcely enter into the calculations, or the means, of an Abyssinian monarch of modern times, however munificent, will be borne by Her Majesty's Government; if so, in what manner and to what amount. If it be worth while to receive these Envoys, it is worth the while to receive them in a manner becoming our own greatness.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Gondar, June 25, 1855.

No. 6.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 27, 1855.

I HAVE read with great interest the able Report on the present state of the Kingdom of Abyssinia, inclosed in your despatch dated Gondar, June 25, 1855, and I entirely approve your proceedings, as reported in that despatch, as well as the language held by you at your interview with King Theodorus.

You will acquaint the King that Her Majesty's Government are fully informed with respect to the events that have recently taken place in Abyssinia, and that they desire to express their admiration of the valour and skill which he has displayed in the field, and of his moderation in victory, and also of the wisdom and benevolence with which he has commenced the work of reform, and of his labours for the welfare of his people. At the same time, however, you will convey the advice and express the earnest hope of Her Majesty's Government that the King will abstain from religious persecution and extending religious principles by force of arms, which is contrary to the principles of Christianity, and cannot fail to involve him in endless troubles.

Her Majesty's Government are convinced that the establishment of friendly and intimate relations between Great Britain and Abyssinia would be attended with many advantages to both countries; and you will accordingly inform the King that the Queen, our gracious Sovereign, will have much pleasure in receiving, and treating with due honour, the Ambassadors whom His Majesty may send to her Court.

This must, however, depend upon your receiving from the King a distinct assurance that he renounces all idea of conquest in Egypt and at Massowah.

Her Majesty's Government have latterly remonstrated in the strongest terms against the intentions of the Viceroy of Egypt to attack Abyssinia, and the present Viceroy has not only put a stop to such proceedings, and has confined himself within the limits of his own dominions, but he has set free the Abyssinian prisoners reduced to slavery by his predecessor. Her Majesty's Government would subject themselves to grave suspicions if they received an Embassy from a Sovereign whose designs against the Sultan, the ally of the Queen of England, were previously known to them.

Should you receive a complete and satisfactory assurance on this subject, and should the King of Abyssinia determine to send Ambassadors to Her Majesty's Court, it will be your duty to accompany them, and you are hereby authorised to defray the expenses of their journey to England, respecting which you will be careful to observe all reasonable economy.

I apprehend, however, that the route which the Ambassadors would pursue must be through Egypt, and as the Viceroy is aware of the hostile designs of the King, it is highly probable that His Highness will not allow them to pass through his territory, and you will therefore communicate with Mr. Bruce, and ascertain from him whether leave will be granted or not, as it would be highly inexpedient that you should be exposed to being turned back from the Egyptian frontier in company with the Abyssinian Emissaries.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 7.

Lord J. Russell to Consul Cameron.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 2, 1861.

YOUR first duty on arriving in Massowah, which you will consider as the head-quarter of your Consulate, will be to make yourself acquainted with the general state of political affairs in Abyssinia.

Her Majesty's Government are so imperfectly informed in regard to what may have happened in that country since the death of your predecessor that I am unable to lay down any very precise rules for the guidance of your conduct.

The civil war which prevailed at that time may have been brought to a conclusion decidedly favourable to one or other of the contending parties, or it may still prevail with the alternate success of either.

It seems to Her Majesty's Government undesirable that you should avow yourself the partizan of either of the contending parties if the contest is still going on. Whatever interest Her Majesty's Government may have in Abyssinia can best be advanced by the tranquillity of the country; but if the British Agent becomes the partizan of one side, the rivalry of European interests, which, however disavowed by the Governments of Europe, is almost invariably found to exist on the part of their Agents in such countries as Abyssinia, will stimulate foreign Agents to declare a partizanship for the other, and thus a civil contest will be promoted and encouraged, which would otherwise die out of itself, or very shortly be brought to a conclusion by the decided preponderance of a victorious party.

The principles, therefore, on which you should act, are—abstinence from any course of proceeding by which a preference for either party should be imputable to you; abstinence from all intrigues to set up an exclusive British influence in Abyssinia; and lastly, the promotion of amicable arrangements between the rival candidates for power.

Her Majesty's Government are aware that religious rivalry has contributed its share to promote dissension in Abyssinia, but such rivalry should receive no countenance from a British Agent; on the contrary, his study should be to extend as far as possible general toleration of all Christian sects, as being most consistent with the doctrines of Christianity and with sound policy. The British Government claim no authority to set up or advocate in a foreign country one sect of Christianity in preference to another: all that they would urge upon the rulers of any such country is, to show equal favour and toleration to the professors of all Christian sects.

But although it is not desirable that you should engage in a contest with the Agent of any other Power for superiority of influence, or that you should openly exhibit suspicion or jealousy of his proceedings, or of the influence which he may be supposed to have acquired, it will be your duty closely to watch any proceedings which may tend to alter the state of possession either on the sea-coast or in the interior of the country, and you will keep Her Majesty's Government at home, and Her Majesty's Governor-General of India, fully informed of all matters of interest which may come under your observation, sending your despatches under flying seal in the one case through Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, and in the other through the Political Agent at Aden.

In addition to matters of a political or commercial nature, you will pay particular attention to any Traffic in Slaves which may be carried on within your district, and report fully upon the same: and you will further avail yourself of any suitable opportunity to impress upon any native Rulers who may directly or indirectly encourage or permit such a Traffic, the abhorrence in which it is held by the British Government, and the dislike with which any parties who may have recourse to it are likely to be regarded in this country.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 8.

Earl Russell to Consul Cameron.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 22, 1862.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 13th of November last, transmitting some articles as presents from the Queen to King Theodore of Abyssinia, as

an acknowledgment of his kindness in ransoming the remains of the late Mr. Plowden, I have to acquaint you that it has since appeared to me to be desirable that I should address a letter to King Theodore in Her Majesty's name to accompany the presents, and at the same time to announce your appointment, and introduce you to the King.

I accordingly inclose a letter which I have written to King Theodore, and which you will deliver to him, accompanied by suitable expressions of friendship on the part of Her Majesty's Government. If the presents should have been given to him before you receive this despatch, you will still deliver my letter, and make the best explanation in your power of its not having arrived sooner.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Earl Russell to King Theodore of Abyssinia.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 20, 1862.

THE Queen my Sovereign has been informed by her servants in the East of the exertions which your Highness kindly made to recover the remains of her late Consul, Mr. Plowden, and of your generosity in declining to accept repayment of the sum of money which you paid for that purpose. Her Majesty commands me to assure your Highness that she views your conduct in regard to this affair as a proof of friendship towards herself and the British nation, of which she is duly sensible.

In order more particularly to manifest Her Majesty's thankfulness for these your Highness's services, and to show her regard and friendship for you personally, Her Majesty requests your acceptance of a rifle and a pair of revolver pistols as a present from herself. Her Majesty has intrusted these articles to Captain Charles Duncan Cameron, whom she has appointed her Consul in Abyssinia, as the successor of the late Mr. Plowden, and who has lately taken his departure for his post, and I take this opportunity of introducing him to your Highness, and of requesting your protection and favour in his behalf. He is well acquainted with all that concerns the interests of both countries, and will, I am confident, do all in his power to make himself acceptable to your Highness and to promote your welfare.

I thank your Highness for the letter which you addressed to me, informing me of the steps which you had taken to punish the men who murdered Mr. Plowden and Mr. Bell; and with my best wishes for your uninterrupted health and happiness, I recommend you to the protection of the Almighty.

Your faithful friend,
(Signed) RUSSELL.

(L.S.) The large signet.

No. 9.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received February 12, 1863.)

My Lord, *Godjam, Abyssinia, October* 31, 1862.

I HAVE the honour to report that King Theodore having sent for me at the close of the rainy season, I joined him at his camp here on the 7th instant.

I was received with a salute of twelve guns, and 6,000 Cavalry, Infantry, and matchlockmen were marched out to escort me to camp.

My reception, as regards this point, was the best His Majesty has yet accorded to an Envoy.

On my arrival I was conducted to the King, who awaited me in a large apartment, entirely covered and carpeted with silk.

He received me in a reclining posture, with a double-barrelled gun and two loaded pistols by his side. His Ministers and Generals stood round in their robes of State. I was allowed to be seated.

After a few compliments, mead and broiled meat were brought in, and the interview became public. It lasted many hours, during which His Majesty gave me a detailed account of his last campaign against Negusi. This he did with much

apparent modesty. He dwelt with graphic clearness on the death-scene of his late Grand Chamberlain, the Englishman Bell, in which our countryman singled out the Chief Garratt, to whom Mr. Plowden owed his death, and killed him on the battle-field, while the King similarly dispatched the same rebel's brother.

Both the slain were His Majesty's cousins.

He spoke of his further revenge for Mr. Plowden's death when he executed 1,500 of Garratt's followers on the same day. He did this, he said, to win the friendship of Her Majesty.

He afterwards broke out into invectives against the Turks, said they were encroaching on him on every side, spoke of the seven flags, as he expressed it, that they had planted on the sea-coast, and dwelt much upon alleged advances from the Egyptian quarter.

He announced his intention of fighting with them, and sending Ambassadors to the European nations to justify his conduct.

Two days after this interview I received a message from His Majesty directing me to put down my business with him on paper.

I wrote immediately stating that I was deputed to present him with certain gifts, and a letter of introduction; also to discuss with him regarding the future. That when Mr. Plowden was killed there were two points under discusion, viz., 1st a Treaty; 2nd, the sending an Embassy to England. I offered to take these up where Mr. Plowden had left them.

I was sent for next day to deliver my presents and your Lordship's letter.

Both gave much pleasure, especially the inscription on the gun, to the effect that it was given by Her Majesty in return for the King's kindness to Mr. Plowden.

The King spoke much this day of his goodwill towards England, and the great things he expected from her friendship; and said that he was anxious to purchase fire-arms and ammunition there.

He renewed his invectives against the Turks, and talked of what he could do if assured of our support on the coast.

My replies were as general as possible, as the room was crowded with courtiers, before whom I was unwilling to deal quite plainly with His Majesty.

His Majesty on this occasion presented me with a buckler, two lances, a war saddle, armlet, horse and mule, which I accepted in the name of the Queen, presenting on my own account a barrel organ, some powder, and three double-barrelled horse pistols, the latter being preferred by His Majesty to revolvers.

On the following Sunday I was again sent for, and to a public interview.

The tone of the King had become bolder regarding Turkey. He spoke of the poverty of his country, saying, that by invading Egypt he would be greatly enriched, and vaunted more boastfully than before of the achievements he would perform if England would prevent any interference by France on the sea-coast, and keep off a Turkish fleet.

Feeling convinced that, however strong may be the wish of England to befriend Abyssinia, this was not the temper I was sent to encourage, I waited till an opportunity should occur of correcting His Majesty with regard to what I felt to be the sentiments of my Government.

This soon offered by His Majesty's asking me whether England would not force his Ambassadors through Massowah and Egypt, the question being prompted by his late doubtful treatment of the Egyptian Envoy, Abderachman Bey, which he had endeavoured previously to explain.

I replied that if there was war England could not take his Ambassadors through Egypt without the consent of that Government. If there was peace, that I could see no obstacle.

He repeated the question in another form, wishing that I should leave him an opening for skirmishes on the frontier as apart from actual war.

I gave the same reply. His Majesty then said that his empire and religion were in danger of being crushed, and that he would fight to the death in their defence; but he made this important addition, that he would not make or bring on war until he had made an appeal to all Christendom.

I told him I was glad to hear this, and that I would write it to my Government.

After this I waited several days in the expectation of a private audience. My food became scant and bad, and I detected a disposition among the spies who had been attached to me, according to the custom of the country, under pretence of rendering me service, to turn matters in such a way that at last I should solicit the King to leave.

I was hourly asked when I was going, which I settled one morning by replying to the usual question, to one who I knew would carry it to the King, that I might stay six months if my business was not finished.

An hour after I received a peremptory message from His Majesty to leave for the sea at once, and send him an answer whether my Government would receive his Embassy or not.

I considered, on the other hand, that as I had been sent to His Majesty at a considerable expense, and on a mission of pure courtesy, it was his duty, at least, to give me some reply to the question of a Treaty, which had been so long pending, including the other important point as to his admitting a Representative of Great Britain to reside in his country, if such were our wish.

I thought, too, that, unless I had clear details with regard to his projected Embassy, much embarrassment might ensue to us hereafter, while at the same time I wished to know His Majesty's intentions regarding the Slave Trade, and to elicit information from him regarding an intercourse with his new Kingdom of Shoa, and his hold on the tribes to the side of Zeyla.

I therefore wrote His Majesty a letter, copy of which is herewith inclosed.

Fortunately, just as it was finished, I got a batch of letters from Massowah. One was a letter from Mr. Colquhoun, telling me that he had received my despatch to your Lordship, stating my fears that Turkey intended to encroach on Abyssinia from her new settlements on the coast; to which he replied that the Porte would be warned to do nothing which could give umbrage to King Theodore. He added that I ought to inform His Majesty that his best mode of obtaining the sympathies of England was by putting down the Slave Trade in his dominions.

There was a further passage regarding Mr. Sheffer's mission to Tadjurah, which was corroborated by an extract from the "Home and Overland Mail," forwarded from Aden, stating what the mission had done, and that the new Settlement was merely intended for a base of operations against Abyssinia.

All this, together with the old Treaty made with Ras Ali, was carefully read through to His Majesty by two interpreters well conversant with English.

I also forwarded His Majesty a letter, in Arabic, from Jerusalem, detailing the part our Consul has taken in some outrage against the Abyssinian community there.

The King, at the same time, got information that Russia had 40,000 men within four days of Constantinople; that Sayid Pasha had gone to France; and that the Sultan was in Egypt.

This various intelligence seems to have pressed heavily on His Majesty. He sent me a message thanking me, entreating me to observe the peril in which he was from two powerful enemies, and begging me to act sincerely by him.

On the following morning I sent a note to His Majesty, telling him that, if he wished, I would return by Matemma, where he told me the Turks had been taking tribute unjustly, and gathering troops, and do what I could there to keep them back, or, at least, collect facts which might tell against them hereafter. Matemma is, just now, a hot-bed of fever.

I reassured him about his Embassy; and wishing to mention something more about his statement regarding not provoking attack, which, as your Lordship will perceive, I had written to him to say that I would report, I sent him a letter which I have expedited to our Consul at Khartoum, asking the latter to do his utmost to preserve peace, but, above all, to report military movements or aggression on Abyssinia to Alexandria.

I told His Majesty that I did this for his sake; he must also now keep his own Governors in restraint.

The answer of His Majesty was kind in the extreme.

He deprecated my going to Matemma on his account, lest, as he expressed it, I should die in his country like Mr. Plowden, and he should again be left without a resource in his present difficulties, but bade me act as I thought fitting; said that, though he was ready to fight, peace was best, and asked me again to do what I could for him by writing.

I answered simply that my life, health, and services were always at the disposal of His Majesty.

On the following morning he sent me a silken embroidered robe, similar to that worn by his chief men, with 1,000 dollars towards paying my expenses to Massowah, and a message to come to him.

My first business was to tell him that I had plenty of money waiting for me at

Gondar; that I would write to my Government of his kind consideration; but that if I accepted money from him I might be dismissed from my service.

It was with great difficulty that I could get my interpreters to translate this, as, in Abyssinia, a refusal of such a nature, especially to a King, has in it something of the nature of an insult.

His Majesty made no reply for half an hour. He then said that all he wanted was friendship.

This gave me an opportunity of repeating expressions of goodwill on the part of my Government, and of assuring him of my own high appreciation of his character and devotion to his cause; on which he said voluntarily that he had well considered the subject of a Treaty, about which there would be no difficulty, but that at present his mind was full of other things; also, that if matters went well, he would gladly receive a Consul. He likewise spoke about putting down the Slave Trade, on which I purposely questioned him.

After this I presented His Royal Highness the Duke of Saxe-Coburg's decoration, which was exceedingly well received.

He then wrote the letter to Her Majesty which I herewith have the honour to forward.

The translation were written by his own interpreters.

He intended also to have written a letter to Mr. Colquhoun about the Slave Trade, and a letter of appeal to the King of Holland, similar to those he had already dictated, but it was too late.

This morning I was told to leave for Massowah.

I sent a Memorandum to His Majesty, reminding him of the letter for Mr. Colquhoun, and stated the advantage he would derive from it.

He replied that he would write afterwards, but assured me that he would stop the Slave Trade effectually, not as a concession to us, but because he hated it himself.

He repeated his expressions of entire confidence in me, and added that he believed I would be a friend to him, as Mr. Plowden had been before.

A Royal Circular of appeal has likewise been forwarded to France from the camp this day by a Frenchman, whom the King has given 500 dollars for his road expenses.

It states, like the two others, that His Majesty projects a struggle with the Turks, and wishes to send Ambassadors to France. He requests an answer by the bearer, who is, however, travelling slowly.

One will also go for Russia, with which country His Majesty has been in some communication. Others are being prepared for the German Powers.

As it is desirable, on every account, that we should not be without a correspondence in Abyssinia for a considerable time, I am preparing a letter on the subject to the Resident at Aden, copy of which will herewith be inclosed.

There seems to be no necessity for irritating the King further at this moment about the 1,000 dollars. I will hand them over to the Negadderass of Adona, send your Lordship a receipt in Arabic, and write to His Majesty, telling him what I have done, and sending a copy of the paragraph in the Consular Instructions bearing on the subject.

But I must here state that Mr. Plowden was more than once placed in the same difficulty with myself, by the King's presenting him with money, which he generally accepted to avoid explanations, making a present of larger value in return.

The sooner, however, the King understands our feelings on this subject the better, and my manner of settling the matter will, I hope, prevent such presents for the future.

I propose to proceed hence to the neighbourhood of Bogos, whose inhabitants have been long under our special protection, and for whom we formerly interceded with the Egyptian Government on the occasion of certain predatory inroads, which, from intelligence I have received, may again be renewed.

I will also write to the Pashas of Capalla and Matemma, in order, if possible, to check mischief. This, and writing occasionally to the King in order to hold him to his promise, is all I can do until I receive further instructions from your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 9.

Consul Cameron to the King of Abyssinia.

May it please your Majesty, *Godjam, Abyssinia, October 22, 1862.*

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Majesty's message of this morning, informing me that I had better leave at once for Massowah, in order to ascertain, for your Majesty's information, whether I would be able or not to pass certain Ambassadors or messengers, whom you are anxious to send to England.

On this point I believe myself justified in repeating the reply I made to your Majesty on the same subject in my last interview, viz., that if Egypt was at war with your Majesty it would be impossible to pass such Ambassadors or messengers through without her consent; if, on the contrary, there was peace, that I could conceive no possible obstacle.

I will, however, send a messenger immediately to Aden, informing the Resident there of your intention, and requesting him to send you an answer direct in Arabic, without reference to me.

Your Majesty ought, however, now to inform me of the number of people of which your Majesty's Embassy, if it goes, will consist; the exact date at which it will be at Massowah, or, if you wish, Hallai; and the character of the presents they are to take, as if there are any horses intended to be sent, as I hear, it will be necessary for me to write this beforehand, so as to insure accommodation, if, indeed, it is possible to afford accommodation on board a steamer.

It might be desirable, too, to speak with me as to the objects of the Embassy, supposing them to be more than what you told me loosely the other day, viz., to appeal to England with regard to certain differences between yourself and Turkey, as also Egypt. We might then consult on those differences, before your taking so serious a step as to bring them before an European Power.

My being an European, and one versed, in some degree, in public affairs, as conducted among us, may perhaps assist you.

Besides which, I may remind your Majesty that my appointment has obliged me to think much over everything connected with Abyssinia.

If your Majesty wishes much business to be done by talking, it would be fitting to choose such a person as the Head of the Embassy as may be thoroughly versed in the matters to be spoken about, and one who would give a favourable opinion of the intelligence and civilization of your people, as well as of your Majesty's character, both of which have been greatly misrepresented by your Majesty's enemies.

The accompanying retinue, also, ought to be the smallest possible; a sufficient retinue being always to be obtained in England.

I would say that one or at most two Heads of the Embassy, and an Interpreter, with a Secretary, if necessary, would be amply sufficient, each with a single native servant.

Having given your Majesty my opinion with regard to an Embassy, as far as I can do so in writing, there is only one point further to discuss with your Majesty, viz., whether your Majesty wishes to avail yourself of my being here to make out a draft of a Treaty for the consideration of my Queen, which, if your Majesty thinks proper, can be signed conditionally, and notice of it now sent on by me, while the draft itself, with the provisional signatures, can accompany your Ambassador.

I have a copy of the Treaty made through Ras Ali with the former Emperor which can be made the base of such a document, if your Majesty wishes, and I now send it you, with certain alterations, for your Majesty's consideration.

As I am anxious to finish whatever I have to say to your Majesty in this letter, as far as I can do so in writing, I may observe at once that I know that the points on which your Majesty made a difficulty in your conversation with Mr. Plowden on this subject were—

1. The acceptance of a Consul.

2. If he were accepted, whether he should have jurisdiction as agreed in the former Emperor's Treaty.

On the first point, I can only ask your Majesty whether Mr. Plowden's stay here was not a positive advantage, in so far as he acted as a mediator and friend generally, but particularly as a protector to the unfortunate Abyssinian tribes laid open to Egypt, while those who ought to have looked after them were cutting each other's throats; whether he did not testify his anxiety by word and deed that your

Majesty, as the most noble and enlightened of Abyssinian Chiefs, should become sole master; lastly, whether he ever showed a disposition to do anything contrary to the interest, honour, or independence of Abyssinia.

Some arrangement, at any rate, on this point will be necessary, if your Majesty really wishes to keep up a close friendship with England. I feel certain, too, that if English artizans were to come here, as I have heard is your Majesty's wish, it would be impossible for them to stay unless there was an officer of some kind, either Envoy or Consul, to look after them.

It would be well if, now that there is an opportunity, your Majesty gave a frank decision on this subject, particularly as your Majesty has now had many years to think it over.

As regard's a Consul's flying a flag, this is by no means necessary; nor would my Government even wish it, if, as I hear, your people might misunderstand it.

In regard to jurisdiction by a Consul, this is in your Majesty's hands, not ours, to decide. England wants to ensure justice and good treatment to her subjects, and nothing more.

If your Majesty can explain to our Government what I believe to be your Majesty's opinion, viz., that such separate jurisdiction would be impossible to carry out, and is also unnecessary where the laws are so mild as in Abyssinia, this would be sufficient for the present.

But it seems to me that a few hours' conversation would settle these matters either one way or the other.

As your Majesty is now, by God's grace, master of Shoa, I would gladly know whether your Majesty has any intention of opening a trade through Zeyla in opposition to Massowah. In the meantime, I can only point it out to your Majesty as worthy of attention.

If I could have some assurance with regard to the stopping of the Slave Trade in this country, which has again been opened, I believe without your Majesty's knowledge, I feel certain that satisfactory information on that point would be received with much pleasure by my Goverment.

A clause in the Treaty on this subject would be still better.

I can only thank your Majesty now for the courteous manner in which your Majesty has received the presents I brought, of which, as well as of the distinguished manner in which I have hitherto been treated, I shall write immediately to England.

It is my duty, however, to add that if your Majesty wishes me to stay until I have finished everything thoroughly, I can dismiss my people if they are too many for a camp, and stay till you have quite done with me.

I owe it to my Government to tell you this.

I am now about to write to the Pasha of Massowah, telling him that if he commits any aggression on those under your Majesty's rule, from where he is on the coast, I feel certain that his conduct will be greatly disapproved of by my Government.

I will also write to my Government, mentioning your Majesty's wise resolution not to give either Egypt or Turkey any ground for attack, which I feel sure will do much to confirm its opinion of your Majesty's prudence as well as courage.

Your Majesty has many enemies besides the Turks and Egyptians who will rejoice in putting your Majesty in the wrong, and who will rejoice especially if your Majesty gives them an opportunity of doing so.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 9.

The King of Abyssinia to the Queen of England.

(Translation)

IN the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God in Trinity, chosen by God, King of Kings, Theodoros of Ethiopia, to Her Majesty Victoria, Queen of England. I hope your Majesty is in good health. By the power of God I am well. My fathers the Emperors having forgotten our Creator, he handed over their kingdom to the Gallas and Turks. But God created me, lifted me out of the dust, and restored this Empire to my rule. He endowed me with power, and enabled me to stand in the place

of my fathers. By His power I drove away the Gallas. But for the Turks I have told them to leave the land of my ancestors. They refuse. I am now going to wrestle with them. Mr. Plowden, and my late Grand Chamberlain, the Englishman Bell, used to tell me that there is a great Christian Queen, who loves all Christians. When they said to me this, "We are able to make you known to her, and to establish friendship between you," then in those times I was very glad. I gave them my love, thinking that I had found your Majesty's goodwill. All men are subject to death, and my enemies, thinking to injure me, killed these my friends. But by the power of God I have exterminated those enemies, not leaving one alive, though they were of my own family, that I may get, by the power of God, your friendship.

I was prevented by the Turks occupying the sea-coast from sending you an Embassy when I was in difficulty. Consul Cameron arrived with a letter, and presents of friendship. By the power of God I was very glad hearing of your welfare, and being assured of your amity. I have received your presents, and thank you much.

I fear that if I send Ambassadors with presents of amity by Consul Cameron, they may be arrested by the Turks.

And now I wish that you may arrange for the safe passage of my Ambassadors everywhere on the road.

I wish to have an answer to this letter by Consul Cameron, and that he may conduct my Embassy to England. See how the Islam oppress the Christian.

No. 10.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received March 9.)

My Lord, *Axum, Abyssinia, January* 1, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to report that I have been intercepted in my journey coastward by the sudden rising of a rebel on my road.

His object was to possess himself of my person, strengthen himself with my arms and ammunition, and then proceed to the plunder of Adona.

He is supported by 300 followers.

Intelligence of this having reached me, I remained on my guard at Adona.

The Governor, at the same time, sent out a hasty levy to put down the insurgent. These were beaten back, after a sharp skirmish, and arrived at Adona at midnight, when I was hurried away by the officials, barely carrying with me my money, ammunition, some clothes, and writing materials.

I am now lodged at Axum, whose church enjoys privileges of sanctuary, similar to those of mediæval Europe. My person is, therefore, safe; my property left behind is, I trust, equally so, being deposited in the church at Adona.

This movement has no political significance. The rebel in question, whose name is Sidj Cassa, is a mere robber. His father, Atto Goldja, was also a noted brigand, though of influential family. He was slain before Adona two years since, with two of his sons, while preparing an attack on the town, and his remains were contumeliously burned—a great insult in this country. The object of the surviving son is revenge and plunder. One of the causes which have laid this province open to so daring a defiance of authority, is King Theodore's having lately sent for the grandees of Tigré to pay him homage, who have drained the country of their military followers.

This result will, I hope, have one good effect, in showing His Majesty that he has much to do before he can meditate any but defensive foreign wars.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 11.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received July 5.)

(Extract.) *Bogos, Abyssinia, March* 31, 1863.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 1st of January, I have the honour to state that King Theodore having sent one of his Generals to Tigre to break up the force of the brigand Cassa, the latter has been stripped of everything, and has taken refuge in the Turkish territory.

The road being thus once more rendered safe, as I had received a very doubtful reply from the Pasha of Cassala to my despatch pointing out to him the necessity of restraining the predatory incursions of the frontier Arabs on Abyssinia, I considered it my duty to proceed to Bogos, which, as well as the neighbouring country, has long been under our protection.

This was the more necessary as a number of the cattle of which the natives had been stripped in Mr. Plowden's time, and only a portion of which had been returned on his application to the Egyptian Government, still remained to be handed over, and the inhabitants looked to me to see the work of my predecessor brought to a close.

As the fate of Cassa had not then been quite ascertained, and the recent disturbance in Tigre had raised many robber bands, who availed themselves of the confusion to plunder on their own account, I applied to the authorities, who furnished me with an escort of 5,000 men across the River Mareb.

The strength of the escort was regulated by their own fears, as the King had previously written to say that if anything happened to me he would reduce Tigre to a desert; and he would have kept his word.

After a stay of some days at Hamazeyn, where I had the satisfaction of settling a local feud which threatened to throw the whole Province into confusion, I proceeded to Bogos, where I found matters much in the state I had anticipated in the conclusion of my despatch of the 31st October.

The Shangallas under Egyptian rule had come down and swept away 300 head of cattle from there, and the Roman Catholic missionary Stella, who resides at Kerew, had gone to the Shangalla country to effect, if possible, their return. The remaining inhabitants had driven their flocks and herds into the mountains.

Within the last week the Shangallas have again been down, plundered twelve villages of their cattle, and killed nine of the inhabitants, leaving three more wounded.

A complaint has been made to me by a Chief of Barka that his brother, an undoubted Abyssinian subject, and a favourite of King Theodore's, has been carried away, and is now in prison at Cassala.

This on the Cassala side. On that of Massowah, the Naib of Arkeeko has given shelter to the brigand Cassa, and has been collecting tribute in every direction, while seven of the principal inhabitants of the Halhal have been tried by his Wakil, and sent to the Habab.

The country is in such confusion in consequence that a messenger whom I sent to the Wakil, begging him to be careful of not levying tribute on Abyssinian subjects, has been obliged to return.

A statement of these facts is being carried to King Theodore by his Representative here, who persists, with his master, in viewing the Turkish claim to the Bogos, Halhal, and Habab as illusory.

Whatever the claim in question may be worth, it only asserts a right to levy tribute, and makes no pretence either to furnish protection to the inhabitants, ameliorate their condition, or keep them in restraint.

I have written to King Theodore twice since my last despatches to the Foreign Office, once telling him that I had forwarded a letter to the Pasha of Cassala to insure tranquillity on his side, and that it was now a point of honour with His Majesty to do the same by his own Governors, and a second time, from here to-day, putting the best colour I can on facts which it is impossible for me to ignore, recommending him to establish a regular Government of some kind here, which can be easily kept in check by my *locum tenens* for Massowah, and telling him that I will go to Cassala myself, in order to settle everything there as far as possible.

My letters from Cassala assure me that I will have no difficulty in doing so, which I have also told the King, in order to prevent his making any hostile movement.

What effect the news from here may have on a character at once so passionate and politic, it is impossible for me to say. He may either allow his grievances to accumulate, in order to lay them before Europe hereafter, or at once take violent measures to compel the Turks to a certain amount of decency in their transactions on his frontier. He will, however, do nothing without seeing his way.

But for his having called away the principal nobles of Tigre, of which I before informed your Lordship, serious local hostilities would already have commenced, His Majesty having given orders to the Governor of Hamazeyn immediately to resent any aggression on the part of the Turks. I reported this in my despatch of the 22nd July last.

I have to-day written a letter to the Pasha of Massowah, in which, without entering on the vexed question as to what part of these provinces belongs to Abyssinia, what to Turkey, I have recommended him to keep a strict watch over his collectors of tribute, whose irregularities are great, and to set at liberty the Chiefs made prisoners by the Nayib's Wakil, unless he is quite sure that the Wakil was in the right, as all these matters may soon be laid before Europe, and it may tell mischievously for his country if he is proved in the wrong.

I have alluded to the rebel Cassa's being in his district; but left it to himself to act as he thinks most wise.

I shall proceed to Cassala as soon as I receive answers to my despatches of the 31st October.

I would leave at once, but that the country on that side, too, is unsettled, and the bearer of my next batch of letters might be killed or captured.

No. 12.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received August 28.)

My Lord, *Kadarif, May* 20, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to inclose your Lordship copies of four despatches of mine to our Consul-General at Alexandria. As the public service may require that you should be acquainted with some portions of their contents as soon as possible, I shall do myself the honour of reporting to your Lordship hereafter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 12.

Consul Cameron to Consul-General Colquhoun.

Sir, *Kadarif, Soudan, May* 20, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to state that my late *locum tenens,* Mr. Walker, having left Massowah, I have requested a gentleman named Speedy to take his place.

His orders for the present are to communicate directly with Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah, in any cases which may arise between himself and the Kaimakam of Massowah, and I would beg that if you approve of this arrangement you will as soon as possible inform Mr. Speedy of your approval. My experience has shown me that direct reference to Jeddah is the only way open of despatching the business of Massowah during my absence.

If you agree with me, he might be furnished with some document to the Turkish authorities which would give him an official standing in their eyes.

I have determined to return to Abyssinia by Matemma, in order to make myself acquainted with the state of affairs on that side of the Egyptian frontier. The confusion there seems as great as at Bogos, on the south-eastern side, whence I have just come. My object in coming to Soudan was to visit Cassala, whither the Roman Catholic priest Stella, who at present enjoys paramount influence at Bogos, had gone to reclaim certain cattle lately taken from the inhabitants of that country by the neighbouring tribes under Egypt; also to inquire what had been done in regard to the cattle and people swept away from thence by a former Pasha of Cassala, in 1854, and which on our representation to the Pashalic of Egypt that Government promised to restore. Finally, to do my utmost to prevent such irregular attacks for the future.

With regard to the first of these objects, you are aware that, during the late troubles in Abyssinia, Mr. Plowden assumed the protection of the tribes of Bogos and others in the neighbourhood: a step which, though I cannot refer to archives, I must suppose was known to, and not disapproved by, Her Majesty's Government.

I do not feel justified, without further instructions, in relinquishing an influence which has already done much to prevent the absorption of these friendless people into Islam,—to avert from them those more than material evils that everywhere follow Mussulman predominance on this unhappy continent, and which may be of political importance to us hereafter.

Taking this view, and finding that Père Stella's application had been neglected by the Pasha of Soudan, who was then at Cassala, I have written the latter the inclosed letter, informing him that I still consider Bogos under British protection, and that if he cannot or will not return the cattle in question before the end of August, Mr. Speedy is directed to forward to you a detailed report on the subject, with a statement of the value of the property taken, when it will rest with others, according to the character of the report, to decide whether to press the matter or not.

I have taken this ground because I expect it will be alleged that there have been counter-aggressions on the Abyssinian side, and that these must be settled before the claims of the Bogos people can be met. To which it may be replied, that whatever may have been done by others, the people of the protected provinces have never been accused of aggression. They are, in fact, too weak to protect themselves. There may be other excuses which Mr. Speedy's report will explain.

The fact is, the Egyptian Government is totally indifferent on the subject, and cares little if its frontier people plunder or are plundered, as long as they pay their tribute. The best way to rouse it to a sense of its responsibility would be to make a money claim on behalf of these protected tribes. If it only had the effect of preventing further irritation of King Theodore until the return of his Embassies from Europe, the advantages of such a step would be great.

In regard to future aggressions on the protected provinces from the Egpytian side, I have directed Mr. Speedy to remonstrate strongly in every case, and to assess property taken, as he has been ordered to do in the present instance, forwarding the assessment to you; whether urged or not, such documents may be useful for reference hereafter.

As regards the Abyssinian side, I have done my best to impress on King Theodore the necessity of restraining these aimless and unauthorized expeditions, and shown him how mischievous they may be to his cause.

I have not hitherto been without success, and will continue the same course as I have opportunity.

As regards the second object I had in view, viz., the claims of the people of Bogos, for the individuals and cattle taken in 1854, the case is clear, and may easily be gathered from my predecessor's letters lodged in your archives.

A Pasha of Cassala inflamed by fanaticism, and who makes no secret that Islam ought to be advanced by the sword, falls upon an inoffensive Christian people under our protection, carries into slavery 350 men, women and children, and distributes among his followers 1,800 head of cattle, besides goats and sheep.

His Government, on the report of our Representative here, repudiates such barbarity. The people taken are subsequently returned. In the mean time, our Representative leaves for the interior, and never returns. The local authorities, profiting by the want of pressure from without, have delayed the return of the cattle to this day. Having formally taken this matter over on the part of the people of Bogos, my course is plain. I will have nothing to do with the local authorities, who are of a stamp to throw disgrace on any Power pretending to the slightest civilization; nor will I have anything to do with payment in cattle, which may delay all settlement indefinitely.

Taking Mr. Plowden's statement as a base, I have assessed the value of 1,800 head of cattle at the Bogos price, with the average loss to their former proprietors, from the date when they were taken to the present time. I annex the assessment to this despatch to be dealt with as you may think proper.

In regard to my third object, viz., the using my official influence to prevent further aggression, I would beg to state that I have already seen several of the frontier Chiefs between this and Bogos, and remonstrated with them on their lawlessness, explaining to them that they may be made to return what they have taken from Abyssinia; and have at the same time spoken or written to various authorities here on the subject, and I shall continue doing this until I re-enter Abyssinia.

I have also requested Mr. Speedy on his way to Massowah, to visit as many Chiefs as possible formally in my name with the same object.

He has further orders to consider the *statu quo* of the hitherto protected provinces when Mr. Plowden left them as the true one, until further instructions from you, and taking it for granted that they belong to Abyssinia, who levies tribute from them, to remonstrate strongly against any double levying of tribute on the part of the Turks of Massowah, and he is directed in this case likewise to

assess the amount of tribute taken by the Turks from the time of Mr. Plowden's leaving, until now, for lodgment in your archives in the event of its being thought necessary to press repayment.

I have informed the Kaimakam of Massowah of this, so that if he chooses to act as he has hitherto done on this point, he will at least be doing so with a knowledge of possible consequences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 12.

Consul Cameron to the Pasha of Soudan.

Excellence, *Kadarif, Soudan, le* 19 *Mai,* 1863.

PERMETTEZ-MOI d'abord d'exprimer mes regrets que je n'ai pas eu le plaisir de vous trouver à Cassala.

Mon but principal en visitant le Soudan était de consulter avec les autorités ici, afin qu'ils fassent cesser les incursions féroces des peuplades sur la frontière Abyssinienne, qui vous payent de tribut, et qui se jettent sur l'Abyssinie pour piller et tuer les Abyssins dans leur voisinage.

Personne ne sait mieux que votre Excellence que les vrais intérêts aussi bien que la réputation du Gouvernement Egyptien souffrent par ces incursions irrégulières. Ils souffriront encore plus si de tels faits sont publiés en Europe.

J'espère donc que vous prendrez des mesures sévères pour restreindre autant que possible les brigandages, pendant que, de ma part, je ferai mon mieux à mon retour chez le Roi Théodore, pour les empêcher de l'autre côté, comme en effet j'ai fait déjà, et avec quelque succès.

Il y a encore un point sur lequel je me fais l'honneur d'écrire à votre Excellence. Quelques semaines avant mon arrivée à Bogos, les gens de Bisha et des Bareas assujettis à l'Egypte ont enlevés 300 vaches des gens de Bogos.

Les gens de Bogos ont été sous notre protection spéciale pendant les guerres civiles que déclaraient l'Abyssinie jusqu'à l'élévation du Roi actuel au Trône, et quoique Sa Majesté est aujourd'hui assez puissant pour garder ses propres domaines, l'amitié qui existe entre mon Gouvernement et la vôtre, aussi bien que les liens qui nous attachent à l'Abyssinie, me justifient dans ce cas-ci en vous priant de faire payer ces vaches à mon aide, M. Speedy, qui restera à Bogos jusqu'au fin d'Août pour les recevoir. S'il n'a pas une réponse avant ce tems-là il a des ordres à faire un rapport spécial à Alexandrie, accompagné par une schedule répresentant le valeur en argent des vaches volées des gens de Bogos, afin que mes supérieurs décident s'ils ne doivent pas être remboursé par votre Gouvernement.

Il faut s'en souvenir sur ce point que les tribus de Bogos sont parmi les plus inoffensifs de l'Afrique; mais s'ils ne l'étaient pas, je ne peux pas croire qu'un pays comme le vôtre voudrait encourager un systême de brigandage, qui ne fait qu'empêcher l'établissement d'une entente cordiale entre les deux nations.

M. Speedy a des ordres à visiter les Chefs, ou Egyptiens ou Abyssins, qui se trouvent entre ici et Massowàh, afin de les conseiller de cesser à attaquer l'un l'autre.

J'ai prié à votre Wakil à Cassala de lui fournir un officier quelconque pour le supporter dans ces efforts amicales.

Mais j'espère bien que vous agirez fortement aussi; comme je vous ai déjà promis de faire de ma part.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 3 in No. 12.

ASSESSMENT of Value, in Maria-Theresa dollars, of Cattle due by the Egyptian Government to the Inhabitants of Bogos, in lieu of those plundered by the troops of Cassala, on the 23rd February, 1854; with estimate of loss to proprietors in consequence of non-payment from that date to the present.

Number.	Description.	Average Price in Maria-Theresa dollars.	Total of Price.
1,800	Oxen and cows	3 per head.	5,400
	Estimated loss in increase, &c., allowing for casualties ..	2 „	3,600
		Grand total ..	9,000

I hereby certify that I have carefully investigated the above claim, that I believe the number of cattle to be approximately correct, and that the estimated loss has been expressly fixed by me at a lower rate than the truth.

Kadarif, Soudan, May 20, 1863.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON,
Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Massowah.

Inclosure 4 in No. 12.

Consul Cameron to Consul-General Colquhoun.

Sir, *Kadarif, Soudan, May* 20, 1863.

WITH reference to my despatch of this day's date, stating that Mr. Speedy is directed to go down to Massowah, visiting as many native Chiefs on his way as he can, I would beg to mention that he has expressed a desire to open friendly relations with the tribes called indiscriminately "Barea," "Basa," and "Shangalla."

The service is not quite safe, but I have left it to himself, and placed some articles at his disposal as ransom for any Abyssinian slaves he may meet there, presents, &c.

Mr. Speedy in a late shooting excursion penetrated further among the adjoining tribes than any European has hitherto done, and I have no doubt that the report on the tribes of the Egyptian frontier which he has been directed to draw up will be replete with interest.

One of the most advantageous results of his succeeding in establishing a friendship with this people will be the checking of the Slave Trade, which they carry on in Abyssinian Christians; an object which, in accordance with instructions issued to my predecessor, may be possibly hereafter effectually arrested by Treaty.

Another advantage will be that a communication will have been opened with these tribes, in the event of the settling of the Egyptian and Abyssinian frontiers, in which they form a third and most important party, being forced upon our consideration. In regard to the Traffic in Slaves, I would beg to draw your attention to Mr. Plowden's despatch to you of the 19th of October, 1855, and his suggestion that the Pasha of Egypt should be urged to cause all the Christian Abyssinians in Soudan to be sent back to their country as an act of grace. If we could effect this, I know nothing that would give a stronger idea alike of our good will and the benefit which may be derived from it, on both which points I think that King Theodore is inclined to doubt. As regards the Baza, I may add that they inhabit the country to the north-west of Tigre, on which they are continually making inroads. They are plundered of what is called tribute in these countries by both Egypt and Abyssinia, but never without fierce resistance.

They acknowledge no master, nor could they be induced to submit to either of their more powerful neighbours by any diplomatic intervention.

They are a handsome race, with long crispy hair; admirable warriors; republican in their form of government; simple and austere in domestic life; and in their political, singularly honest and true to their word.

They are said to muster only 6,000 spears, and preserve their independence without the aid of guns or horses, neither of which they possess.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 5 in No. 12.

Consul Cameron to Consul-General Colquhoun.

(Extract.) *Kadarif, Soudan, May* 20, 1863.

YOU will have gathered from my despatches of this day's date that Mr. Speedy will not be fixed at Massowah during my absence.

The fact is, that the affairs of the Abyssinian frontier have fallen into confusion, principally in consequence of Mr. Plowden's agent at Massowah being of necessity tied to the spot for the transmission of letters, money, &c.

My communications are at present kept up through one of the King's interpreters, whom I sent down to bring the answers to my despatches of the 31st of October last.

It will give you an idea of the slowness with which my Government correspondence is carried on, when I state that I do not yet know whether those letters have reached England or not, yet I have received a packet from Massowah to-day.

No. 13.

Earl Russell to Consul Cameron.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 8, 1863.

I HAVE received from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt your despatches of the 20th May last; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government do not approve your proceedings in Abyssinia, nor your suggestions founded upon them.

I have only to desire that you will abstain from all interference in the internal affairs of that country, and that you will remain at your post at Massowah, whither you were ordered by my despatch of the 22nd of April last to return and reside.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 14.

Earl Russell to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 5, 1865.

ALTHOUGH it is too late to give you any directions for the guidance of Mr. Rassam beyond those which I have already transmitted by telegraph, it may be useful, in order to prevent misconceptions, that I should enable you to state upon any proper occasion what has been and is the policy of the British Government regarding Abyssinia.

It should be borne in mind that Abyssinia is composed of several distinct provinces, some of which are separated from each other by lofty mountains and by rivers which are impassable during a portion of the year.

Hence these different provinces have often been ruled by separate Princes or Chiefs ("Dedjatch") independent of each other.

In 1841, Captain Harris was sent from Bombay to the King of Shoa, with whom he concluded a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce, on the 16th November, 1841.

In the same year the Ruler of Tigre, Ras Oobeay, or Ubie, called Ras of Abyssinia, sent Mr. Coffin, an English traveller, with a letter and presents for Her Majesty.

On Mr. Coffin's arrival at Cairo, he was informed, through Colonel Barnett, in

December 1841, by direction of Lord Aberdeen, that he need not proceed further on his journey to England, and that he might deliver to Colonel Barnett any letter with which he was charged.

Mr. Coffin accordingly delivered the letter from Ras Ubie (together with presents) to Colonel Barnett, who sent the letter to England, but it cannot be ascertained whether the presents were also sent, the only allusion to them being found in a despatch from Colonel Barnett, dated September 19, 1841, in which he says they were still with Mr. Coffin at Cairo.

No reply, however, was returned to this letter, and Ras Ubie was thereupon so angry that he threatened violence to Mr. Coffin for not bringing him a return present from the Queen.

In January 1848, Lord Palmerston, with a view to establish commercial relations with Abyssinia, appointed Mr. Plowden Consul for that country, and directed him to reside at Massowah.

Mr. Plowden was informed in his letter of appointment, that he was sent to Massowah for the protection of British trade with Abyssinia aud the countries adjacent thereto.

Consul Plowden proceeded to Gondar, and concluded a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Ras Ali, on the 2nd November, 1849.

By this Treaty it was provided that His Majesty of Abyssinia would receive an Ambassador from Her Britannic Majesty, and "Her Britannic Majesty would, in the same manner, receive and protect any Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul whom His Majesty of Abyssinia, or his successors, might see fit to appoint."

But in 1854 Ras Ali was overthrown by one of his sons-in-law, who induced the Coptic Bishop to crown him Emperor of Abyssinia. This person was the present Emperor Theodore, who, so far from insisting on the observance of the Treaty of 1849, refused altogether to recognize that Treaty.

Consul Plowden was told by the British Government in 1857 that the Emperor was bound in good faith to recognize that Treaty, and that if he objected to any of its provisions he should propose modifications.

But from the triumph of the Emperor Theodore in 1856 to the present day the Treaty has been a dead letter.

It may be argued that the British Government ought to have insisted on the validity of the Treaty on the one hand, and to have protected the Emperor of Abyssinia from the Turks, on the other.

But considering the short tenure of power in the Abyssinian Kings, whatever be their title, the difficulty of reaching with a regular British force their seats of Empire, and the little value of a victory gained at Gondar and Shoa, the risk of failure, and the certainty of expense, it has seemed to the British Government a preferable course to withdraw, as much as possible, from Abyssinian engagements, Abyssinian alliances, and British interference in Abyssinia.

This course, however, has not been taken without giving rise to groundless reproaches, many unfounded allegations, and some embarrassing and painful occurrences.

Of the former class is the following bold assertion, namely :—

"There is reason for believing that the Emperor Theodore holds Captain Cameron as a hostage for the recognition by England, already made in 1849, of the independence of Abyssinia, for the suppression of Egyptian aggressions along the frontier, and for the restitution of the church and convent at Jerusalem, torn from him and his people by the Copts, Armenians, and Turks."

Now with respect to the recognition of the independence of Abyssinia in 1849, it has been seen that it was England that asked for the recognition of the Treaty of 1849, and the Emperor Theodore who refused it. But the recognition of the independence of Abyssinia has never been withdrawn by England.

As to the suppression of Egyptian aggressions along the frontier, England has from time to time used her influence to prevent such aggressions, but will not consent to guarantee the integrity of the Abyssinian territory.

Such a guarantee would be, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, an unwise engagement—impracticable in execution.

The restitution of the church and convent of Jerusalem is a matter which requires some further explanation.

Any one who follows with attention the proceedings of the Turkish Government in the various provinces under its direct rule, must be aware that the Christian sects, subjects of the Ottoman Porte, frequently persecute one another, and that the Sultan is often

appealed to to rescue individuals and communities from the maltreatment or cruelty of their fellow-Christians.

Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Sublime Porte uses his good offices on such occasions, and generally with success.

In July 1852, Lord Malmesbury was appealed to by Bishop Gobat, of Jerusalem, in behalf of Ras Ali and Dedjatch Oobeay, who had adopted at a meeting at Gondar a resolution to the effect—

"That Her Majesty should be requested to authorize you (the Bishop) to protect and superintend their countrymen visiting or residing in Jerusalem, and to authorize the British Agent residing at Jerusalem to lend you (the Bishop) his assistance for that purpose when required."

Lord Malmesbury's answer to this request was very clear and decisive—

"I have to state to you, in reply, that *Her Majesty's Government cannot undertake to protect officially the natives of Abyssinia who may chance to be residing in the territory of the Sublime Porte.* But Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem will be instructed to use his good offices for them, in case of need, as members of a Christian Church in spiritual communion with the Established Church in this country."

You will see that the Earl of Malmesbury distinctly refused "to protect officially the natives of Abyssinia who may chance to be residing in the territory of the Sublime Porte."

You will observe also that the good offices to be employed in their favour were intended for the benefit of those "who might chance to be residing in the territory of the Sublime Porte." Thus a distinction was made between those who might resort occasionally or casually to Jerusalem and the inhabitants of Jerusalem of Abyssinian origin, who might be accounted Turkish subjects.

Thus limited, both as to the extent of the protection to be afforded and as to the classes of persons on whose behalf good offices were to be exercised, the instruction of the Earl of Malmesbury must be allowed to have been proper and judicious, Accordingly I referred Consul Finn, on May 29, 1862, to those instructions of 1852, observing, "I have nothing to add to those instructions, except to enjoin you to act upon them with caution and prudence."

Those instructions remain still in force.

Coming now to the imprisonment of Consul Cameron, it appears from the papers presented to Parliament that after he had conveyed my letter, written by order of the Queen, and some few presents to the Emperor of Abyssinia, he went to the country of Bogos, where he employed himself in reconciling some rival Chiefs, sending on the Emperor's letter to the Queen to Massowah by the Abyssinian messenger.

It appears, further, that the chief cause of the Emperor's anger with Consul Cameron was this journey to Bogos, coupled with the Emperor's suspicion that Consul Cameron had intrigued to set the Turks and Egyptians of the frontier against him, and aggravated in some degree by the return of Consul Cameron to Gondar without any answer to the Emperor's letter to the Queen.

It appears from King Theodore's letter to Mr, Rassam, sent home by that gentleman in his letter of the 5th of September, that the King alleges that Captain Cameron "abused and denounced him as a murderer," in consequence of the vengeance which he took on the persons who killed Consul Plowden and Mr. Bell, and that when he had treated him well and asked him to make him (the King) a friend of the Queen, Captain Cameron "went and stayed some time with the Turks, and returned to me (the King);" and further, that when the King spoke to Captain Cameron about the letter sent by him to the Queen, he said he had not received any intelligence concerning it.

There is no reason to suppose that Consul Cameron incited the Egyptian forces on the frontier to commit aggressions on the territory of Abyssinia. It is far more probable that the enemies of the British name in Abyssinia should have infused unjust suspicions into the mind of the Emperor. But certainly Captain Cameron, in going to Bogos, acted without orders, and incurred the displeasure of his own Government.

It is now to be hoped that Mr. Rassam's explanation will procure for Captain Cameron permission to leave Abyssinia. He will be employed hereafter in a different part of the world, and will never have occasion to return to Abyssinia.

I have thus explained to you that the policy of the British Government has been founded entirely on the desire to promote trade and intercourse with Abyssinia.

I am well aware that there are persons who wish Her Majesty's Government to interfere in behalf of Abyssinia, as a Christian country, against Turkey and Egypt, as Mahomedan countries.

But this policy has never been adopted by the British Government, and, I trust, never will be.

If we were to make ourselves the protectors of the Emperor Theodore against the Sultan and his Viceroy of Egypt, we should become responsible for his acts, and be entangled in his quarrels with all his neighbours and rivals.

The obligations of the British Government are various enough and heavy enough, without undertaking so costly, hazardous, and unprofitable a protectorate.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

ABYSSINIA.

Further Correspondence respecting the British Captives in Abyssinia.

Presented to the House of Commons by Command of Her Majesty, in pursuance of their Address dated August 3, 1866.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

BRITISH CAPTIVES

IN

ABYSSINIA.

(In continuation of Papers presented to Parliament, August 10, 1866.)

Presented to the House of Commons by Command of Her Majesty, in pursuance of their Address dated July 8, 1867.

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LONDON:
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RETURN to an Address of the Honourable the House of Commons, dated July 8, 1867;
for—

"Copy of further Correspondence respecting the British Captives in Abyssinia, including that between Her Majesty's Government and Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt, and the authorities at Aden and Mr. Flad, and the answer sent by the Secretary of State for India to King Theodore's Letter requesting that he might be allowed to send an Embassy to the Queen" (in continuation of Papers presented 10th August, 1866).

No. 1.

Colonel Stanton to Mr. Layard.—(*Received November* 23.)

Sir, *Alexandria, November* 9, 1865.

THE inclosed letters from Colonel Merewether reached me shortly after the last mail to England was dispatched, and consequently too late to enable me to forward them on by an earlier opportunity.

I sent by telegraph the information of Rassam's departure from Massowah, which I am sure will be gladly received in England; and as the last reports declare that the disturbances about Kassala are ended, we may reasonably hope that no insurmountable difficulties will be met with on the road to Matemma, and that Rassam and his party will be able to reach that spot by the middle of this month.

It is also satisfactory to find that the reports of the successes of the rebels in Abyssinia are not confirmed, and that the danger with which the captives were threatened on that account is avoided. Altogether Rassam appears to have started under favourable auspices; and I trust that he will make the most of his opportunity, and press on his journey.

Should I receive any trustworthy intelligence of his progress, I will not fail to inform you of the same by telegraph.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 2.

Colonel Stanton to Mr. Layard.—(*Received December* 25.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, December* 13, 1865.

THE inclosed letter from Colonel Merewether has just reached me, and I have nothing to add to the information it contains, no intelligence of Rassam or his party having reached me; and I fear we cannot hear of his progress for some time to come.

I trust the remark in Colonel Merewether's letter as to the King coming to Metemmah, should he wish Rassam to visit Magdala, may not be founded, as I fear there is little chance of so favourable a result as the King coming himself to meet him, particularly as it appears the rebels are still in the field in Godjam. The statement that the rebels in Tigré and Walkich are engaged in hostilities against each other would lead to the supposition that one party—probably the Waksun in Tigré—are not in opposition to King Theodore. But the statement is too general to allow of any positive conclusion being drawn.

Dr. Beke, who arrived in Egypt some time since, is still here. He has informed me his intention is to proceed to Massowah, and from thence try to reach Adowa. He talks of proceeding in about a week. I informed him I feared his journey might interfere with Rassam's mission. But I hope the latter will have accomplished his task before Dr. Beke can reach the country.

No. 3.

Mr. Purday to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received January 22.)

My Lord, *January* 22, 1866.

YOUR Lordship having kindly promised to inform me whether Mr. Rassam's instructions include the release of the missionaries in Abyssinia; and being anxious to know this fact, in consequence of Mrs. Stern's anxiety on the subject, I have taken the liberty to remind your Lordship of the promise given to me about a fortnight since.

I have had other letters from Dr. Beke, who says that no tidings have come to hand of either Mr. Rassam or the captives up to the 6th instant at Suez.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. H. PURDAY.

No. 4.

Mr. Hammond to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 22, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, inquiring whether the instructions given to Mr. Rassam include the release of the missionaries in Abyssinia; and I am to state to you in reply, that Mr. Rassam was distinctly desired to ask for the release of the missionaries; but inasmuch as Her Majesty's Government have no right to make authoritative demands on foreign Powers in favour of any but British subjects, Mr. Rassam was cautioned against making his request on behalf of foreigners in an authoritative manner such as he would be entitled to do on behalf of subjects of Her Majesty.

As Mr. Rassam's general instructions, however, enjoin him to see that all the prisoners on whose account so much interest is necessarily excited are set free, Lord Clarendon cannot doubt that no exertion will be spared by him to secure this object, the more especially as Mr. Rassam was desired to present King Theodore a letter from the Queen, in which Her Majesty graciously expressed her expectation that the King would dismiss Captain Cameron, and any other Europeans who may desire it, from his Court, and would afford them every assistance and protection on their journey to the destination to which they desire to proceed.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 5.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 7.)

My Lord, *Beyrout, January* 20, 1866.

WITH reference to Earl Russell's despatch of the 27th of September last, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that during my recent visit to Jerusalem I devoted much of my time to a careful investigation into Mr. Consul Moore's proceedings in regard to the Abyssinians.

In order fully to understand the whole question, I examined with much diligence the correspondence of Mr. Consul Finn on this subject from the year 1850 to the year 1862. I will not trouble your Lordship with lengthy extracts and copies, but simply give their dates in the margin,* and will allude to such as necessity may require.

From this correspondence it appears that Mr. Finn repeatedly represented both to the Foreign Office and to Her Majesty's Embassy, that, in order to afford to the Abyssinians any effecient protection against their powerful enemies and oppressors, it would be necessary to procure their recognition by the Porte as foreigners and as under British protection; foretelling, what has since occurred, that unless this could be done, they would be deprived of their property in Jerusalem in favour with the Copts, with whom the Turkish authorities persisted in treating them as identical, and obstinately denying the right of the English Consul to intervene in their affairs.

* Mr. Finn, November 30; December 9, 1850; to Mr. Finn, July 10; Mr. Finn, August 17, 1852; June 22, 1858; May 27, 1859; March 13; May 7; to Mr. Finn, May 29; Mr. Finn to Embassy, June 3; Embassy to Mr. Finn, July 3, 1862.

On the other hand I find that in answer to these representations, Mr. Finn is referred by Earl Russell's despatch of May 29, 1862, to the original instructions of 1852, authorizing him to use his good offices for the protection of any Abyssinians who may chance to be in Jerusalem, as being members of a Christian church in spiritual communion with the Established Church of England; and Earl Russell modifies this authority by an injunction to use it with caution and prudence. Her Majesty's Ambassador also, when appealed to by Mr. Finn in June 1862, declines to interfere in the matter.

As the despatch from the Embassy here referred to may not exist in the archives of the Foreign Office I have the honour to inclose a copy.

Such appears to have been the position of affairs when Mr. Moore succeeded Mr. Finn. In 1863, when the quarrel between the rival sects concerning the ownership of the Abyssian convent seems to have reached it culminating point, Mr. Moore attempted to use his good offices in behalf of the Abyssians, with a view of protecting them from spoliation and assisting in bringing about an amicable adjustment of the dispute; but on being met with the old objection that the Abyssinians are Rayahs and that he had no right to interfere, he did not consider himself justified in risking a compromise of his position by trying to sustain by official correspondence a right which he could not substantiate, and took the prudent and cautious course of reporting the circumstances to his superiors, and awaiting further instructions should it be decided advisable to adopt more formal and energetic measures.

In regard to the alleged influence of Mr. Moore's conduct upon the treatment of British subjects in Abyssinia, I am more inclined to attribute any blame there may be to the injudicious zeal of his predecessor, who, from his despatch of June 22, 1858, appears to have informed some Abyssinians of distinction who visited Jerusalem, that their fellow countrymen were, in this country, under Her Majesty's gracious protection, and to have addressed a letter to the King of Abyssinia to the same effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) S. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Mr. Erskine to Mr. Finn.

Sir, *Constantinople, July* 3, 1862.

AS I perceive by an instruction addressed to you on the 29th of May last, that Earl Russell has already informed you of the course you should adopt relative to the qualified protection you are authorized to accord to Abyssinians at Jerusalem, I do not think it necessary to interfere any further in regard to the matters adverted to in your despatch of the 3rd ultimo.

I am, &c.
For Sir H. L. Bulwer,
(Signed) E. M. ERSKINE.

No. 6.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.— (Received February 14.)

(Extract.) *Aden, January* 21, 1866.

THE "Victoria" returned from Massowah this morning bringing news from Rassam up to the 8th of November, and from Cameron to the 28th of September. I inclose copies of Cameron's letters to Rassam; also one from Mr. Stern to Rassam.

These letters from the prisoners were received by M. Munzinger on the 16th December. The delay on the road was caused by the messengers being afraid of the cholera, which they were told was raging ot Massowah.

M. Munzinger adds that he had received no news direct from the prisoners later than the 28th September. It was said that King Theodore had come to Godjam, and M. Munzinger thought the news was authentic. When the King had come so much nearer to Matemma Mr. Rassam would not delay to enter into communication with him, and M. Munzinger felt sure that decisive news would very shortly be received. It was given out that the King was taking the prisoners with him, but that requires confirmation.

Rassam will have told you all about his own progress in his letter to you. M. Munzinger reports that Rassam left Kassala on the 9th November, and was expected to reach

Matemma by the 20th. Long ere this I hope he has had an interview with the King, and effected the release of the captives.

Dr. Beke arrived here on the 10th, and as the "Victoria" was proceeding to Massowah on the 11th, I gave him and an Abyssinian priest he had with him a passage in her. Some of his stores had not arrived here yet, and he cannot go up country without them he told me, so I hope before they reach him we shall hear of Rassam's complete success, so as to render any further attempts of Dr. Beke's unnecessary.

Inclosure 1 in No. 6.

Mr. Stern to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Sir, *Amba Magdala, September* 12, 1865.

THE accompanying letter to Mrs. Stern was written some time ago, but I could not forward it as I had not a favourable moment. Like the one before it, it is at your disposal, and you can make of it whatever use you may deem desirable. It is a trying task to indite long epistles with manacles around the legs and right-hand wrist, but as I am anxious that our friends should have a faithful account of this sad captivity, I do not mind the inconvenience which writing in a crippled posture involves.

Myself and several of my fellow-prisoners anticipate your advent like that of an angel of mercy, and I do not doubt that, under God, your laudable mission will be attended with the happiest results. The rebel in Tigré, I know from good authority, will not oppose your progress, but should you decide to take an opposite course, pray forward Her Majesty's letter, as otherwise the despot will suspect the veracity of that document. That our Heavenly Father may guide you by that wisdom which is infallible, is the prayer of yours, &c.

(Signed) HENRY STERN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 6.

Mr. Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, September* 18, 1865.

I AM at last able to report the arrival of the things; I have not yet been able to compare them with your list, but believe they will be found all right. We hear you are on the road; Samuel sent me word yesterday to that effect. I have drawn a bill in your favour in duplicate for Bardel, to whom I owe money, and send a letter of advice for Hertslet. Pray let me know how you will manage regarding it, as Bardel wants the money to be lodged at Massowah for him.

We have had some trouble in getting comfortably through the winter owing to the difficulty of getting provisions, but there has been no one ill except Rosenthal, who has been shut in for about ten days with neuralgia and sore eyes. I am stronger and better than I have ever been since leaving England. Please God all may end well. Pray send the two accompanying letters to England, and God bless you, my brave Rassam, and grant that we may leave this horrid country together.

Yours, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

P.S.—Your brandy is excellent; you can send us some more.

Inclosure 3 in No. 6.

Mr. Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, September* 27, 1865.

AFTER waiting, on account of one difficulty and another, I am at last enabled to send you messengers and letters. We have weathered the winter gloriously, though not without trouble. Our great danger now lies in the uncertainty of communication. As long as we can keep up our stock of money, we may hope on. If money fails we must starve. Pray keep us supplied through Gaffat, or any other way. I had only 5 dollars left when the last 150 dollars came. Every one says you are on the road. God send you

success! The messenger you sent paid 16 dollars on the road for Customs, &c. Pray pay him. We have got every thing right I believe. A thousand thanks.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 4 in No. 6.

Mr. Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, September* 28, 1865.

THE messenger's master wants more money; half to be left at his home, half to be sent on here. He also wants a cuckoo clock and a carpet. I write you these things because I promised him to do so yesterday.

As regards money I don't think he is exorbitant; there is no disguising that he runs a fearful risk. The other requests are those of a child, but might perhaps be attended to if it can be done without too much trouble. We are all well. The messenger leaves to-morrow.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 5 in No. 6.

Mr. Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam,

THE bishop is exceedingly anxious to have some French brandy; D. Merat the same. Pray send me plenty if you can. These men care about nothing but this and sweetmeats.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 7.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 27.)

My Lord, *Cairo, February* 16, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship the copies of three letters from Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether that reached me on the 12th instant, unfortunately just too late for the Marseilles mail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 7.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Metemmah, November* 27, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to report for the information of Government that I arrived here from Massowah on the 21st instant, with my companions Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, six days later than I had reckoned upon, owing to our detention on the road for want of camels to carry our luggage.

2. If it had not been for the great assistance rendered to me by the authorities of Massowah and Kassala, there is no knowing how much longer I might have been detained, especially in the latter place, on account of the great objection the Soudan cameleers seemed to have against serving Europeans or Turks.

3. On leaving Massowah, Abdallah Agha the Governor of that place, sent with me Abd Alkareun, the brother of the Nayab of Harkeeko, with a guard of fifteen men to escort me as far as the Egyptian Province which begins at Barka. But on arriving amongst the Beni Aamir tribe, where I had intended to dismiss the guard and to change the camels I had obtained in the Massowah district, it was found that all soldiers belonging to the Egyptian outpost had been recalled to Kassala on account of the late mutiny of part of the Soudan troops, and there were no camels to be had for carrying our baggage.

4. Sooner than leave me in the lurch in that out of the way place, Abd Alkareun the brother of the Nayab, kindly volunteered to see me safe at Kassala, and, accordingly, he accompanied me thither with the same guard and camels that had brought us from Massowah.

5. According to custom the day before I reached Kassala, I sent to the Governor of Tacka the letter of recommendation which was supplied to me by the Egyptian Government, and I was not a little amazed on arriving within a mile of the town to see a guard of honour turn out to meet me consisting of a regiment of Soudan Infantry and about 150 of the Bashi-bazook Cavalry. Had I known that such a display was awaiting my arrival at Kassala, I would have certainly taken steps to prevent it, as I am averse to such exhibitions.

6. On leaving that place the authorities wished to send a large guard of honour to escort me as far as Matemma, but I prevailed upon them to reduce the number to five men, as I knew that this escort was more than enough for the occasion.

7. When I reached Kassala the whole of the mutiny had been totally suppressed, but not without unnecessary bloodshed.

8. Of the four regiments of mutineers, about 800 men had escaped destruction. These have been seized and imprisoned with their wives and children.

9. The prisoners are so badly looked after that while I was at Kassala they were dying in great numbers, and instead of their remains receiving proper interment, they were suffered to be thrown in ditches outside the town for the hyænas to devour. While I was riding one afternoon in the suburbs of the town, I saw no less than three bodies of the wretched mutineers in this sickening state.

10. The town of Kassala has been almost deserted. That portion of its inhabitants who escaped the fury of the mutineers, left the place with disgust and sought refuge amongst the more peaceable neighbouring tribes.

11. There were no eatables to be had in the place save bad meat and jewaree (millet), and even the highest Turkish officials had not tasted anything but bread made of that grain for the last five months.

12. Besides the anarchy and bloodshed, cholera and deadly fevers were the scourge of the place from the month of July to October; and even while I was there nearly one-tenth of the garrison was laid up with one kind of disease or another.

13. Jaafar Pasha, the Deputy Governor-General of the Soudan, was expected daily from Souakin, at Kassala, when I left that place. The reason he had been so long detained on the road was because he could not get the number of camels he required for his journey.

14. While at Kadarif, two days before I reached Matemma, I met Abd Almalak, the Coptic messenger who was sent in March last by our late Consul-General in Egypt Sir Robert Colquhoun, with letters and presents to Aboona Salama the Metropolitan of Abyssinia. He told me that he had tried his best to reach that prelate but in consequence of the Aboona's imprisonment by the King, and the insecurity of the roads to Magdala he could not manage it.

15. As the Bishop is still confined and the letters addressed to him by Sir Robert Colquhoun might do a great deal of harm were they to fall into the hands of King Theodorus, I advised him to return to Egypt with the articles he had been entrusted with. He attended to my advice and left me to return to Egypt.

16. I regret to bring to the notice of Government that Abd Almalak has been provided with food and carriage free of expense by the peasants in the Soudan district, ever since he came to this country; as I believe he has reported to the Egyptian authorities that the British Government had not supplied him with sufficient funds to take him to Abyssinia, to whose Sovereign he had asserted, he had been sent with letters.

17. I spoke to Abd Almalak upon the subject, and he corroborated what I had heard, He told me that only 50 dollars were given to him in Egypt, which sum was hardly sufficient to carry him as far as Kassala. With regard to his reporting that he had been sent as Embassy by the British Government to King Theodorus, he said that he was obliged to do so to gain respect, as he alleged, that if he had only said that he was sent to the Aboona, no one would have taken any notice of him.

18. On arriving at Matemma, I learned that King Theodorus had been prowling about in the neighbourhood of Gondar, between this place and Debra Tabor, in search of some rebels for more than a week. As soon as I obtained messengers, the next day, I wrote and informed him of my arrival.

19. Mr. Eipperte (one of the lay Missionaries of the Jerusalem Pilgrim Mission, who had gone to Debra Tabor, with his wife for change of air, and returned to Matemma on the n22d instant), informed me that he had left the King at this side of Lake Dembea,

not more than six or seven days' journey hence, but that no one knew where he was going to.

20. Shaikh Joomaa, Chief of Matemma and at Galabat, who returned from visiting the King, after my arrival, gave me also the same imformation about the movements of His Majesty. News has reached me since then, however, that the King has gone to Godjam, and my messenger could not possibly reach him for ten days.

21. He is not expected to remain any length of time in that rebellious district; but it is feared that if he meet with a reverse he would be furious for some days after.

22. Mr. Eipperte informed me that the King was expecting me to come to him viâ Matemma, when they left Debra Tabor together, about the middle of this month. He entertained great hopes, as did the rest of the German gentlemen at Gaffat, that His Majesty would be reconciled to us as soon as he received Her Majesty's letter; but how long he is to prolong its receipt, no one can predict. It is quite obvious that I must not attempt to reach him before he sends me an escort.

23. I am told by Mr. Eipperte that King Theodorus entertains utter contempt for all Europeans, and he has taken it into his head of late to nickname all Franks by a certain insulting epithet.

24. When Mr. Eipperte left Debra Tabor, the prisoners at Magdala were in the same wretched condition, with regard to their fetters and misery, as they were when Captain Cameron wrote to me at the end of July.

25. I am sorry to say that slavery is carried on in these parts on a most extensive scale. I am told that during the next two months, thousands of unfortunate Galla girls and boys will be brought down to the fair, which is held here, annually at this time of the year.

26. It is reported that even missionaries do not scruple to deal in this inhuman traffic. How far this assertion can be relied on I am unable to say; but I can vouch for one fact; and that is, there are certain lay missionaries who have been purchasing slaves for the purpose of bringing them up in the Christian faith, which proceeding is not only scandalous, but a disgrace to the name of any Christian society.

27. It is premised that Austrian and Prussian laws allow the purchasing of slaves for the object of freeing them, but not for reselling them. It ought to be known that so long as there are purchasers of slaves, there will be no lack of merciless beings to bring them to the market.

28. It is asserted that King Theodorus is still averse to the Slave Traffic; and if rumour speak true, the reason he went to Godjam was partly to intercept the slave-merchants and disposses them of all their property.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 7.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Matemma, December* 1, 1865.

SINCE the date of my letter of the 27th ultimo, I received some communications from Gaffat and Magdala, copy of which I have the honour to enclose herewith for the information of Government, marked as follows:—

(A.) A letter from Mr. Flad to me.

(B.) Three letters from Captain Cameron to me.

(C.) A letter from Captain Cameron to Mr. Hertslet, of the Foreign Office.

2. I regret to say that a spirit of dissension has sprung up amongst the European prisoners at Magdala; and if matters do not mend soon, I fear that some great mischief will accrue therefrom which might aggravate their already miserable condition and increase our difficulties with the King.

3. Captain Cameron has been drawing upon the several bills which I have satisfied, but if he go on spending money heedlessly and call upon me for payment I fear I shall not be able to meet his demands. I have only brought money with me sufficient for the current expenses of the mission, and it is quite impossible for me to obtain funds here or in Abyssinia by bills on Egypt, England, or Aden.

4. The 800 dollars I had sent to Captain Cameron in June last, viâ Matemma, could not be brought hither on account of the late disturbances at Kassala and its neighbourhood; but the messenger to whom I had entrusted the money brought it to me while I was at Bafka, and handed it over to me in perfect order.

5. The 500 dollars which had been sent by Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt

for the use of Captain Cameron have not yet reached Matemma, nor is it known where the money has been sent to.

6. I am unable to understand the drift of Captain Cameron's request in asking me to place all the money sent by me to him on his private account with the Foreign Office.

7. All the sums I transmitted to him since I have been appointed to this mission I have debited Government with; and of course it is not for me to say whether that money is to be charged to his private account or be borne by the State.

8. On the other hand I do not see what claim the prisoners at Magdala and Gaffat have upon Her Majesty's Government. The stores and cash which Captain Cameron has supplied them with was an act of charity; and to prevent any misunderstanding on this score I always took care to send the things direct to him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 7.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Rassam.

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, November* 16, 1865.

FOR a long time I have been waiting anxiously for news from you. Now a few days ago I heard that you had sent a letter to His Majesty announcing your coming, therefore I hasten to send you the inclosed letters of Captain Cameron.

I hope my servants Engeda and Tadla will meet you on the road, if possible at Kassala.

I am obliged to send the servants with all speed, because of our pecuniary difficulties here. With the greatest difficulties I obtained but 150 dollars for Captain Cameron and his people from the Europeans here, with the promise to repay them here as soon as they want it. This will not last them long, because provisions are at a very high rate at the fortress.

As I am unable to provide the servants with money which would be sufficient for their whole journey, I have begged Mr. T. Eipperte, at Matemma, to supply them with so much money as they want to reach you. Would you be kind enough to repay Mr. T. Eipperte when you are passing Matemma. He is also in possession of four notes of Captain Cameron:—

1. A note of 200 dollars for Mr. Saalmüller;
2. „ 200 „ for Mr. Bender;
3. „ 50 „ for Mr. Kienzle;
4. „ 50 „ for Mr. Waldimier.

All this money was drawn by myself for Captain Cameron. All the owners of these notes (except Mr. Bender) beg to have their notes paid to Mr. T. Eipperle, so that they could send for it in case they want it. Mr. Bender wishes to be repaid here.

I also inclose a note of 250 dollars in favour of Messrs. Eisler and Schiller. They are in want of money, therefore they would be very grateful if you would kindly bring them that sum.

As soon as you have arrived at Matemma or at Woachuy, I should be very much obliged if you would be kind enough to send my servants directly with 100 or 150 dollars, as I have sent nearly all my money to the fortress.

Allow me to observe that at present there is no money to be drawn here; and as you do not know how long you may be detained here, it is good to provide yourself to last you for some time.

The provisions, &c., you had the kindness to send by Fanta, I was fortunate enough to get them to the fortress before the road was closed up. Three times they came back, being afraid that they would fall into the King's hand. The fourth time they succeeded in getting everything there; but one mule and two donkeys fell on the road. I also had sent them provisions, salt meat, potatoes, preserved milk, &c.

As the King had gone in another direction, it will for the future be very difficult to get anything there: and it would be very desirable if you would arrive soon to intercede for them, or else they would be starving, as they have not much money left. On the 14th instant two servants started carrying 50 dollars, but as the road is full of robbers it is very uncertain whether they will reach the fortress.

The Consul is anxiously waiting for his servant Lama, whom he had sent down in June (?), but he has not yet come back.

His Majesty the King is at present at Dembea, but nobody knows whether he will move.

You will meet with difficulties enough, as I have already stated to you in my last letter. There are persons who will use their influence to drag the matter on as long as possible. We pray most earnestly here that God would keep and protect you on your journey, and that he would allay all difficulties that impede your undertaking.

Pray excuse the liberty I take to send you some letters. I should be very glad if you would be so kind as to forward them.

I beg, &c.
(Signed) J. M. FLAD.

Inclosure 4 in No. 7.

Mr. Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, October* 10, 1865.

I WRITE you a few lines to tell you that I have received a message from Gaffat to the following effect:—"If Mr. Rassam does not come now, you will all be lost first, and then ourselves."

I am requested to let you know this.

The King sent us a cow a-piece some time back—the first notice he has taken of us, with one exception, since the torturing. He has also spoken rather kindly about us lately in public; but we are still chained hand and foot.

I have requested Mr. Flad to write to you regarding a certain messenger of his, named Wundun Agenyo, and inclose you a note for 250 dollars for the support of two of my party, prisoners at Gaffat.

The King is in Waddela. We are all well, and waiting anxiously for news from you.

God bless and prosper you, dear Rassam.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 5 in No. 7.

Mr. Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, October* 17, 1865

MY packets are not yet closed, so I write to you once more on the subject I alluded to yesterday, viz., the desirability of putting all the money sent by you to me on my private account with the Foreign Office.

You must remember that our party are all prisoners, retained by force in the country; one-half being in chains, the others without them.

Unless the arrangement I have recommended be fallen in with, how is the division of this money to be adjusted?

Two of my own people at Gaffat I have supplied with money on my own responsibility, by a draft on Hertslet.

But if Mr. Stern and Rosenthal are supported here on sums supplied by me by dribblets, and these sums put to the Government account, have the other missionaries no claim also for Government support?

Suppose such a claim were made for them by others, how could it be arranged? Is the money sent to be redivided?

Or is the sum paid to the missionaries with me to be made a standard, the other missionaries being allowed to claim on the same scale?

Or, on the other hand, are the expenses of the Gaffat prisoners to be made a standard? Then the prisoners here, of all classes, will have and raise an additional claim.

Then again, I have divided the money here according to the wants of the prisoners, including Mr. Bardel, who would otherwise have starved. Suppose a claim for re-division were made, it would not be easy to satisfy all parties.

You must remember that you are powerless in this country, and a single mischievous person, who might be wrong-headed enough to bring a money claim before the King, might paralyze everything and do a world of harm, as the King might like nothing better than to arbitrate in such a matter, merely in order to give you a new proof of his being absolute ruler in his own country, and the proper arbitrator of all affairs, whether among Europeans or his own people.

I may tell you that this has been on the point of being carried out, and a piteous letter written to the King, in order to lead him to meddle in our money matters.

The result might have been a most mischievous intermeddling, or the stopping of our supplies altogether; or even a stripping of myself and all of us of the little we possess.

I repeat, that the shortest way to stop all this will be to put all the money I have received from you, provisionally, on my account, just like the money I have received without your aid, and to put off all adjustments till we are out of the country; otherwise there may be a new dilemma raised on this account.

All my people have been maddening themselves about these questions and that of indemnity, until they all seem mere bedlamites.

Pray attend to this, dear Rassam, for both our sakes, and believe me, ever yours,

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 6 in No. 7.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Matemma, December* 13, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward copy of further communications I have received from Gaffat and Magdala, which, though they have only reached me now, are of older date than the copy of those I transmitted to you with my letter of the 1st instant.

2. They were sent down to me at Massowah, but on the messenger reaching Adowa, and learning that I had come up to Abyssinia by way of Kassala and Matemma, he retraced his steps to Gondar; and on hearing there that I was waiting at this place for an escort to take me to the King he came on to me here.

3. I have also received two notes from Mrs. Flad which had been written to Miss Cameron and Mrs. Kerans at the request of their relatives, which I shall feel obliged by your forwarding to their destinations.

4. Further news reached Matemma yesterday about the movements of King Theodorus. He is said to be at a place called Chapal, below the high range of the Godjam mountains, whither he had gone in pursuit of the rebels; but that he has not been able to do much as the Godjamites had heard of his intended attack, and had retired to their fastnesses in the mountains before he could overtake them. The chief of the King's swordsmen had gone over to the enemy with a number of his corps.

5. Nothing as yet has been heard of my messengers whom I had sent on the 22nd ultimo to the King, announcing my arrival at Matemma. They were seen passing through Gondar on their way to Godjam on the 27th of November.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 7 in No. 7.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Rassam.

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, August* 1, 1865.

ON the 29th of June my servants Tadla and David arrived with all the things and the money you sent in a state of good preservation, and I forthwith sent it on to Captain Cameron on the fortress, but I had some disappointment about it, as it unfortunately happened that His Majesty left the fortress, and as the people I had sent were afraid to proceed any further, part of the things came back. However, I sent others off again, and I hope they will have arrived there now.

On the 18th of July Fouta's companion arrived here, announcing that they had arrived with the goods below Lamalino (eight days' journey from here), but cannot proceed any further, as their animals are worn out, and likewise they said they had no money to pay the toll. I furnished him with mules, and money to pay the toll, and sent him back instantly together with one of my own servants, in order to get the things hither. I hope they will arrive in a few days.

Allow me to express my deepest gratitude for your kindness toward me and my family. We receive it as a special gift of God. Mrs. Flad, in her confinement shortly ago, had neither sugar, tea, nor rice, and we could not get any here. Of the rice, sugar, and soap, I gave to Mr. Schimper, and some to my fellow-prisoners here.

With these provisions our friends might have spent a comparatively easier winter than the last, had not a new calamity come over them.

No doubt ere this reaches you you will have heard of the escape of the Prince of Shoa, Prince Minelek, grandson of Sahela Selassie, and son-in-law to His Majesty King Theodorus. The King got so exasperated that he began to quarrel with the Bishop, and ordered to put all the prisoners into short hand-chains. It may be imagined that their condition is miserable indeed now.

As I know that Captain Cameron sent down his servant Lama, you will get informed of their condition ere this reaches you. Our friends were put into short hand-chains a day or half-a-day before your kind letter arrived.

I learned by Samuel that your letter made a good impression on the King, and that he wrote an answer to your letter, and that he sent your messenger immediately down to you with his desire that you might soon come up. And Samuel added, that after you have come, everything which is now crooked would get straight.

I hope that this my letter will reach you on the road hither.

It is a very difficult mission which you are about to undertake, but as you have already three times asked the King to be permitted to come up you cannot possibly avoid coming yourself, without endangering the safety of our friend Captain Cameron. But I trust with God's grace, to whom we are recommending you daily, you will succeed in your noble undertaking.

Permit me the liberty I take now to give you some hints regarding the difficult position you will be placed in, even as soon as you reach this country.

Let me remind you that as soon as you put your foot on Abyssinian ground you will be surrounded with spies, who will report all your words and actions to the King. Do not let any unfavourable impression (which no doubt you will have), either about the King or his people, or the country and the manners of it, escape your lips. The King and his people are always on the alert to find out faults and shortcomings in the conduct of the Europeans, and he is only too glad if he has the least reason to caluminate their character and reputation.

Your patience will be brought to a trial on the road and here, but do not allow your European attendants and domestics to quarrel with, or beat, an Abyssinian. All such little nonsenses have brought sorrow and trouble enough on our poor friends.

Do not for the present notice the Bishop or any other high functionary, as His Majesty is very suspicious in this respect.

Pray do not bring with you Martscha, Worky, or Beros, as the King is displeased with them, it would be very unfortunate for them as well as for you.

No doubt the King will take all pains to justify his conduct towards the English prisoners in your presence. At first he will most likely begin by showing you the Amharic translation of the writings of Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal and my wife. Secondly, he will tell you that he has received the English Consul, Captain Cameron, with all the decorum which he thought proper at the reception of an Ambassador of the Queen of England. He will tell you what presents he gave to Captain Cameron, and how he sent him with a letter for Her Majesty the Queen of England, wishing him to bring an answer. Instead of waiting at Massowah or Bogos for an answer, the Consul went down to Kassala, to my enemies the Turks, and came round by Matemma without bringing me the desired answer, and so on.

After all these and similar declarations, the King will put to you the blunt question: Have I been right or wrong? And you will perhaps be perplexed; but to get at your ends you will be obliged apparently to agree with him, for to gainsay him would be to spoil the whole matter at the beginning.

It is very probable that he will come with his odd notions about Sennaar and Sudan, that it formerly belonged to his dominions, and that he wants to have it. But what are you prepared to answer to this? To laugh—you dare not.

He will perhaps also tell you his indignation at the conduct of the English Consul at Jerusalem, in the affair of the Abyssinians and their convent.

I feel almost silly to give such pieces of information to an Ambassador of Her Majesty; but if you will come hither, you will see that I am justified in doing so.

The King is, since the 23rd of June, at Debra Tabor. What direction he will take is unknown. Some say that he is going to Woggera and Semên.

I really must beg your pardon in having trespassed so long on your patience.

May God with His grace guide you in all your proceedings, and enable you to accomplish the liberation of your suffering friends.

This is the prayer of yours, &c.

(Signed) J. M. FLAD.

Inclosure 8 in No. 7.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Rassam.

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, August* 21, 1865.

AT last your servants arrived with the goods, on the 19th of this month. I am only sorry to say that the white-cotton stuffs are almost entirely ruined by the rains. The white shirts are still good for use, but are very much spoiled by the tin boxes. The flannel and flannel shirts, however, are in a good state. The brown soap is all right; but the Windsor soap we had to scrape off from the stuffs, and had to make balls of it. Fortunately enough the eatables have all arrived in a perfect good state, including rice and sugar. Tea, I hope, when I have it well dried, will be good for use. The needles were all "woss;" but as Mrs. Flad has had plenty of sewing materials, she has hitherto provided them.

I should have wished to write to you directly after Tadla and David had arrived; but as I had expected your servants sooner, I waited anxiously for their arrival. In the meantime I learned that Captain Cameron had sent down to you his servant Lama; so I thought that he will have informed you of all that is necessary.

I don't know whether you are acquainted with the character of Samuel, who has been for a long time the King's favourite, and in this his capacity has done great mischief in the whole matter. After Mr. Stern's imprisonment, before his papers were examined, Captain Cameron and myself thought to get him to act for our interest. We bribed him. Captain Cameron gave him 185 dollars, and I, 100 dollars; but when we had filled his pockets he did just the contrary. He promised to us he would surely get Mr. Stern released in a few days; but at the very same time it was he who advised the King to examine Mr. Stern's writing, and it was he who put suspicion in the King's mind concerning the Consul's going down to Kassala, and it is his working that the Consul was put in chains. I mention only this, as some Abyssinians might represent him as a fitting person to act for your interest.

Wolda Selassy Gobazy, a merchant and spy of the King, has praised before the King the English Ambassador beyond measure; he has told everywhere how kind and polite a reception he had met with you; and it is now stated, as soon as you have arrived at Adowa, this man will be sent by His Majesty to receive you, and bring you to the King.

On the 2nd instant His Majesty left Debra Tabor. He returned to his camp, where the Wollo Gallas had made an attack and killed some of his soldiers. At present he is between Lasta Jeddjio and Wadela.

On the 27th of July my last messengers went to the fortress. They will come back in September, when the rains begin to abate. At that time I shall send on the things to Captain Cameron.

I have drawn for Captain Cameron on you, in favour of Mr. Bender at Gaffat, the sum of 200 dollars. The owner of the order will send it down to your agent after the rainy season is over. I inclose two letters of Mrs. Flad. Would you be kind enough to forward them?

I remain, &c.
(Signed) J. M. FLAD.

Inclosure 9 in No. 7.

Mr. Stern to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Sir, *Amba Magdala, July* 9, 1865.

WE have been informed that His Majesty had requested you to come up to Abyssinia, in order that he may arrange with you our sad business. After all that you have heard, you may perhaps feel a little hesitation to embark on such a mission. The enterprise is certainly laudable, and our Heavenly Father, I feel sure, will protect you on the road, and crown with success your self-denying efforts on behalf of the suffering and afflicted. Should circumstances lead you to adopt an opposite course, His Majesty would certainly resent even an imaginary insult on those in his power.

Our troubles have, during the last few days, been aggravated by an event with which we have not the remotest connection. On the night of the 1st instant Prince Menilek, the son of Hailo Malakot, and son-in-law to His Majesty, unexpectedly quitted the camp, and, together with his followers, departed for Shoa. The King had next morning a quarrel with the Bishop, and, to finish the day's business, all the prisoners got, in addition to their feet, also short hand-chains.

Mr. Flad may, perhaps, write you more; but, as the Royal troops are on the road to Begemeder, by which the bearer has to pass, I must not be diffuse.

That God may bless and prosper your noble undertaking to effect our liberation is the fervent prayer of yours, &c.

(Signed) A. H. STERN.

Inclosure 10 in No. 7.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.

My Lord, *Aden, February* 8, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report that Dr. Beke, proceeding on a mission from the friends of the captives in Abyssinia, arrived here on the morning of the 11th January. Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria," was about to leave for Massowah, and I offered him a passage in her for Mrs. Beke, himself, and an Abyssinian priest, who was travelling with him. He had intended waiting here some days for money and stores which were following him from England, but on being told that the "Victoria" in all probability would not re-visit Massowah for some time to come, he took advantage of the opportunity and left on the 12th January. Captain Parr, Her Majesty's ship "Lyra," kindly said he would take up the stores and money when he proceeded to that port, which he would have to do shortly—they have been here about a fortnight—but I have been compelled to detain the "Lyra" till now, in consequence of the unsettled state of one of the Arab tribes on the mainland near to this.

2. She will leave, however, on the 12th instant, and will bring back from Massowah any further intelligence which may have been received either from Captain Cameron or Mr. Rassam—none has been since that forwarded by me on the 21st ultimo.

3. By the "Lyra" I have sent a letter to Dr. Beke, a copy of which I have the honor to forward herewith, and trust it will meet with your Lordship's approval. In the delicate and very difficult position in which Mr. Rassam is placed, I considered it my duty to point out to Dr. Beke how inexpedient an advance on his part now would be, and how likely to mar the success of Mr. Rassam's mission, which is promising so well.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 11 in No. 7.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Aden, February* 8, 1866.

HER Majesty's ship "Lyra" will leave this for Massowah in a few days, and I take the opportunity of communicating to you the latest intelligence I have received from Abyssinia, both from the captives and from Mr. Rassam.

2. The letters from the former were up to the 28th September only, the messengers bringing them down having delayed in Tigré from dread of the cholera, said to be raging on the coast. On the above date Captain Cameron and his fellow prisoners were still at Magdala, and all well, having got through the winter better than they had expected to do.

3. Mr. Rassam had reached Kassala on the 6th November, and left it again on the 9th, expecting to arrive at Matemma on the 20th idem. From there he would immediately communicate with King Theodorus, and it was hoped would either meet, or speedily be joined by, an escort to take him to the King. Of the latter's movements it was said that he had entered Godjam, so as to be nearer to Matemma, and that he had the captives with him. The first part of this report was supposed to be true; the latter not to be strictly relied on.

4. My object in mentioning the above is to show you exactly the position of affairs now, and while desirous of not in the least tramelling you in the execution of the kindly object you have in view, to suggest to you the unquestionable expediency of your deferring your entry into Abyssinia until something more decisive is heard of the result of Mr. Rassam's mission at Matemma. That gentleman has progressed as favourably and as rapidly as could, under the circumstances, be expected; he is proceeding to the King by the route selected by that potentate, and at this moment, if not actually with him, will be in direct communication and engaged in negotiations regarding the release of the unfortunate captives whose safety and freedom is your chief point of solicitude.

5. With your knowledge of Abyssinia, its present ruler and its people, I must not enter at length into the difficulties and complications that are likely to be raised, if while these negotiations are going on, and before they have been brought to any issue, the King should hear that another mission (for your reticence will, of course, be greatly magnified) has entered Abysinia, headed by an English gentleman of repute in the country itself, and having professedly the same object, viz., the liberation of the captives; it will also be pointed out to him that this second mission is entering the country, not at his invitation, a point on which, as you know, he is particularly sensitive; and further, that it is proceeding through the territory of those who are rebels to his authority, and that it is enabled to do so only by entering into friendly communication and association with those who are in arms against him. In any person's mind such a mode of proceeding would naturally raise doubts—how much more so will it in a person of such a notoriously suspicious and hasty nature as the Emperor of Abyssinia; in the understanding of himself and those around him, it will be impossible to dissever you from the British Government or to induce them to believe that you are acting separately and entirely in a private capacity; it will, therefore, seem as if Government was acting on two different plans, one of which would personally be most objectionable to him, and would immediately lead him to question the other. The confidence in Mr. Rassam's mission, which has been brought about by careful management and long patient waiting would be at once withdrawn, and the position of the captives rendered more critical than ever.

6. As far as we are able to judge, Mr. Rassam's mission has every chance of success. He is proceeding to join the King's Court at the invitation of that monarch; on the 20th of November he was to have reached the place appointed, and if the King was in Godjam, there would not be above fourteen days' march between them; and further, he is the bearer of a letter from Her Majesty the Queen of England, which cannot fail to prove most satisfactory to his wounded dignity, but the receipt thereof, so all are agreed, is the point on which he has always laid the greatest stress, as the one essential before the question of the condition of the captives, or any other, could be entertained.

7. Under these circumstances I would strongly recommend your deferring your advance from Massowah, until further tidings have been received of Mr. Rassam's movements; such cannot be long delayed now, they may, indeed, be at Massowah at this moment, and to save time, I shall, by this opportunity, write and request M. Munzinger, who is in charge of the British Consulate, to be good enough to communicate to you any authentic intelligence he may receive, that you may be the better able to judge how you can act with advantage to the cause you have undertaken.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 8.

Mr. Purday to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received February* 27.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, February* 26, 1866.

IN taking the liberty to present to your Lordship a copy of Mr. Stern's last letter, which I trust your Lordship will read, I am led to make two or three remarks on the correspondence which has lately taken place between myself and the Foreign Office, relative to Dr. Beke's statement of a conversation which he had in Cairo with Mr. Palgrave, on the subjects of Mr. Rassam's instructions, &c., and Mr. Palgrave's denial of those statements.

Now if your Lordship thinks it worth while to compare the letter sent to me respecting Mr. Rassam's instructions, with the statements made by Mr. Palgrave to Dr. Beke, and to the Foreign Office, your Lordship will find that there have been prevarications somewhere.

As to the other revelations of Mr. Palgrave to Dr. Beke, it is quite obvious that Dr. Beke could not relate what he did not know anything about, until Mr. Palgrave told him. Whether they are true or not, it is not for me to say; but one thing is certain, they are not very creditable.

Begging your Lordship's excuse for troubling you with this, I remain, &c.,
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 9.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received March 26.)

My Lord, *Cairo, March 8, 1866.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship the copy of a letter from Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, Political Resident at Aden, dated Matemma, 27th December, 1865, which reached me through the Prussian Consul-General this morning, and which incloses copies of letters received from the King of Abyssinia, inviting Mr. Rassam to proceed to Debra Tabor.

Mr. Rassam intended leaving Matemma on the 28th December, and expected to meet His Majesty near the Lake Dambea, before the 10th January.

There appears, from the courteous tone of the King's letters to Mr. Rassam, reason to hope that the mission of that gentleman may be successful, and that the captives will have, ere this, been liberated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 9.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Matemma, December 27, 1865.*

MY letters of the 5th ultimo, and of the 1st and 13th instant, which I forwarded to you, viâ Kassala and Massowah, on the 14th of this month, will explain to you how far I had progressed with my mission up to the date of the last letter. I have now the honour to report, for the information of the Government, that I received yesterday two letters from King Theodorus, a translation of which I send herewith inclosed.

2. Both letters, which are written in Arabic, are most civil and friendly. The one of the latest date, which he sent as an apology for having omitted to affix his name and seal to the former letters, is quite perfect as regards the Royal seal and name.

3. It took the messengers I sent from here on the 22nd ultimo, fifteen days to reach the King in Godjam; and no sooner did His Majesty receive my letter than he ordered letters to be written to the different rulers on the way between Matemma and Debra Tabor, to afford me and my party every assistance in their power, and to provide us with carriage and provisions, free of expense, through the whole route. He also ordered three of his officers, with the rank of "Basha," and decorated with the Royal shirt, to come with a large escort to meet us at Wahuee (the first village on the border of Abyssinia, two days' journey hence), for the purpose of conducting us to his Court. The King himself would meet me near the lake in Dambea on my way there, where he purposes to have a private conference with me regarding the object of my mission.

4. As His Majesty thought that he should like to remain at Debra Tabor during our stay in Abyssinia (Gondar being now in a ruined state), he has written both to the authorities and to the Europeans there, to prepare everything for us which might conduce to our comfort.

5. The messengers give great hopes as to the success of our mission; and from the munificent way he has treated the whole (seven in number), the aspect of matters looks more cheering. He dressed them all handsomely, and presented each of them with a fine mule.

6. It is currently rumoured that the King had been heard to say that he would try the European prisoners again in my presence, and that he intended to constitute me a judge between him and them on the charge of treason.

7. The messenger whom I had last sent from Massowah, conveying to the King the report of my departure thence for Matemma on the 15th of October, did not reach His Majesty, on account of the disturbances on the road, until the 8th instant, or a day after he received my letter addressed to him from this place. In this case, the King did not know that I had left Massowah until he had heard of my arrival here; consequently, he lost no time in acting up to his promise of sending me an escort to take me up to him.

8. The King has also written to the Chief of Matemma to provide us with carriage and other necessaries as far as Wahuee, where the Royal guard would be awaiting us. The required camels have already been engaged, and we purpose to leave

to-morrow afternoon for Abyssinia, and hope to meet His Majesty before the 10th of next month.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 9.

King Theodore to Mr. Rassam.

(Translation.)

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, praise be to Him for ever, Amen.

To the beloved and noble Hormuzd Rassam.

AFTER offering to you salutations, and asking after your good health, we praise God abundantly that we are well and in the best of health. We inform you that we have received your note dated the 22nd November, and understood it to the letter, and we thanked the Creator for your friendship. Now, oh beloved, we have explained to you that the omission of our name to this letter has been occasioned by the people whom I used to love, and who used to sit on my bed [*i.e.*, at my board], but who had reviled us. This is the obstacle which we mentioned to you while you were at Massowah. Now seeing that God has brought you safely to these parts, we have sent peremptory orders to the Governors in the neighbourhood of Tchelga for receiving you, and bringing you towards us.

Regarding the servants (messengers) who came to us while you were at Massowah, they got sick, and we found one of them, named Mohammed, not indisposed; him we send to you according to your desire.* We have ordered the said Mohammed, if they (his companions) are recovered, to take them with him. May you remain preserved!

The first of Nahsas (A.H.) 1282 (December 8, 1865).

Inclosure 3 in No. 9.

King Theodore to Mr. Rassam.

(Translation.)

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, praise be to Him eternally.

From the King of Kings of Abyssinia, King Theodorus, to the beloved and true friend Hormuzd Rassam, First Governor of Aden.

AFTER offering you abundance of salutations, and presenting you with compliments, (we offer) to the Most High God abundant thanks. What necessitated the writing this, oh dear one, is that we wrote to you formerly a number of letters, not containing the name and seal, on account of what had taken place on the part of insolent people, who outraged God, and (the one) whom He had made ruler, and we do not know nor understand whether these people are Jews or heathens, who do not know God. When we saw in this matter [five words obscure], we find it necessary to affix for you our name and seal, and we have placed the name and the Royal seal because, if these wicked men have reviled us, you, oh beloved, what evil have you done to us! Now we send you our name and our seal by your servants, in order that every time we might not act amiss as formerly. Salam.

Written on Monday the 4th of Nahsas, (A.H.) 1282 (December 11, 1865).

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* I had asked the messenger who carried my letter to come himself to me when the escort was sent.—H. RASSAM.

No. 10.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received March 27.)

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 16, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship the accompanying despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, with its inclosures, which reached me this morning, and which contains further intelligence from Mr. Rassam.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 10.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.

My Lord, *Aden, March* 3, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Her Majesty's ship "Lyra" returned from Massowah this day, bringing intelligence from the captives up to the 27th December, and from Mr. Rassam up to the 4th January.

2. Copies of the letters received from Captain Cameron are forwarded herewith. It will be seen from them that though all had suffered greatly from influenza, and Mr. Rosenthal's child had died since last accounts, they were at the time of writing in fair health, and as well as could be expected under the circumstances. They were anxiously looking for intelligence regarding Mr. Rassam's mission, of which they knew nothing beyond the reports of his having left the coast for up country. The money, 300 dollars, which Captain Cameron asks to be sent to Massowah on Mr. Bardel's account was forwarded by me in Her Majesty's ship "Lyra." There would be no use attempting to send any more money direct to Captain Cameron for his use and that of the other captives, as long ere this I hope Mr. Rassam, who is well supplied with funds, will at least have communicated with them, if not have effected their release.

3. A copy of a letter from Mr. Flad, at Gaffat, is also appended. It is dated 28th December and 1st January, and in it he states "twice I have sent money up to the fortress to Captain Cameron, &c., so that they are well supplied for some time to come." All the letters were much damaged by wet, so that the writing in some parts was quite illegible.

4. I am glad to be able to give excellent reports of Mr. Rassam's successful progress: as I expected, he had only to push on and reach Matemma to find everything smooth before him. He appears to have arrived at that place on the 21st December. He there received a most friendly and courteous letter from the Emperor, who to do proper honour to the mission had sent three officers of rank, with a strong guard, to escort it to the Court. The Emperor himself was in Godjam chastising the rebels there, but he intended to come and meet Mr. Rassam near the Lake Tsana, as the latter passed through Dendrea on his way to Debra Tabor. The Emperor would leave it to Mr. Rassam's option to reside either at Debra Tabor or Korata during his stay in Abyssinia, and orders had been sent to both those places to make arrangements for the proper reception and for the wants of the mission; while all the people between Matemma and Debra Tabor were directed to provide the party with everything required, whether in the shape of provisions, carriage, or aught else. All the messengers Mr. Rassam had sent to the Emperor had been given dresses of honour and other presents. On the 4th January the mission was at Bolwoha, between Wohnee and Tchulza, and only about fifty miles west of Gondar, expecting to move on that afternoon. They had been treated most civilly by the heads of the districts they had passed through since leaving Matemma.

5. The Emperor seems quite to have changed his tactics, and the best results may soon, I think, be confidentially expected, though from the dilatory habits of the people of the country some time may yet elapse before the object of the mission will be quite completed. Mr. Flad mentions in his letter that the Europeans at Gaffat (the King's artizans) had received two letters from His Majesty, saying that an English Ambassador, who came to seek his friendship, was on the road, and after he had met him he would send him to Gaffat. He had also ordered them to receive him with all honour due to his rank. Everybody, the Europeans and Abyssinians, conclude that His Majesty is inclined to settle the business on which Mr. Rassam was sent.

6. M. Munzinger, Acting British Consul at Massowah, informs me that on the 13th February he had forwarded by native boat copies of all the letters now received in

original by the "Lyra," also a despatch from Mr. Rassam to me. These have not yet reached me, but probably will in a day or so.' He also said he does not expect any more letters before the middle of March. The "Victoria" will be sent to Massowah on the 15th, by which time I hope further good tidings will have arrived.

7. Dr. Beke was still at Massowah when the "Lyra" left on the 27th ultimo, but he proposed starting in a day or two, and going about thirty miles inland. He has sent no official reply to my despatch requesting him to delay his attempt to enter Abyssinia until something definite was known of the success or otherwise of Mr. Rassam's mission; but in a semi-official note he informs me that he had already notified his arrival to the Emperor, and his intention to proceed to his Court as quickly as possible. His letter was despatched on the 30th January, and with it a copy of a petition from the relatives of the captives, written in Amharic and English, praying for mercy to the unfortunate prisoners. At the earliest, that letter would not reach the Emperor before the middle of February. By that time, I trust, Mr. Rassam will have been sufficiently long with the King to render the chances of any ill-effects resulting from the apparently double and different missions being less than if he had not joined His Majesty; and having delivered Her Majesty's letter to King Theodorus, the latter would be more disposed to understand the real nature and object of Dr. Beke's proceedings.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 10.

Mr. Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, December* 11, 1865.

I HAVE received your note by Henry Adam's man; he has been four months on the road, and was lightened of the paper, &c., by rebels.

There is no news here, except that half of us are laid up with influenza; and that poor Mrs. Rosenthal's son has gone at last, after being a constant sufferer in one shape or another almost since his birth.

Mrs. Rosenthal is *enceinte*. God alone knows what the rest of all this misery will be.

We are all pretty quiet again among ourselves—the best of all things; but there are times when the position is horrible. The nerves, and consequently the temper, give way in spite of ourselves. I am anxiously looking out for money.

I have borrowed 20 dollars already, which I cannot pay.

The Bishop has no money to lend us at present.

I send two letters, one for Dr. Beke, the other for Herstlet. Remember me most kindly to dear Playfair and Badger if you are writing that way, and pray thank General Coghlan for a letter he has been kind enough to write to my people, and believe me, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 3 in No. 10.

Mr. Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My deer Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, December* 18, 1865.

I MERELY send you a few lines to say that we are all still alive, though suffering. There is a nasty epidemic prevailing, a sort of influenza, and Stern, myself, Rosenthal, Mrs. Rosenthal, Kerens, and Mr. Bardel have all been stricken with it. We are none of us too strong, I am sorry to say; it is all well as long as we are not touched by disease, but there is not one of us who can stand the slightest illness. Mrs. Rosenthal was confined last night, and has brought a little girl into this miserable society of ours. You might write the news to the Jews' Society. I wish you would arrange to have a few hundred dollars at my disposal, on my private account * * * * You can arrange it kindly. Send Mr. Flad 20 dollars for Mr. Kerens. Excuse me troubling you about this, but my people will soon be clamouring for advances on wages. I have written to Herstlet about it, also about having all money sent put, if possible, to my private account.

* * * * * * [illegible]

not forget to be remembered to dear Playfair and his wife, and also to Mr. Badger, for whose kindness to my mother I am truly grateful. F. at G. will, I suppose, tell you the news. Good bye.

Yours ever,
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 4 in No. 10.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Rassam.

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, December* 28, 1865.

ALREADY, a week ago, I had intended to send to you Gebree Michael; but just when he was on the spot to leave news reached us that you had already passed Alafa, on your road to the King, and we were fully convinced that you would be here next week; but yesterday evening when Fanta arrived, we learned that we were disappointed. However, I hope that you have now the not . . . left behind you.

The 400 dollars you had the kindness to send by my servants I have received. Twice I have sent money up to the fortress to Captain Cameron, &c., so that they are supplied for some to come. From the inclosed notes of Captain Cameron, you will learn the condition of our suffering friends in Magdala.

We were very much grieved to hear of the death of Mr. Rosenthal's child; but the poor fellow was a sufferer from the very beginning: he died on the 8th of this month. On the 17th, Mrs. Rosenthal was delivered of a little daughter; both she and the child are well.

The Europeans at Gaffat (the King's artisans) received two letters from His Majesty, in which he says that an English Ambassador, who came to seek his friendship, is on the coast, and after he has met him he will send him to Gaffat. He also ordered them to receive you with all honours due to your rank. Everybody, the Europeans and Abyssinians, conclude that His Majesty is inclined to settle the business you came for; yet one can never get to the bottom of this man's character, but of course we hope for the best, and trust that God will bless your self-denying efforts.

As I hope to have the honour of meeting you soon, I postpone everything that I should have to say about the Europeans here; you will find yourself that they are persons mixed up together of a very different caste. I do not know anything else which I should have to say for the present besides what I have recommended in my letter from August.

I and Mrs. Flad feel so grateful for your continual kindness towards us, that we . . . . nothing to complain of . . . . present. The only thing . . . . would beg of you no . . . that after you leave . . . . in liberating our unf . . friends you would bri . . . . . your influence in our behalf too, as it is our most fervent wish to get out of this country. On the 17th of this month, Suma, the servant of the Consul, arrived here, the stores he had left at Gondar, because they demanded 11 dollars toll of him. I myself spoke to the Nigad Ras of Gondar . . . giving him a present of two shirts, and promising to give him some gunpowder. I got the things here without paying the 11 dollars. Suma says that he received from you 100 dollars; his expenses from Massowah to Gondar amounted to 75 dollars. As Tantoo Mershee, the merchant to whom you had intrusted him gave me the account, the remaining 25 dollars he handed me over, which I shall send to Captain Cameron. Waldoo also and his companions whom you had sent with money, have not yet arrived at Magdala.

Captain Cameron sent . . . . letter from . . . . dated 22nd of July, in which . . . . state that on the 25th of June . . . . . had sent the sum of 800 dollars . . . . Mr. Eipperle, at Matemma. The . . sul wished me to send down . . . . it but . . . . nor Mr. Eipperle have mentioned anything about it. Mr. Schniapee thanks you for your kind remembrances, and begs to say, that he hopes he will soon have the honour of seeing you here.

(Signed) F. M. FLAD.

P.S.—1*st January*, 1866.—I kept Tanta here till now, in the hope of giving you some . . . . news of our friends on the fortress, as I have sent some messengers a fortnight ago; but they have not arrived, and I deem it better to send him now as you may want him on the road.

Report says that the King had sent a friendly letter to the English prisoners on the fortress; as soon as I hear of them I shall send to you. I send you some potatoes by

Tanta. May the Lord lead you safely hither and protect you, and prosper your efforts in this new year, is the sincere wish of your's, very respectfully.

F. M. F.

Inclosure 5 in No. 10.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Rassam.

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, January* 3, 1866, 1 P.M.

JUST now my messenger arrived from Magdala, with the inclosed letters from Captain Cameron. I hasten to forward them; perhaps the man may reach Tanta on the road. The report that His Majesty Theodorus has sent a friendly letter to the English prisoners at Magdala, has proved to be a gigantic lie.

In case you are called to the King from Tshelga, please to let the bearer of this return, in order that we might hear something about you.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) F. M. FLAD.

No. 11.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received April 6.)

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 27, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the accompanying despatch from Colonel Merewether, with its inclosures, that has just reached me by the Bombay mail.

With the exception of Mr. Rassam's private letter to Colonel Merewether, reporting his progress in Abyssinia, which appears most satisfactory, the inclosures contained in Colonel Merewether's despatch have already been forwarded to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 11.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.

My Lord, *Aden, March* 17, 1866.

THE letters alluded to in paragraph 6 of my despatch of the 3rd instant, as having been sent from Massowah by native boat, only arrived to-day; the vessel was delayed by bad weather, and contrary winds; I have the honour to forward herewith copies of the different documents received by her.

2. They are of more importance than I expected they would be, and I regret to say tell of most unfortunate dissensions amongst the captives themselves, which may lead to difficulties, and injuriously affect Mr. Rassam's efforts for their release. It is true, the intelligence is of old date, and the later news transmitted by me on the 3rd instant, said no more about the quarrels, it may be hoped therefore matters have improved, and will remain so until Mr. Rassam joins the King, and has the advantage of direct personal communication with His Majesty.

3. Mr. Rassam's progress is most promising, and the tone of the King's letters most auspicious, while the instructions issued by the King, and the manner in which the mission has been treated after entering Abyssinia, are everything that could be wished. The latest official communication is dated the 27th December, but I have a private letter giving account of the movement of the mission up to the 11th January, when it was only twenty miles from Gondar; extracts from this letter are appended for your Lordship's information.

4. As regards Mr. Rassam's and Captain Cameron's remarks on the pecuniary transactions between them, I instructed the former to charge to Her Majesty's Government all disbursements made by him, whether to Captain Cameron or to any one else; any monies sent up to the captives were intended for the benefit of the whole, and to be distributed by Captain Cameron as he found best. When the captives have been safely extricated from their present position and got out of the country, the total amount expended can be adjusted, in any manner Her Majesty's Government may be pleased to decide. Much more than Mr. Rassam is likely to use would be well spent if it bring about that fortunate result.

5. By this mail I send 1,000 German crowns to Colonel Stanton to meet the bill drawn by Mr. Rassam, and I shall ask the former to, if possible, make an arrangement through the Egyptian Government, that any further bills Mr. Rassam may have to draw, may be cashed at any place where treasure may be, belonging to the Egyptian Government, and I will at once on receiving advice of the drafts being issued, or presented in Egypt, remit the equivalent to Colonel Stanton. The 500 dollars alluded to, and which I asked Sir R. Colquhoun to send to Matemma, were returned from Khartoum, their safe despatch to their destination not having been found feasible. It is of the utmost importance that Mr. Rassam should be well provided with funds, and I trust that the arrangements will meet with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 11.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, November 27, 1865.

[See Inclosure 1 in No. 7.]

Inclosure 3 in No. 11.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, December 1, 1865.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 7.]

Inclosure 4 in No. 11.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Rassam, November 16, 1865.

[See Inclosure 3 in No. 7.]

Inclosure 5 in No. 11.

Mr. Cameron to Mr. Rassam, October 10, 1865.

[See Inclosure 4 in No. 7.]

Inclosure 6 in No. 11.

Mr. Cameron to Mr. Rassam, October 17, 1865.

[See Inclosure 5 in No. 7.]

Inclosure 7 in No. 11.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, December 13, 1865.

[See Inclosure 6 in No. 7.]

Inclosure 8 in No. 11.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Rassam, August 1, 1865.

[See Inclosure 7 in No. 7.]

Inclosure 9 in No. 11.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Rassam, August 21, 1865.

[See Inclosure 8 in No. 7.]

Inclosure 10 in No. 11.

Mr. Stern to Mr. Rassam, July 9, 1865.

[See Inclosure 9 in No. 7.]

Inclosure 11 in No. 11.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, December 27, 1865.

[See Inclosure 1 in No. 9.]

Inclosure 12 in No. 11.

King Theodore to Mr. Rassam, December 8, 1865.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 9.]

Inclosure 13 in No. 11.

King Theodore to Mr. Rassam, December 11, 1865.

[See Inclosure 3 in No. 9.]

Inclosure 14 in No. 11.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Balcoalen, about 50 *miles to the north-north-west of Gondar, between Walence and Chulga, January* 1, 1866.

My dear Colonel,

I DO hope that the new year will be more propitious to me, my party, and the prisoners than last year; and from the turn the Abyssinian difficulty has taken lately, I have no doubt that our trouble will soon be compensated by the release of our captives.

The inclosed official letter (which I have been obliged to write on thin paper, on account of the difficulty there is in sending any communication to the sea coast for fear of rebels and others) will give you in detail what had taken place lately, and I doubt not that you will be extremely pleased at the way the King has been treating me even before he saw me. His letters could not have been more civil and friendly, nor the orders which he has sent to all the districts through which we have to pass, for our good reception and entertainment, could be more gratifying. He has sent three high officials to escort us from the border of Abyssinia to his Court, and he actually sent for the messenger I sent to him from Massowah, and told him that he would hold them responsible for getting us everything, even to the fowls and eggs. He told them that they were to act on his part as well as mine, and they were to obtain for us everything that could be got. In a letter which he forwarded to the Shebele of Matemma and Galabat, he spoke in gratifying terms of me, and said "a beloved friend of mine named Hormuzd Rassam, an Englishman, is at present with you at Matemma; you are to convey him safely to the district of Cludga, where he will be received by our people, as he is our beloved." Although the old Chief was extremely kind at first before he heard from the King about us, this letter made him doubly so, and he immediately got us camels and sent us to Walmee (the first Abyssinian district), which place we reached on the morning of the 30th ultimo, two days from Matemma. At that place the Royal Guard was to be awaiting us, but on our arrival there, two messengers came and informed me, on the part of the Chiefs of the escort, that they had been obliged to go after the rebels with their party as they had heard that Tinsoo Gobagai had heard of my mission to the King, and had sent a large force to intercept my movements, and carry us all to their Chiefs with all our things.

This movement of the King's officers stopped the progress of the rebels at once, otherwise we might have been by this time prisoners in the hands of the arch rebel Walbiat.

The officers who are call Bashas sent orders at the same time to the Chief of Walmee to send us to this spot, where we are to remain till they return from their expedition, as they said Walmee was a very dirty place (they could not have said a truer word), and Balwaha was in the neighbourhood of nice villages, and where we have good water and shelter in the wood on the bank of the stream called by the same name as the spot.

We left Walmee yesterday afternoon and reached here at sunset; and I must confess that this place is far more pleasant to stay in for a few days than the last village we last left. On our arrival here we found two "Shooms" (Chiefs of villages) awaiting us with a bullock, bread for all our party, milk, eggs, fowls, and beer, which they had brought to us on the part of their Sovereign; of course as long as we remain here and Abyssinia we shall be his guests, and the authorities have to provide us with all eatables and carriage. I dare not offer to pay for what I get as I am told that by doing so I offend the Emperor, which of course I would not do. Although we are all esteemed Royal guests, money is spent faster in making presents than if I had paid for everything I got, and I only wish I had brought some more money with me. As I managed to obtain funds from a German

missionary at Matemma (partly ready money, and partly to be paid to me hereafter) I was obliged to draw on the Consul-General in Egypt for 1,000 German crowns, as I could not manage to get any one to accept a bill on Aden. If you will be writing to Colonel Stanton, kindly ask him to honour my order and draw on you for the amount; or if you can manage it, it would be better if you could get the Peninsular and Oriental Agent at Aden to accept the bill for 1,000 German crowns, and write to the Superintendent of his Company at Alexandria to cash it. I have written to Colonel Stanton and asked him to settle the draft with you as I do not like to complicate my accounts by drawing on the Foreign Office.

I have sent a copy of the inclosed despatch to Colonel Stanton by a courier to Khartoom, as I was not certain that I should ever be able to send you the original, and if I sent it whether it would reach you safely. One of my old messengers to the Rajah has undertaken to convey it to Massowah, and I intend to dispatch him from Chulga on my arrival there; of course the thing will be done in secret. I hope it will not be long before I am able to write to you openly. Your kind letter of the 10th November reached me at Matemma on the 18th ultimo. Many thanks for it, and for all the notes you kindly inclosed. They reached me from Massowah in thirty-three days at Kassala. The authorities took charge of the packet and sent it on to Kedarif by a Government courier, and thence it was brought to me by the Bashi-bazooks.

On the 14th of last month I sent you *vid* Kassala and Massowah, a large packet of letters containing no end of news, official and private, and I hope that before the end of this month it would reach you safely; indeed if the agents I wrote to will attend to my instructions, and the "Victoria" will arrive at Massowah in time to receive the packet, it might reach you about the middle of this month.

I have sent copies of all my official letters to you to Egypt in case the originals may delay or be lost on the road. Can you believe it, that great liar, the messenger, who reported twice the release of Cameron, on account of the letter he brought me again from the King, and for the sake of his relative Samuel; he is certainly very useful, and has the cheek of his Satanic Majesty. I taxed him the other day with the deception he played upon me, and his cool answer was that he wished to please me, and that as he had heard that the Emperor was going to release Cameron immediately, he thought he might just as well be the first person to inform me of the good tidings. "Had the report been bad," said he, "I would not have dared to utter it." Did you ever hear of such cool confession? You will perceive that the King mentions him in his letter to me. He is called Mahomed Salcannee, the brother of Samuel. I did not employ again after the first time. I have received two notes—one from Samuel, and the other from the King's Arabic scribes—they both say that their master is pleased with me, and doubted not that he would treat me well. The sun is as powerful as ever, but I am told that as soon as we pass Chulga (in two days' journey hence) we shall not feel its heat any longer; how pleasant it will be! We are all, thank God, quite well, and, with the exception of some of our servants having suffered for a short time from fever, every one of my party is in perfect health.

4th January.—The officers whom the King had sent to escort us made their appearance in the afternoon, they presented themselves to me as soon as they arrived, decorated with the Royal shirt. They were extremely civil, and would not sit down in my presence until I asked them to do so. They expressed themselves in very gratifying terms on the part of their Sovereign for my safe arrival to these parts; they told me they had sent agents all over the country to collect men and beasts of burden for removing us to the King's Court, and they expected them back to-morrow. I shall be glad when I know that I am in the King's camp. I am getting quite sick of this constant delay.

11th.—Saraba, near Chulga, about twenty miles from Gondar.—We have had no end of delays since we left Balwaka on the 7th, the difficulty has been in procuring men and beasts of burden to transport our luggage, which in this country is done by the King as I am a Royal guest. I proposed to the Chief, whom the King sent to escort me to him, that Blanc Prideaux and S. might push on with our light kit, and the rest of our baggage could follow, but they would not listen to such an expedient, as they said they would not dare to do such a thing, as they knew it would displease His Majesty. I am told, however, that we shall be at the Lake in three days, and consequently we shall meet His Majesty two days afterwards; nothing could exceed the civility and attention which has been shown to me by His Majesty's loyal subjects ever since I left Walmee, and as for the Bashas (two of whom are brothers of Dejaj Hailo, the Commandant of the Magdala garrison, they are over courteous and condescending. I am told that their master had ordered them to honour and respect me as if I was himself; wherever we go we are supplied with bread, cows, milk, fowls, eggs, honey, food for our animals, and beer or meat. Yesterday we ascended this plateau which is, I think, above 8,000 feet above the level of the sea: the climate is most delicious, and, barring the rain, it is not unlike the

English spring. I tried the heat of the sun yesterday at 2 p.m., and found it not higher than 83 degrees. The nights are intensely cold. I hope it will not be long before I shall have the felicity of sending you good and cheering tidings regarding the duty on which I have been sent.

Yours &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

I have received letters from Cameron, which I send by a different messenger.

No. 12.

Extracts of Private Letters received from Mr. Rassam and others.

A FEW days ago I wrote to you a long letter, and told you how well I was received by the Emperor of Abyssinia. We are all now staying at his Court as his guests, and not a day passes without his showing us marked civility and attention.

On the 16th instant all the released prisoners were brought before him, and after some charges were read before the Ministers of State and nobles to different prisoners, they all confessed their faults and begged His Majesty's forgiveness. The Emperor very graciously pardoned them, and said that henceforth he would love them and show them the regard which he has shown me and my companions. We all had another meeting with His Majesty yesterday, and nothing could exceed his courteous and polite behaviour on that occasion. He told me that he wished to see more of me, in order that I might benefit him with my friendly advice.

From my letter to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs you will perceive that he wishes to have some artisans and instructors of artillery; and I send, in conjunction with him, Mr. Flad, one of the released prisoners, to carry the letter to England and bring back an answer. Mr. Flad is a very good man, and our choice could not have been better. Thank God, we are all well, and I have no doubt that, through your prayers and those of our other friends, we shall meet ere long in health and good spirits. Kind regards to all friends.

Zeghe, April 18, 1866.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

P.S.—If you are sending the medicines which Blane has asked for, I shall feel greatly obliged by your forwarding me as soon as possible the articles noted in the inclosed list.

H. R.

Mr. Rassam will have imparted to you the good news of our deliverance from imprisonment, and of our having been formally reconciled with His Majesty the King Theodore since our arrival here.

Lake Tsana, April 16, 1866.

(Signed) C. D. CAMERON.

His Imperial Majesty has just given us some very handsome presents, and continues to treat us with the kindness he showed us since our arrival in the country. A few days ago I sent you an account of the handsome hospitality and reception we had met at his hands. The Emperor desires, for the sake of friendship, that we should stay a few months longer in his country; if it was not for our families at home nothing could be more agreeable to us; and even with this circumstance we feel very happy, if our remaining in this country can in any way strengthen the friendship between the two nations. We are all, thank God, in good health, and, for the present, all enjoying the hospitality of the King's camp. . . . . [Here follows a long list of medicines.]

Zeghe, April 18, 1866.

(Signed) H. BLANC.

No. 13.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 23.)

My Lord, *Cairo, April* 9, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from Colonel Merewether, dated Aden, 28th March, which reached me shortly after the departure of the last homeward mail, and which contains the particulars of the Abyssinian intelligence I had the honour to forward to your Lordship by telegraph on the 5th instant.

The tenour of Colonel Merewether's despatch is of so satisfactory a nature that the complete success of Mr. Rassam's mission can hardly be any longer a matter of doubt, and it may reasonably be hoped that the captives have ere this been safely escorted across the Abyssinian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 13.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.

My Lord, *Aden, March* 28, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report. for your Lordship's information, that the "Victoria" has just returned from Massowah, bringing news from Mr. Rassam up to the 7th February, dated from Sijan Muder, in South-western Abyssinia, and stating that the Emperor had given him a most magnificent reception; a regular constituted Embassy from England could not have been treated with greater honour and attention.

A few hours after his first interview with His Majesty the latter ordered the release of all the European prisoners, including the missionaries and the Frenchmen, and directed that they should all be made over to Mr. Rassam, to take out with him from Abyssinia, which he hoped to leave about the end of March.

The King sent his chamberlain to Magdala to unfetter the prisoners and to bring them to meet Mr. Rassam at Debra Tabor, to which place the latter and his companions were proceeding from the Court, then to Godjam, and where he expected to receive the released captives about the end of February.

The Emperor has written a most polite letter to the Queen, which Mr. Rassam felt sure would please Her Majesty and the British nation.

The Emperor had also made Mr. Rassam handsome presents, and was preparing more to give to the mission before leaving the country.

The above was received at Massowah on the 18th of March; we may therefore expect to hear of Mr. Rassam having actually met and received the released captives about the 10th or 12th proximo, when the "Victoria" will again visit Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 14.

Mr. Hammond to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 26, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 9th of April, conveying the highly satisfactory information that Mr. Rassam's mission had been successful, and that Captain Cameron and the other Europeans held in confinement by King Theodore had been released.

Under these circumstances Mr. Palgrave's services will no longer be required, and you will state to him that, as they cannot now be availed of, he is at liberty to return to England or to proceed elsewhere, at his own convenience.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 15.

*Mr. Hammond to Mr. Purday.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 28, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to inform you that his Lordship has received intelligence from Colonel Merewether, through Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt, dated April 20, to the effect that he had received a letter from Captain Cameron, dated Magdala, February 26, stating that he and his fellow-prisoners had been released from their chains on the previous day, and were about to proceed to Gaffat to be given up to Mr. Rassam.

Captain Cameron's letter further reported everything as being friendly, and stated that Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal were not to be subject to any further trial.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 16.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received May* 14.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, May* 4, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward the inclosed despatch from Colonel Merewether, dated Aden, 24th April, which has just reached me under flying seal, and which gives further details of the Abyssinian intelligence forwarded to your Lordship by telegraph on the 27th ultimo.

This intelligence appears most satisfactory, and gives grounds for believing the whole of the captives have been set at liberty, and that the whole party may be expected to reach Massowah towards the end of May or the beginning of June.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 16.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.

My Lord, *Aden, April* 24, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report for your Lordship's information that the "Victoria" returned from Massowah on the night of the 20th instant. The mail steamer from Bombay passed through the same night, and there was only time to send by her the telegram which was forwarded through Colonel Stanton, C.B.

2. As mentioned therein no letter had come down from Mr. Rassam; the short one, written by Captain Cameron, from which an extract was given in the telegram communicating the good tidings of the actual release, was addressed to M. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate at Massowah, and sent by that gentleman to me. M. Munzinger further reports in a letter from Massowah, dated 16th April, that an Abyssinian convert named Meereba Wurker, a man who had been educated in Bombay, and on whose statements reliance could be placed, had arrived a few days before from Korata, having quitted that place in the middle of March. He said that at the time he left the whole party, including the released prisoners, were assembled at Korata, all in good health and spirits. Mr. Rassam sent salutations, but did not like to write; he was very anxious to leave, but the Emperor was still absent, and it was necessary they should see him before they left. He was then at Zajeh, on the south-west corner of Lake Tsana. It was stated that the Emperor was having valuable presents prepared for Her Majesty, and had called together the best goldsmiths in Abyssinia for that purpose.

3. It was thought that the Mission, with the released Europeans, the German gentlemen from Gaffat, were also at Korata, and were to be allowed to leave the country with the others, would not be able to start on their downward journey before the end of March or beginning of April. Korata is on the east side of Lake Tsana, about the middle of it. The party would have to pass round the head of the lake through Dumbea to Matemma, and so by the route followed by Mr. Rassam in his upward journey. The road by Adowa was impracticable, the Province of Tigré being still much disturbed. At

* A similar despatch was addressed to Captain Desborough.

this season of the year the distance from Korata to Massowah, through Matemma, cannot well be performed in less than two months, and as the late captives are far from strong, it will be June before they can reach the coast; the "Victoria" will be there in readiness by the 1st June.

4. That, however, is a mere matter of time, all difficulties have now vanished, the captives have been released; the Emperor was exceedingly pleased at receiving Her Majesty's letter, caused the greatest consideration and attention to be paid to Mr. Rassam, and the Mission, and has shown himself most anxious to revive friendly communications.

5. A man named Michael Yoriss, an Abyssinian priest, came from Massowah in the "Victoria." He had been in Aden about three months before, and proffered his services to obtain information, I accepted them, and have the honour now to append copy of his statement, giving the intelligence he has collected.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 16.

Statement of Michael Yoriss.

AFTER leaving Aden about three months and a-half ago in Her Majesty's ship "Victoria," I proceeded from Massowah through Adowa and Haurasain to Gondar, and thence to Darnot, when at Whendizeh, Lee Gabroo's Town, I met Mr. Rassam and the mission proceeding to Daroka to meet the King, they were being very well treated by the people of the country, and had the King's officials with them. Leaving Mr. Rassam, I preceded him, and arrived at Daroka, Daniet, four days before him. I had an audience with the King and was asked if I knew anything about the English that were coming up to him. I replied I knew nothing about them. I was present when Mr. Rassam arrived at Damot and had an interview with the King, he was well received and his presents accepted, and he was thanked for them. The King gave him dresses of honour and 5,000 dollars and 50 dollars to each of the servants of the mission. The King asked Mr. Rassam why he had remained two years at Massowah, why he had not come up; he replied that the roads were reported unsafe, and that was his reason; that he had written several times to His Majesty for permission, and that directly it came for him to travel viâ Matemma he had availed himself of the permission and started. The King then asked him if Consul Cameron was his brother. Mr. Rassam replied that, no, he was not an Englishman himself, but still a servant of the British Government, and had been sent with a letter from the Queen of England. The King said he was very glad and accepted it with pleasure; that he had no fault to find with Consul Cameron; that he liked the English very much, and had delivered a letter to Consul Cameron to send to England for him, and that he had not yet received any answer, so he was displeased with Consul Cameron, but that he liked him, and it was entirely owing to Samuel, his steward, that Cameron had been treated in the way he had, for which he had since disgraced Samuel and turned him out of office; that Mr. Stern he had a great aversion to and and all Jews; that he was led to believe they were Englishmen, and that he consequently honoured them and treated them well, and when he found that they abused him and his country and behaved improperly, he got angry with them; but that as now Mr. Rassam had brought an authentic letter from Her Majesty the Queen, he was very much pleased, and ordered Guffar Gholam, his Wuzeer (chamberlain), to proceed to Magdala and release all the prisoners, Europeans, and take them all to Gaffat, and ordered Mr. Rassam to proceed to Korata and there wait for them; that he had a little business to do and would also come there himself shortly. I also had some business in the country and travelled about, when I heard that Mr. Rassam had arrived at Korata, I was at Damot and I went to Zajah and Korata, saw them and afterwards proceeded to Gaffat, thence to Nassos Mooja, where I met the whole of the Europeans going to Korata; all the Europeans that were at Gaffat, ladies included, were there too, they were four days' journey from Gaffat, and distant about two days' journey from Korata, but it would take them more than that to reach it; they all appeared quite well, but were evidently suffering from weakness and fatigue. I spoke to Captain Cameron and he told me that he had written a letter informing of his having been released, and that the messenger who had it could go with me to Massowah, and that he would be paid by M. Munzinger; he told me the King was going to meet Mr. Rassam and live at Zujjeh or Beguender close to Korata. It is about forty days since I saw Captain Cameron; after leaving him I went to Gondar and thence made the best of my way to Massowah viâ Adowa, the messenger of Captain Cameron with me. I arrived at

Massowah seven days after the departure of the "Victoria," so I waited for her return It will take Mr. Rassam and the Consul two good months to get to Massowah viâ Matemma, which is the route they are going to take. The country is still much disturbed, and I was several times stopped on the road by the rebels. The King will not, I think, detain Mr. Rassam and Captain Cameron longer than two or three days at Zijjeh; they ought to be at Massowah in about five weeks or so from this day.

(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW,
Assistant Political Resident, Aden.

No. 17.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received May* 28.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, May* 19, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, to your Lordship, a despatch that has just reached me under flying seal, from the Assistant Political Resident at Aden, and containing the latest intelligence from Abyssinia.

The Emperor continued to treat Mr. Rassam well, and not a day passed without His Majesty showing him marked attention. The messengers who brought this intelligence state, that on reaching Waghara on the 13th April, they heard it reported that Mr. Rassam had proceeded on the 11th to Sighié to take leave of His Majesty.

Captain Cameron and all the released prisoners, eighteen in number, were in perfect health, and all expected to leave about the middle of April.

The Emperor had received a letter from Dr. Beke, inclosing a petition from the relatives of the prisoners; but it may be hoped that no ill effects will result from Dr. Beke's interference, as matters have gone on so favourably with Mr. Rassam.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 17.

The Assistant Resident at Aden to the Earl of Clarendon.

My Lord, *Aden, May* 11, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Lordship's information, that intelligence has been received from M. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate at Massowah, of the arrival on the 29th ultimo of two messengers from Mr. Rassam, with private letters, dated Korata, on Lake Tsana, 9th April, 1866: these letters M. Munzinger has retained until the "Victoria" should revisit the island, as he was afraid to transmit them by this opportunity, being uncertain as to the probable date of arrival at Aden of the vessel that has brought his present despatch; they will now consequently be delivered to Colonel Merewether in person at Massowah, and the information they contain doubtless communicated to your Lordship on the arrival of the "Victoria" at Suez.

2. Messengers were despatched, it appears, by Mr. Rassam, with this self-same packet of letters, on the 23rd March last, but on reaching Waghara they were by some mistake stopped by the Emperor's people. His Majesty, on hearing of their detention, immediately sent and had them released; but instead of continuing their journey on to Massowah, the messengers returned to Mr. Rassam, who had therefore to engage other men to convey the letters to Massowah. The latter left Korata on the 9th April, and state that on reaching Waghara on the 13th idem, they heard it reported that Mr. Rassam had proceeded on the 11th to Sighié to meet and there take leave of the King, whilst the rest of the party had started *en route* for Dembéa, and that Mr. Rassam was to join them at Gorgora, whence they would continue their journey to Matemma.

3. Mr. Rassam states, in a private letter to M. Munzinger, of the 9th April, that the Emperor continued to treat him well, that not a day passed without His Majesty showing him marked attention, he and his party being provided with every necessary, and that further, he had been presented with 10,000 dollars. Captain Cameron and all the released prisoners, eighteen in number, were in perfect health, but the former was somewhat weak; that they all expected to leave about the middle of the month (April).

4. Dr. Beke's letter had been received by the Emperor on the 15th March; the day after its arrival His Majesty sent it to Mr. Rassam to read, together with the petition from the relatives of the prisoners, and Mr. Rassam thought that His Majesty wished to consult

with him regarding the answer that should be sent. He considered it very probable that the messengers who had brought it would be dismissed at the same time that he left the Court, in which case he would despatch one also, to give information of his departure from Korota for Matemma and Kissala. This messenger M. Munzinger expected would arrive in a few days at Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 18.

Captain Cameron to Mr. Hammond.—(Received June 5.)

Sir, *Korata, Abyssinia, March* 16, 1866.

I SENT the intelligence to Massowah on the 25th February, of our having been released of our chains the day before, owing to the successful intercession of Mr. Rassam.

We reached this on the 12th instant, having been handed over entirely to Mr. Rassam.

We were rather afraid of a public judgment, but this, thank God, has been spared us.

This morning the King sent a letter, containing the charges against us. Those against myself are as follows :—

1. Instead of going to Massowah, after my first visit to His Majesty, I went among the Turks, who were his enemies (viz., to Kassala). I suppose as being in the Egyptian territory, as he considers that his quarrel with the Turks is limited to Egypt, and has nothing to do with Turkey.

2. I abused him while there; how, is not known.

3. After returning to his dominions, I could give no account as to whether there was an answer or not to his letter to Her Majesty.

There is also a very respectful and humbly worded letter for Her Majesty.

We hope to leave soon, in company with the other prisoners, who were at large at Gaffat, and Mr. Rassam.

We are all well.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 19.

Mr. Purday to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 11.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, June 7*, 1866.

I AM requested by Mrs. Stern to forward you a copy of a letter she has just received from her husband, the Rev. H. A. Stern, thanking your Lordship for the communications on the subject of the Abyssinian captives which your Lordship has kindly, from time to time, favoured us with.

I am, &c.
(Signed) C. H. PURDAY.

Inclosure in No. 19.

The Rev. H. A. Stern to Mrs. Stern.

My dear Wife, *Korata, March* 22, 1866.

AT length God in his infinite mercy has heard the prayers which have ascended to his throne of grace in our behalf, and released us from prison and chains. Our manacles were removed on February 24th, and on the 25th we quitted the rocky heights on which we had been confined for sixteen interminable months. Two days we remained encamped at the foot of the Amba to regain some strength, as several of us (myself among the number) could scarcely stand upright, much less ride any considerable distance. Freedom, change of air, and the luxury of unshackled hands and feet, however, effected a wonderful alteration in our exhausted and enervated frames. On the 7th instant, we reached Gaffat, where Mr. Flad and our former fellow prisoners gave us a most cordial reception. We remained one night with those friends, and then in company started for Korata, the temporary home

of Mr. Rassam, and the vicinity of the Royal camp. From the kindness and attention we experienced, as we advanced on our journey, hope, so long deadened in our hearts, began to revive, and visions of liberty, to which for more than two years we had been strangers, again brighten our future. Our enterprizing, excellent friend, Mr. Rassam, received us with that cautious coldness which our mutual position seemed to render indispensable. Messengers were dispatched the same night to announce our arrival to His Majesty; and on the morning of the 15th instant, a complete reconciliation was effected before Mr. Rassam and the royal delegates, between the King and his white prisoners.

We are now waiting with yearning impatience the permission to leave Abyssinia; a question which is still subject to the variable mood of His Majesty.

A letter from Dr. Beke, together with a petition from you and the other relatives of the prisoners, arrived here on the 16th instant.

The King forwarded the English copies to Mr. Rassam, with the laconic remark; "I have already, for the sake of the Queen of England, liberated the captives" I should like to have written a long letter, but Mr. Rassam restricted me to a short note, and I must therefore impose an unwilling restraint on my unchained hand.

Kiss the dear children for me; and that our Heavenly Father may ere long reunite us, is the continual prayer of your affectionate, bnt severely tried husband.

(Signed) HENRY A. STERN.

No. 20.

Dr. Beke to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 13.)

My Lord, 4, *Suffolk Street, London, June* 11, 1866.

I TAKE the liberty of announcing to your Lordship that I arrived in England from Abyssinia on the 8th instant; and I avail myself of the earliest opportunity to say that I have heard, to my great regret, that the contents of a letter addressed by me from Cairo to Mr. Purday, the father-in-law of the Rev. H. A. Stern, had been made known to your Lordship, and that you had in consequence found it necessary to communicate with Mr. W. G. Palgrave on the subject.

In justice to myself, I trust I may be allowed to offer the following explanation respecting that letter:—

On my arrival in Alexandria last November, I heard openly repeated, in the presence of several English gentlemen (some of whom I believe to be now in England), matters affecting the personal character of two gentlemen who have unfortunately been named in connection with the subject, of which matters Mr. Palgrave was said to be the promulgator.

On the 30th of November I arrived at Cairo, and on the following day Mr. Palgrave (with whom I was not then personally acquainted) called at the hotel where I was staying with my wife, and as I was not within he left his card. It was not till several days afterwards that I returned his call, when I found he had quitted Cairo for a short time. I had now occasion to go to Suez; and on my return, on the 11th of December, I found that during my absence Mr. Palgrave had again called on me. A few days after this we accidentally met in the street, and were introduced to one another by a mutual friend. On the 20th of December Mr. Palgrave paid me a visit, accompanied by another gentleman (a German, whose name I do not recollect), and I received the two in the common sitting-room of the hotel, my wife being occasionally present during portions of the interview. I have entered into these details in order to show that it was Mr. Palgrave who sought my acquaintance, and not I his; and that, as no previous confidence or privity had existed between us, what he thought fit to communicate to me spontaneously and without reservation, on the only occasion on which we ever met, except in the open street, could not be regarded as of a private or confidential character.

With Mr. Palgrave's statements to me, your Lordship has been made acquainted.

Those relating to the two gentlemen already alluded to were little more than an amplification of what I had previously heard in Alexandria. I therefore owe no apology to any one for repeating what was common talk in Egypt before my arrival in that country; but I do owe it to myself to say that I should not have condescended to advert to such a subject in my correspondence with Mr. Purday, had it not been for the apprehension (entertained by others as well as myself) that the alleged ill-feeling towards Mr. Stern, on account of what had occurred in Mesopotamia, might have been carried over into Abyssinia.

That the instructions from Her Majesty's Government to Mr. Rassam were specially directed, if not absolutely restricted, to the liberation of Mr. Consul Cameron, I had heard

from more than one quarter before I left England; consequently, it was no matter of surprise to me to have this confirmed by Mr. Palgrave. Still, as I was deputed by the relatives of Mr. Stern and other captives to obtain the liberation of the whole of them without distinction, it was of the utmost importance that I should be assured of what the fact really was. Accordingly, I suggested that Mr. Purday should communicate on the subject with some members of either House of Parliament, with a view to elicit the truth; but I certainly did not authorize or desire, nor did I indeed in the slightest degree contemplate, any communication with your Lordship, or with your Department, on the subject; and I can only repeat the expression of my regret at such communication having been made, and that your Lordship should thereby have been subjected to any trouble or annoyance.

I do not, however, take to myself any blame for having communicated to Mr. Stern's relative what had been communicated to me under the circumstances already detailed. On the contrary, I consider that I should have been wanting in my duty to him and the other relatives of the captives, and yet more to the captives themselves, had I acted otherwise than I did.

As regards my own mission, your Lordship will, I am sure, do me the justice to believe that I was throughout most careful to abstain from everything at all likely to militate against, or interfere with, the exertions of Mr. Rassam. What I had made up my mind to was the liberation of the captives at all events; and I was only desirous that gentleman should be aware that if from any cause his mission did not make such progress as could be wished for, I was acting independently, though quite harmoniously, towards the same end. The best proof of this is, however, afforded by the reception given by the Emperor Theodore to the petition of the relatives of the captives, forwarded to him in my letter of the 29th of January. As I learn from a communication from Mr. Rassam himself, the petition touched the Emperor's heart; and when (as Mr. Stern reports) His Majesty said that he had already released the prisoners for the sake of the Queen of England, I have reason to believe that if such had not been the case (fortunately for the honour of the British nation), he would still have set them free out of compassion for their distressed relatives, on whose behalf I had undertaken my journey to his country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 21.

Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 19, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 22.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 4.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, June* 24, 1866.

I HAD the honour to forward to your Lordship, by telegraph, the summary of intelligence that has reached me this day, on the subject of the Abyssinian captives.

This intelligence was contained in a letter addressed to the Egyptian Trading Company by their agent at Khartoum, who had received the information from their corresdondent at Matemma, and although it is almost incredible that Captain Cameron could have acted in the reckless and inconsiderate manner reported, I cannot help fearing that there must be, at least, some foundation for the rumour.* The last letters received from Mr. Rassam were dated the 9th April, at which time he hoped to be able to take leave of the King in a few days, and unless some untoward event had happened, later intelligence should have been received from him ere this.

I propose making immediate application to the Egyptian Government, to cause instant inquiries to be made through the Governor-General of the Soudan into the matter, as it appears to me to be of so urgent a nature that no time should be lost in obtaining

* That Captain Cameron had attempted to escape.

all possible particulars on the subject, and this is, I believe, the quickest and surest method of ascertaining whether there is any truth in the report forwarded from Khartoum.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 23.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received July* 7.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, June* 26, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship, a despatch that has just reached me, under flying seal, from the Assistant Political Resident at Aden, forwarding the copy of a letter from Mr. Munzinger, dated Massowah, 1st June.

The intelligence contained in this letter is not satisfactory, though it does not make any mention of the circumstances reported in my despatch No. 51 of the 24th instant to your Lordship, but it appears evident that the King of Abyssinia is not inclined to allow Mr. Rassam and his companions to leave the country so soon as was expected.

On Mr. Flad's arrival in Egypt, I shall probably be enabled to ascertain something more positive as to the position of affairs in Abyssinia at the date of his departure, and trust to find that the report forwarded from Matemma is unfounded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 23.

The Assistant Resident at Aden to the Earl of Clarendon.

My Lord, *Aden, June* 17, 1866.

I DO myself the honour to forward for your Lordship's information, copy of a communication received by me yesterday, from Massowah, from M. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate at that place, dated the 1st instant. The intelligence received, which was brought by native boat, is anything but satisfactory, and M. Munzinger's report is vague. Mr. Flad is the bearer of other letters, which M. Munzinger has not forwarded. One of the members of the mission, in a private note to me, dated 21st April, in which no reference is made to the present position, except that he wishes Mr. Flad to be given some money on his account for purchases in England, mentions that he has himself addressed one to the Political Resident, and there must be others from Mr. Rassam from this place. I have, however, only received the two above referred to.

2. Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" left this for Massowah on the 11th instant, and would have arrived there on or about the 13th; so that in the event of the officer commanding the "Victoria" seeing a necessity for his speedy departure for Suez, to convey Mr. Flad thither, she might be expected to reach that place about the 19th instant, in which case the intelligence herein reported would have already reached your Lordship through Mr. Flad.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 23.

M. Munzinger to the Assistant Resident at Aden.

Sir, *Massowah, June* 1, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to inform you, that Mr. Flad arrived here yesterday. He left King Theodorus' camp, at Zeghe on the lake, on the 21st of April, and he proceeded by Matemma and Kassala. He left Mr. Rassam and all his companions (including the released prisoners) in perfect health in the King's camp. The promise Theodorus gave to Mr. Rassam to send him to his country at once, has not been fulfilled. It seems the King [illegible]es to prolong the negociations. He asked Mr. Rassam to send Mr. Flad with letter to [illegible]overnment, and to stay with him till Mr. Flad will return.

As Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether promised me to send the "Victoria" in the beginning of June, Mr. Flad will do better to wait here for her.

In case the "Victoria" has not left Aden when this will reach you, I beg to send her hither as soon as possible, and to furnish her with coals enough to bring Mr. Flad directly to Suez, if you will find it convenient.

I beg you to inform Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether of the contents of this letter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MUNZINGER.

No. 24.

The Assistant Resident at Aden to the Earl of Clarendon.

My Lord, *Aden, June* 21, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report for your Lordship's information in continuation of my despatch of the 17th instant, that in consequence of the strong head winds prevailing in the Red Sea at this season and the slow speed of the "Victoria," in addition to the unsatisfactory state of her machinery, her commander deemed it more advisable to return to Aden with Mr. Flad in place of at once proceeding with him on to Suez, more especially as he was firmly convinced that by so doing he would thereby hasten Mr. Flad's arrival in England. The "Victoria" arrived here at 5 P.M. to-day, and after a consultation with Mr. Flad I considered it most prudent to send him on to Suez with a letter of introduction to Colonel Stanton, Consul-General in Egypt, at once by the French mail steamer, which was signalled and arrived in the harbour within an hour or so after the "Victoria" came to anchor. The letters to your Lordship's address that Mr. Flad is the bearer of will explain the present position of Mr. Rassam and his companions, and Mr. Flad will communicate to your Lordship what has actually happened between the King and Mr. Rassam to cause the latter's detention. It is needless to add that Mr. Rassam has been unable to write as fully as he would have wished, the letter with Mr. Flad having been almost dictated by the Emperor. As the French steamer is to leave so soon, I am precluded from recording clearly for your Lordship's information the intelligence that Mr. Flad is in possession of. That gentleman has, however, made a written statement of the facts as they occurred, which he will have the honour of handing to your Lordship on arrival in London. Mr. Flad is entirely without means and has not a change of clothes. I have consequently taken upon myself to supply him with clothing for the present, and have given him 50*l.* for current expenses and to cover certain sums that he has been forced to disburse on his downward journey, and I have further informed him he need be in no fear of not receiving ample remuneration for the services he is rendering. I trust that my proceedings will meet with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 25.

Mr. Rassam to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 10.)

My Lord, *Emperor's Court, Legay, April* 18, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship an Amharic letter with an English translation, from the Emperor of Abyssinia, addressed to the distressed families of Consul Cameron and the other European prisoners, in answer to a petition they had forwarded to him through Dr. Beke, and His Majesty will feel obliged by your having it forwarded to the respective parties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure in No. 25.

King Theodore to the Families of the European Prisoners.

(Translation.)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

From the King of Kings, Theodorus, to the distressed [relatives of the prisoners].

HOW are you? Thanks be to God, I am well. The petition which you have sent has reached me. I have felt the grief which has distressed you. For the sake of my friend, Victoria, the Queen of England, I have released the prisoners at Magdala, and delivered them into the hands of Mr. Hormuzd Rassam. May this news give you gladness.

Dated at Zegay, anno mundi 7358, and anno domini 1858, in the year of Saint Mark, and the 10th day the month Mazia (17th April, 1866).

No. 26.

Mr. Rassam to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received July* 10.)

My Lord, *Emperor's Court, Tegay, April* 18, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that my companions, Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, and I reached the Court of the Emperor of Abyssinia on the 28th of January, and His Majesty gave us a most magnificent reception, and treated us with great kindness and civility.

He received Her Majesty's letter graciously; in answer to which he wrote a very friendly and courteous reply.

I had the first interview with His Majesty on the very afternoon of my arrival at his Court, when he related to me all his grievances with regard to Consul Cameron and the other European prisoners. Early the next morning he ordered the release of all the prisoners, a nominal list of whom is herewith inclosed for your Lordship's information. All the released prisoners have been made over to me by His Majesty, and are with me enjoying good health.

All the prisoners presented themselves before the Emperor on the 16th instant, and after the charges were read to them, they all confessed that they were wrong in what they had written and spoken against His Majesty. The Emperor then forgave them for all that they had done, and said that he would be as friendly towards them henceforth as he is towards myself and my companions.

His Majesty has been good enough to present me with 10,000 dollars for my expenditure, and has in every respect been very kind and hospitable. The other day he did me the honour of coming in person to see me in my tent, and said that he held me very dear on account of my being the servant of his friend the British Queen. He has also presented me with a royal saddle, shield, sword, spear, and armlet, and has given each of my companions a shield, spear, and armlet, in addition to five mules. He is about to create an order, with which he intends to invest us.

His Majesty has had for some years a desire to procure some scientific men from England, and yesterday he spoke to me about obtaining for him two or three men who could teach his people how to make cannons, muskets, and shot, and how to melt iron, also an instructor of artillery. He said he wished these persons to come here with their instruments and everything necessary for their work, and after they had taught his people they should be allowed to return.

His Majesty would be much obliged to Her Majesty's Government if his request could be complied with, and from his second letter to the Queen, which I inclose herewith, your Lordship will perceive that we are all detained in this country for the present for friendship's sake.

I should be obliged if Her Majesty's Government could send me 100,000 percussion caps of different sizes, a few double-barrelled rifles and pistols, some gunpowder, a boat, if practicable, for the use of His Majesty on the lake, and any other thing which Mr. Flad, who is the bearer of this letter, may suggest.

If Her Majesty's Government are able to send the persons required, it is necessary that they should be informed that they will be required to remain in the service of the Emperor at least one year, and that no European articles are obtainable here.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure in No. 26.

LIST of the Released Prisoners.

Names.	Occupation.	Country.	County, &c.	Inhabitant of
C. D. Cameron ..	Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Massowah.	..	..	..
L. Kerans ..	Late Secretary of Consul Cameron	Ireland ..	Galway ..	Southpark, Ahaseragh.
R. McKelvey ..	Late servant of Consul Cameron	Ditto	Down	Downpatrick.
J. Makerer ..	Servant of Consul Cameron ..	France ..	Department Haut Rhin	Vhiran-Val.
D. Pietro	Late servant of Consul Cameron	Italy	Turin	Taveia.
A. Bardel ..	Painter, and late teacher of languages	France ..	Department of the Meuse	Sampigny.
Rev. H. A. Stern ..	Missionary..	Cur-Hessen ..	..	London.
H. Rosenthal ..	Missionary..	Mecklenburg ..	Furstenberg ..	London.
Mrs. E. Rosenthal ..	.. ..	England ..	London ..	London.
Mr. J. M. Flad ..	Missionary..	Wurtemberg ..	Reutlingen ..	Undingen.
Mrs. P. Flad ..	.. ..	Rhenish Prussia .	Treves ..	Saarbeucken.
A. Flad } Children.	.. ..	..	..	..
Fr. Flad } Children.	.. ..	..	..	..
P. Flad } Children.	.. ..	..	..	..
W. Staiger ..	Missionary..	Grand Duchy of Baden	Lahr	Laugenwinkel.
F. Brandeis ..	Missionary..	Ditto	Wiesloch ..	Baierthal.
K. Schiller } Natural history collectors		Prussia ..	Posen.. ..	Posen.
T. Essler.. } Natural history collectors		Hungary ..	Odenburgh ..	Neuthal.

Korata, April 4, 1866.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 27.

The King of Abyssinia to Her Majesty.

(Translation.)

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, Amen.

From the servant of Our Lord and His created Being, the son of David, the son of Solomon, the King of Kings (of Ethiopia), Theodorus,

To her, whom God has exalted above all Sovereigns and glorified above all Princes and peoples, and made the Defender of the Christian Faith, and the succour of the poor and oppressed, Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

HAD the illustrious Hormuzd Rassam, whom your Majesty has mentioned to us in your letter, not been sent to us about the matter of Cameron and others, but the lowest of your servants, he would have been received graciously by us. We now send, with Hormuzd Rassam, Cameron and all the other Europeans about whom your Majesty has written. Your Majesty can learn from those who fear the Lord the ill-treatment and abuse which we have received at the hands of the above-mentioned Europeans and the Copt who called himself Metropolitan, the Aboona Salama.

In my humble position I am not worthy to address your Majesty, but illustrious Princes and the deep ocean can bear everything. I, being an ignorant Ethiopian, hope that your Majesty will overlook my shortcomings and pardon my faults. The people whom we have imprisoned for their reviling and defaming us did so because the Gallas had proved victorious over the Royal children of Israel and had humbled them; but God has empowered me, the son of one of the humble women of Israel, to regain that which had been lost by my forefathers.

Doubtless your Majesty has learnt how ignorant and blind the people of Ethiopia are; wherefore I beg of your Majesty not to take amiss the mistakes I may make in my correspondence with you. Counsel me, but do not blame me, O Queen! whose Majesty God has glorified, and to whom He has given abundance of wisdom.

Dated the 22nd day of January, 1858 (corresponding to the 29th of January, 1866).

No. 28.

The King of Abyssinia to Her Majesty.

(Translation.)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

From God's slave and His created Being, the son of David, the son of Solomon, the King of Kings, Theodorus,

To Her whom God has exalted above all people, the Defender of the Christian Faith, the protector of the poor and oppressed, the Queen of England, Victoria.

HAD not your servant, Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, whom you said that you had sent in the affair of Mr. Cameron, come, but the lowest of your slaves, I would have welcomed him.

By the power of God I have released Mr. Cameron, and made him over to your servant, Mr. Rassam; and by the power of God I have also released the other prisoners, and all other Europeans who might wish to leave the country, and made them over to him, and I have kept your servant, Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, for the sake of consulting together upon the extension of our friendship.

We, the people of Ethiopia, are blind, and we beg of your Majesty that you should give light to our eyes; and so may you receive light in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Dated at Zegay, anno mundi 7358 and anno domini 1858, and in the year of St. Mark and the 10th day of the month Mazia (corresponding to the 17th of April, 1866).

No. 29.

Mr. Flad to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received July* 10.)

My Lord,

I DEEPLY regret that I have to report for your Lordship's information the melancholy events which Mr. Rassam and his companions, together with the released prisoners, had to experience just on the day appointed for their departure from Abyssinia.

It was the 13th of April, 1866, which day was appointed by His Majesty Theodorus, that the released prisoners should leave Korata, and proceed from there by Foggera, Dembea, and Tshelga to Matemma.

Mr. Rassam with his companions had left us early in the morning, in order to take leave of His Majesty Theodorus. The royal camp was at Segie, on the south-west shore of the Lake Tsana.

The European artizans of His Majesty and the agents of his Lordship Bishop Gobat at Jerusalem proceeded, according to the order of the King, with Mr. Rassam to the Royal camp.

As soon as Mr. Rassam had arrived on the other side of the lake, as usual when he went to see His Majesty, the mules of the King were waiting for him to take the three gentlemen up to the house of the King.

As soon as they had dismounted from the mules and entered the hedge, one of the King's Rases (Minister) came, informing Mr. Rassam that he had received order from the King to make him, Mr. Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc prisoners.

Immediately a soldier took hold of Mr. Rassam, others took the swords of Mr. Prideaux and Dr. Blanc, and some others took hold of the two gentlemen. Mr. Prideaux, not yet aware what was going on, refused to give his sword, on which occasion a soldier gave him some boxings. Informed by Mr. Rassam that they were prisoners, Mr. Prideaux condescended. After this a carpet was brought and the gentlemen were ordered to take a seat. The King was inside in his house, and the gentlemen had to sit outside in the sun and were watched by soldiers.

The first Ras (Minister) was sent by the King to ask Mr. Rassam: Where are the prisoners?—*A.* They have left Korata to go to Tshelga.

Why did you not bring them here?—*A.* Your Majesty gave me permission to send them by the other side of the lake to Tshelga, where I should have met them, to take them to their own country.

You had no right to send them without my permission.—*A.* Your Majesty had graciously released them, and given them over to me, for the friendship's sake of my Queen; and, by Ledj Abeedan, I have asked your Majesty whether I may send them around the lake or not, and your Majesty gave me, by Ledj Abeedan your servant, full liberty to do what I think best.

King. I wish you to reconcile me to them. I intended also to give those who have no mûle a mule, and to those who have no money some money for the road.—*A.* The reconciliation which took place in the month of March, I thought was sufficient. The released prisoners asked your Majesty to forgive them for the Redeemer's sake, and I myself asked your Majesty to forgive them. According to which your Majesty, in your letter dated (?)* March, say, that for God's sake, and for the friendship's sake of the Queen of England, you forgave them and that I shall take them out of your country.

Some unimportant questions more were put to Mr. Rassam, after which the three gentlemen were brought to a tent and watched by soldiers.

I must make here the remark, that the Government could not have intrusted a man better fit for the mission of Mr. Rassam than himself. In all his business with the King he was calm, prudent, cautious, and sincere. Not only the Abyssinians but even the Europeans did wonder at him. I have also to observe that if even Mr. Rassam would have taken the released prisoners with him to the King the same thing would have happened. Neither Mr. Rassam nor the released prisoners would have been permitted to leave Abyssinia. A month before we had received the King's order to start it was reported by the natives that the King intended to keep Mr. Rassam and the released prisoners in order to get a "kassa" (ransom) satisfaction from the Queen of England.

Once when he consulted his European artisans whether he shall send Mr. Rassam and the released prisoners or whether he shall keep them, and those gentlemen advised, yea, even beged him, to send Mr. Rassam and the released prisoners to their country and to make friendship with England, he replied "But if they are gone what have I?—An empty hand! I wish to have something in my hands (that means hostages); but as your advice is to send them, I will follow your advice, they may go."

The prison where we were put in was built more than a fortnight ago, and at the same time it was said by the natives, who had heard what the King was going to do, that if the prisoners are going with Mr. Rassam to the King they will not be allowed to see him; but they will be brought as soon as they land to that hedge, which afterwards became our prison.

From this we see that the King had planned it long ago, not only to keep Mr. Rassam, but to frighten him, that he might consent to the King's proposal made in March to Mr. Rassam, namely, that he shall remain in Abyssinia and send a man with letters to his Queen, that Her Majesty shall send skilful men, artists, &c., to Abyssinia, who would open the King's eyes, because, said he, "I am blind, and wish you to open my eyes." Mr. Rassam will have given in his reports to your Lordship the details of that negotiation.

After the three gentlemen had been put in a tent their property was brought before the King, where it was by himself examined, counted, and registered. The money, silver vessels and ornaments, the guns, pistols, powder, &c., were taken by the King. The other effects and the provisions were, after they had passed their examination, restored to the gentlemen.

It is the custom in Abyssinia, that if a person is imprisoned his property is taken by the Government. Sometimes it is restored, sometimes not.

The servants who were with Mr. Rassam received also a guard; but they were allowed to serve their masters. Those of his servants who have been at Korata and those who were with us have been put in chains.

The 14th and 15th of April past over quiet.

Now I must proceed to our own, the released prisoners' sad history. On the 13th of April, at 9 o'clock, we left Korata with a servant of the King, which was given to us as an escort, not anticipating that some hours after we would be made prisoners again. Before we left all our mules were counted by some of the king's officers. After two hours' ride we were brought by our guide to a village; a few hours after our arrival we were called in a house to hear a letter from the King. As soon as we had entered the house the door was watched by two armed soldiers and we ourselves were surrounded by about twenty soldiers, who had been hidden in the house. Detaty Tadla, who was sitting on an alga, arose then and said, I have received order from the King to make you prisoners, but do not be afraid. As soon as he had pronounced these words each of us was taken and kept by a soldier. A letter of the King was read to us, its contents were as follows; "In the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God, may this letter reach Detaty Tadla. By the power of God, I the King of Kings, Theodorus, am well. We have been angry with our friends and with those Europeans who say we go to our country, and we are not yet reconciled. Until we consult what we are going to do take hold of them, but do not make them uncomfortable or afraid, and do not hurt them."

As soon as the letter was read we were ordered to sit down and to give up our pocket-

* Mr. Rassam gave the date, but I forgot it.

knives. After we were searched Detaty Tadla left the house with some governors and soldiers. They proceeded to the tents of Mrs. Flad and Mrs. Rosenthal, gave a guard to them, and took hold of our servants, property, and animals. Boxes were opened, the money was counted and taken, and everything given to the charge of the soldiers. The ladies, the children, and the servants were weeping and crying, and even we ourselves felt very wretched, seeing us again surrounded by all these black barbarians, who rejoiced in our misery. In the evening iron chains were brought and we were two and two chained together. For each of us a man-servant and a maid-servant, for whom he had to make himself responsible were released, and allowed to provide some food for us. During the night we were watched. The next morning we were brought back to Korata. We were allowed to ride on our mules. Arrived at the market-place, we had to sit there for about five hours, being watched and surrounded by a great many Abyssinians. The greater part pitied us, others had their delight to mock at us, whether we were monkeys or men. In the evening we were brought in two different houses, the ladies and children together with us. We had no bed and nothing to eat, everything was taken from us. It was something heartrending to hear the poor little children weeping and crying, one asking for a bit of bread, another for milk, and another for his supper and his bed. If the wives of the European artisans, who in providence happened to be at Korata, would not have sent us some food and some milk for the children, and a covering for the ladies and children at night, our position would have been terrible. We, the chained, had just to lie down on the floor of the house. To the ladies and children two algas were allowed. The fearful night had passed; two hours before sunrise we were ordered by our guard to get up and to proceed down to the shore of the lake; from whence we were in the boats of bulrushes and by the people terrible from their beginning, hitherto (Isaiah xviii, 2), taken to the other side of the lake, to the Royal camp. Our servants were kept prisoners at Korata.

Arrived on the other side, the King sent three mules, one for Captain Cameron, and two for the ladies and the children. An hour's walk brought us to our prison. Immediately after we had arrived the King sent us a dinner consisting in eleven cows, eleven baskets of bread, eleven jars of hydromel, five jars of butter, and three jars of pepper. He also kindly sent a tent for the ladies. Mr. Rassam had the kindness to send us one of his tents and six cowhides, else we would have been obliged to sleep on the bare ground.

In the evening some of our luggage, after it had been examined, was sent to us by His Majesty. Mrs. Flad was very glad to find some dresses for the little ones, and some preserved milk in one of the boxes. We partook of some "debs" (roasted meat) which a soldier had the kindness to prepare for us.

On the 10th, in the morning, we were brought before His Majesty. For Captain Cameron he had sent a mule. When we arrived the whole Court was assembled. Mr. Rassam, with companions, was sitting on a carpet in front of His Majesty. Immediately order was given to release Captain Cameron from his chain. To the soldier who had to open the iron chain of Captain Cameron the King said ironically, "Take care, do not touch him, he has the syphilis." As soon as the chain was taken off Captain Cameron was ordered to take a seat on the carpet, where Mr. Rassan with his companions were sitting. After Captain Cameron, M. Bardel, a Frenchman, was released and ordered to sit down next Captain Cameron.

Now the King said to Mr. Rassam, Ask the prisoners: Why did you wish to leave my country before you took leave of me, and before we were reconciled?—*A.* Your Majesty had graciously given us over to the English Ambassador, Mr. Rassam, and we had to do what Mr. Rassam ordered us to do.

King. Would it not have been right for you to ask Mr. Rassam to bring you hither and to reconcile you with me?—*A.* Yes.

King. You made the mistake, Mr. Rassam, because I told you to reconcile me with them. Why have you omitted to do so?—*A.* Your Majesty, a reconciliation took place in March, as soon as the prisoners had arrived at my camp, and I was fully convinced that such a reconciliation would be satisfactory.

King. But on the day when I sent to you that you might get ready for the road, did I not tell you that if you came you should bring the released prisoners with you, because I wished to give to those who had no mule a mule, and to those who have no money some money for the road; according to which you gave me the answer that you have bought mules for them, and that you have money enough to take them to their country?—*A.* Yes; but I did this only to spare your Majesty to be troubled with them.

King. Now you see for your sake they are again in chains. From the day you said you wished to send them by another road I got suspicious, and thought that you wished to do so in order that you may say in your country you have released them by your prudence or by your power. Who are you? Are you a king? Are you not only but the servant of the Queen of England?

But now, ask those whether they have abused me or not?—*A.* Yes.

King. Captain Cameron I had imprisoned because he went to Kassala to my enemies the Turks, and I had given him a letter for the Queen, and he came back without bringing me an answer. Messrs. Flad, Stern, Rosenthal, Makerer, and Kerans, I had chained because they have abused me; and the rest of them I had imprisoned because I found them together with the others. They have done nothing. I even don't know them.

King (to Mr. Rassam). Ask Mr. Stern whatfore did he abuse me?—*A.* Your Majesty, in a bad hour St. Peter betrayed his Master, and I wrote something against your Majesty; but as Peter when he repented received Christ's forgiveness, so I repent, and ask your Majesty to forgive me for Christ's sake.

King. Did you write it from yourself, or did the Aboona ask you to write it?—*Mr. Stern.* What I have written, partly I heard it from the Aboona, and partly from his servants; but he never asked me to write it down.

After this Mr. Rosenthal was asked, Have you abused me?—*A.* Yes.

King. Have you called me a wild King, because I have killed that man at Gondar?—*A.* Yes.

King. Well, that man was a murderer. Have you not the law in your country that a murderer shall be put to death?—*A.* Yes; but at that time I was not acquainted with his guilt.

Mr. Rassam, Mr. Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc were now ordered by the King to arise, and to hear a letter. In the letter the King said that he proved before them that the prisoners were guilty. "I," said he, "will stand to my former friendship, but I require a 'kasa' (ransom, satisfaction); and I require it from you, Mr. Rassam, because you are the Balderaba given to me by the Queen of England. She says in her letter, everthing I wish Mr. Rassam will do for you.* What my kasa is I will tell you afterwards. I don't want gold or silver; I want people who will open my eyes, because I am blind. . . . Now let me prove to you that though my mother was poor, she was a daughter of the ancient Kings of Ethiopia."

About fifteen witnesses he called out of his Court, who witnessed that his mother was from the line of the ancient Kings, and that he, the King had from his mother's side, in more than ten different provinces of his Empire, "galt," that is territory, granted by Government for continual possession. After this, Mr. Rassam and companions were ordered to their tents. Mr. Rassam, before leaving, asked the King again to pardon us, which was refused. The King said, "For to-day I have released Captain Cameron. If I only obtain your friendship, to-morrow I will do everything you wish me to do" After Mr. Rassam had left, we were taken back to our prison.

In the morning, on the 17th, we were called to the tent of Mr. Rassam. Soon after we arrived there, the King sent a message to Mr. Rassam that our chains should be opened. After about an hour, which we spent in the tent of Mr. Rassam, the three English gentlemen received from His Majesty an invitation to an audience. We, the released prisoners, were also ordered to appear. As soon as we (the prisoners) had approached near His Majesty and received his salutation, we fell down to the ground, asking His Majesty to forgive and to pardon us. We were ordered to get up, and to come nearer. We had the honour to take a seat on a carpet. The King brought forth the petition of the relations of the English prisoners, which had been sent from Massowah by Dr. Beke. Captain Cameron was asked to read it. After that the King said, "It is the devil who made me angry with you, and who tempted me to destroy the friendly feelings existing since the late Mr. Plowden, between myself and England. From my childhood I like the Europeans, especially the English; and God knows that, from morning till evening, I had no other desire than to get in alliance with the English nation. It is true that, by the power of God, I will fight the Turks; but there never arose a thought in my mind to fight with the English. What I wish is, that they shall love me and be my friends. Mr. Stern," said he, "you are quite innocent; it is not you who abused me, it is that Copt, who calls himself a monk and a bishop. He made me angry with you, and he abused me. And Mr. Flad, God knows I never had any bad feelings against him. He never committed anything which could make me angry with him. And Mr. Rassam, you are the best man I ever saw in my life, and you did nothing which could make me angry with you. The other day it is true my suspicion arose, but it was the devil; and now we will make peace, forgetting everything past, and by actions of love we will renew our friendship. Now, I pray you all forgive me." The King immediately fell down to the ground before us. We asked that His Majesty might arise and forgive us, but he refused; so we said, according to the custom of the country, "For God's sake we forgive you." And immediately we kneeled down before him, begging him to forgive us, on which he answered, "For God's

* There was one sentence in Her Majesty's letter which was just contrary to its meaning translated.

sake I forgive you." After this ceremony we had to sit down. Then the King said that each of us should write a letter to his relations, and give them the news that His Majesty, by the power of God, and for the friendship's sake of the Queen of England, had pardoned and released us, and that we hope to see and meet them soon. After this we were dismissed.

The King now told Mr. Rassam that he wished him to stay with him, until the Queen of England would send him a "kasa," existing in artists, machines, and tools, &c., for which purpose he should now write letters, and send one of the Europeans, who would come back and bring the "kasa."

I must make the remark, for your Lordship's information, that the letter Mr. Rassam sends by me was dictated to him by His Majesty, and that after he had written it, he had to read it to Aito Samuel, Kantiba Haloo, and to the European artists. Mr. Rassam also asked me to inform your Lordship of the difficult position he was in when he had to write; yea, that he was obliged to write in that strange way his letter.

In the afternoon Mr. Rassam was asked by His Majesty whom he wished to send to England. Mr. Rassam replied, "Any one to whom your Majesty gives confidence;" on which the King replied, "Mr. Flad shall go. I trust him."* The next morning the King sent for me, informing me that he wished me to take his and Mr. Rassam's letter to England. I replied, "Your Majesty, I am not the man fit for such a mission. I would feel very much obliged to your Majesty if you would send any one else." King: "No, you are the man we want; and you must understand that you are not my messenger, but Mr. Rassam's. But you must use all your influence to bring me the workmen," &c.

Up to this date the money of Mr. Rassam was in the hands of the King. He gave me 1,000 dollars, to bring them, together with Aito Samuel, to Mr. Rassam, and I had to tell Mr. Rassam that His Majesty will send him by and by the rest of the money he took from him (6,800 dollars). On the same day (the 18th) the swords were given back to Mr. Prideaux and Dr. Blanc. The King made the following excuse: "I took your swords from you because I was afraid you might hurt yourself." On the same day Mr. Rassam and companions received the presents which the King had ordered to be made for them—mules, saddles, shields, &c.

On the 21st (the day when I left), early in the morning, His Majesty paid a visit to Mr. Rassam. At 11 o'clock His Majesty came the second time to the tent of Mr. Rassam, and had covered with carpets, by his first Minister, the floor of the three tents the English gentlemen occupied. In returning, he took Mr. Rassam by his right hand, and, walking along, he flattered him, that he was his brother, &c. When they reached the door of the hedge in which Mr. Rassam's and our tents were, the King sent off the soldiers who hitherto had watched us day and night, saying, "Get off, you naughty people; it is not necessary that you watch my friends and my brother Mr. Rassam." None of us were allowed to go outside before the guard had been taken away. The evening previous Mr. Rassam and companions wished to take a ride. They had to ask for permission, and a guard was going with them. At midday, on the 21st, the guns, pistols, shields, spears, powder, silver ornaments, &c., were sent back to Mr. Rassam;† silver spoons, &c., were not restored. Also the money which was taken from the prisoners, though promised to be restored, was not given back to them before I left. I left the camp at 4 o'clock, after a heart-burning leave of my dear wife and children, and all my other friends, whom I had to leave in the hands of the savage Theodore, the cruel, inhuman, and sly despot.

From Segie I proceeded, by Tshelga, Mattemma, Kedaref, Kassala, and Bogos, to Massowah, at which place I arrived, after a dangerous and fatiguing journey, on the 31st of May.

Begging your Lordship to make no public use of the above report, and, as I am by birth a German and not well acquainted with the English language, to pardon any mistake I have made.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. M. FLAD.

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* As I was informed by the European artists, the King had chosen me, not because he trusts me, but he said to them: "To an European, his heart is his wife, and his eyes are his children. Mr. Flad has a wife and three children, which I will keep here, and then I am certain that he will return and bring me an answer."

† All this was done by the King that I might take the news to Europe.

No. 30.

Mr. Flad to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 10.)

My Lord,

I HAVE further to bring to your Lordship's information that all the struggles by King Theodore, the misery and imprisonment of the English Consul, Captain Cameron, and all those who were under his protection, arose partly from the imprudent transaction of the Consul's business, and partly from the negligence of the Foreign Office, as also the conduct of some Europeans, which caused the King's suspicion and distrust against the English nation.

What I write now I don't write it to bring accusations against persons; I merely write it down to make your Lordship more acquainted with the motives by which all these collisions between the two Governments were produced.

1. Captain Cameron, when he came the first time to Abyssinia brought with him M. Bardel, a Frenchman, engaged as Secretary—a man of a very equivocal character—quarrelling with him and separating from him, he made him his constant enemy. And I believe that he is one of those who put the existing suspicion against Mr. Rassam and the English Government into the heart of the King, and who advised him to take hostages from England, else they would revenge themselves, after they have liberated their subjects.

M. Bardel, after having been dismissed by Captain Cameron, entered the King's service. The King sent him with a letter to the Emperor of France. The contents of the letter were similar to that letter of the King which he sent at the same time by Captain Cameron to the Queen of England.

After nine months M. Bardel returned from France with a letter in answer to the letter the King had sent. Though His Majesty was not much pleased with the answer of the Emperor Napoleon, he gave permission to the French Consul, M. Lejan, and his companion, Dr. Lagard, who had been kept for three or four months as prisoners at large, to leave his country. At that time M. Bardel reported in Abyssinia that the English Government will send no answer to the King, because they like much more the Egyptians than him. From where M. Bardel had receive this information I don't know. He himself said to me that he heard it at Alexandria from an Englishman who was well acquainted with what is going on in the Foreign Office. I must say, the Government, as well as the different newspapers, and societies like that who sent Dr. Beke, acted very imprudently since our capture began. If some of those letters and despatches* would be sent by one of our enemies to King Theodore, they would be enough to provoke his indignation in such a way that he would kill in one day, not only those who have English blood in their veins, but every one who is from the European race. Until the Government has succeeded in procuring the release of the prisoners it should be abolished that the newspapers receive any article regarding the Abyssinian captives. This is especially now at present most necessary, because that said M. Bardel is again on very friendly terms with Theodore, and he has his correspondent, Pater Delmanty (Roman Priest) at Massowah and Hallai. M. Bardel is a man who would not care much if all our people would be killed in a one day.

2. Consul Cameron when he came the first time to Abyssinia, after having been well received by His Majesty, and presented with a golden saddle and a mule, a horse, an ornamental shield, a bitwa, and 1,000 dollars, was intrusted by His Majesty with a letter for the Queen of England. The King wished him, if possible, to go himself to England and bring him an answer, if not, to stay at Bogos or Massowah, in order that when the answer comes, he shall bring it up to the King. Consul Cameron, against the advice of the King, went by Bogos to Kassala, and as he was sick he came to Mattemma up to Genda to get medicine in my house. At Keren, in the Bogos country, he separated from Aito Samuel, the man who was given by the King to him as Balderaba (introducer, escort, &c.). Aito Samuel wrote from Keren a very accusative letter to the King about Captain Cameron.† Having arrived at Gondar, at his first interview with His Majesty, the King was very angry with him. He asked him, What has become of my letter?—*A.* I sent it from Aslum by two of my servants to Aden.

King. Where is the answer? Did I not tell you to bring me the answer?—*A.* I hope the answer will be here till January 1864. I left one of my men at Massowah with

* For example, the despatch of Lord Russell to the Political Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, and many other articles, also letters from the prisoners.

† Some Abyssinians also told the King that the English Consul abused and derogated him before the Turks. Whether this accusation was true or not, I don't know. At his imprisonment, and at the reconciliation in Mr. Rassam's tent, the charges His Majesty brought against Consul Cameron were: 1. You went to my enemies, abused and derogated me; 2. You came back without bringing me an answer.

the order that as soon as the answer arrives he shall bring it up. I came only back because I am sick and I know that I would find some medicine at Mr. Flad's.

King. What for did you go to my enemies to Kassala?—*A.* Some Arab tribes have stolen cows from Hamarim, and I went only down to Kassala to speak to the Egyptian Government that they must be restored.

King. It was not you business to interfere. Who told you to do so. Neither I myself nor your Queen gave you order to go down to Kassala.

Though the King was at that time angry with Consul Cameron, he still treated him as his friend till the arrival of Mr. Kerans, who brought a letter from the Foreign Office to Consul Cameron, in which the arrival of his despatches and the King's letter to the Foreign Office was acknowledged. But no further remark was made about the King's letter, nor was there given any hope that an answer would be sent. Captain Cameron was obliged to send a copy of his letter to the King, who for months had been seriously waiting for an answer of Her Majesty the Queen.

Disappointed in his expectations he listened and believed all the calumniations of the anti-Anglican Europeans and Abyssinians. Some days after the arrival of that letter Consul Cameron was ordered to leave his house at Gondar, and to take his abode in a tent in the King's camp; that is to say, the Consul was a prisoner. This was in November 1863, four months and a half after his second arrival in Abyssinia. Being out of good health he had once asked the King for permission to leave his camp and to abide in his house at Gondar. It was refused to him. The King said, Let him die, if they only cannot say that I have killed him. Where is the answer to my letter? Why does his Queen (abusing Her Majesty in a most vulgar manner) despise me?

More than five weeks after the Consul had received his letter from the Foreign Office he asked the King (in a letter) to give him permission to go to his post to Massowah. The following day he and all those who were under his protection were put in chains. If Mr. Kerans would have brought a letter for the King, whether good or bad, neither the Consul nor his subjects would have been imprisoned and deprived of all the property. Even Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal would have been released, and, as it was reported by the natives, all of us, together with the Consul, would have been sent out of Abyssinia. But instead of sending an answer to the Emperor, the Government wrote to their Consul to leave immediately the Abyssinian territory, and to proceed to his post to Massowah. From where he shall inform his Government what France is going to do against Abyssinia and what they are doing on the African shore of the Red Sea. From all this the Emperor was fully convinced that the intention of the English Government is to have nothing to do with him any more. How could it be otherwise expected than that the Emperor would take revenge on the Consul and his subjects?

When we were in prison the King once sent us a message saying, "The Consul I have imprisoned because his Queen did not send me an answer. Personally, I have nothing against him. Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal I have imprisoned because they have abused me, and the rest (we were ten Europeans) I have imprisoned because I found that you white people are all bad."

The Rev. Mr. Stern was, after having received the King's permission to leave his country, prevented from doing so because the King was informed (by somebody else) that the Bishop Salama, the English Consul, and the Rev. Mr. Stern had made a complot against him. He was beaten, because when two of his interpreters were beaten before him until they expired, he took up his hand covering his face. Then the King said to his soldier, "He bites his finger against us; beat him." Until the King was convinced that he gets no answer from the English Government, he treated Mr. Stern, though in prison, very polite. All his property was in Mr. Stern's possession. Either by M. Bardel himself, or by his influence through Aito Samuel, the King heard that Mr. Stern is anxious about some written things regarding him. His papers were examined and translated, and a severer imprisonment followed.

3. Further, Consul Cameron when on Magdala gave to Dejaj Mereet (Duke of Hamazim and prisoner on Magdala) a paper of protection (safe-guard), in which he said, that in case England will take revenge on Abyssinia, the country and family of Dejaj Mereet shall be treated as friends, because he did all he could to provide for the English prisoners. Captain Cameron took that paper back and burnt it: but a copy of it was, by Mr. Kerans, Secretary of Consul Cameron, put into the hands of the mischievous Mr. Bardel, who, as it seems to me, made use of it to the disadvantage of Mr. Rassam's mission.

There were also some Abyssinians, especially one, a former servant of the late Mr. Baroni at Massowah, who advised the Emperor to keep Mr. Rassam in his country, else the English Government would not only send him no artists, but they may send troops to take revenge.

4. It seems also that Her Majesty the Queen, in her letter to the Emperor Theodore, sent by Mr. Rassam, did not enter into the different questions of the Emperor made in his letter in 1862.

Also it seems that the English Government gave to the Emperor Theodore at the time of the late Consul Plowden some promises, which were never realized. From all these, and many other things, the King sees himself deceived in his expectations from the English Government, and therefore he distrusts us and hates us.

I beg your Lordship to excuse my liberty in making here some additional remarks of my own.

Being fully convinced that the English Government, at the sad news I have to give, will be very much irritated and disappointed, because Mr. Rassam with the released prisoners was at this time expected to be back from Abyssinia: I fear that many voices will be heard: Send troops and force the Emperor Theodore to send all English subjects out of his dominions.

I make here the humble petition, and say: As the Government, since the Abyssinian captive began, experienced great patience, the Government should not lose it; but try to satisfy the claims of the Emperor. This could be accomplished:—

1. If the Government would give me a man and the necessary money, I would try to get the people the Emperor wants.

Workmen are hitherto treated and paid well by King Theodore. The only thing which is to be feared is, if they wish to go to their country, they would not be allowed to do so. Mr. Rassam received from the Emperor in money, presents, and other things about 25,000 German crowns. Consul Cameron received in money 1,000 and in presents, &c., about 2,000 or more: 2,000 dollars the Emperor paid for the late Consul Plowden (money by which Mr. Plowden was released out of the hands of his murderers, the rebel Gared); except what Consul Plowden had received during his stay in Abyssinia in money (which he borrowed from the Emperor), and what he received in corn, cows, honey, &c., that will make together a sum of some 30,000 German crowns. One part of this money would be sufficient for the purchasing of instruments, &c.

2. If the Government would appoint Mr. Rassam Consul of Massowah and Abyssinia. From this the King would see that the English Government takes no hostile position towards him and his country.

If England would take a hostile position towards Abyssinia, it might be, though this is very doubtful, that the Emperor would send out the English subjects at once; but there is much more reason to fear that a fatalist like him would, at once, in a most cruel and barbarous manner, slaughter all our people, together with his European workmen. There are twenty-six souls, Europeans, connected with Mr. Rassam. The European workmen with their wives and children are thirty-five souls; all together sixty-one souls, Europeans, except all the native servants, who would, with their masters, have to share the same fate. In the other way, it is to be expected that as soon as hostile troops enter Abyssinia the Emperor might take our people, and retiring to any distant Galla country, he would torture them (which is worse than to be killed at once), in order to force them to write, that the troops shall leave his dominions. Therefore, it is most desirable to finish with this man in peace.

No. 31.

Mr. Flad to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 14.)

My Lord, 42, *Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, July* 14, 1866.

I HAD hoped ere this to have had the honour of a summons from your Lordship, but not having done so, I feel it necessary to state a circumstance which came to my knowledge while on my journey to this country, and that is, that it was strongly reported that Egyptian troops were collecting on the borders to make a descent upon Bogos, a district belonging to the King of Abyssinia; and I very much fear if this is done, that it will not only be determinated to the captives and Mr. Rassam, but that the King may be induced to re-imprison them on that account, and that His Majesty (who has an exceedingly suspicious mind) may think the British Government might prevent such an occurrence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

No. 32.

Lord Stanley to the Assistant Resident at Aden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1866.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 21st ultimo, reporting the steps which you took to expedite the journey to this country from Abyssinia of the Rev. Mr. Flad, and I approve your proceedings in this respect.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 33.

Mr. Flad to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 17.)

My Lord, 42, *Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, July* 17, 1866.

IN the interview which I had the honour of having with your Lordship yesterday, I ventured to suggest the urgent necessity of my having an interview with Her Majesty, in order that on my return to Abyssinia, I might be enabled to assure the King that Her Majesty had been graciously pleased to grant me an audience.

The reason for my being desirous of obtaining such audience, is my conviction, that on my return to Abyssinia the first question that will be asked by the King is, whether I had seen Her Majesty, and I fear that a negative answer would greatly endanger the success of my mission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

Inclosure in No. 33.

Letter of King Theodore to Mr. T. M. Flad, in order to engage workmen for him.

IN the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God.

Theodorus, King of Kings of Ethiopia, who is a creature and a servant of God, the son of David and Solomon.

I send Mr. Flad to Europe because I am in want of skilful artists. All those workmen who would like to come to my country, rejoicing in their coming, I shall receive them with great honour and give them good pay for their services. If they wish to remain in my country I shall make their abode most happy (pleasant). But, if they, after having teached my people their arts for some years, wish to return to their country, I shall, through the power of God, give them a splendid pay, and with great honour I shall send them back to their country.

Men and Material required by King Theodore from England and Her Majesty's Government.

1. Two gunsmiths.
2. An Artillery officer.
3. An iron-founder, who is able to erect a foundry and furnace. All to be furnished with necessary tools and instruments.
4. One or two boat-builders.
5. A cart and wheelwright.

His Majesty would also be pleased if Her Majesty's Government were to send him the following articles:—

1. A small blast steam-engine for foundry.
2. A turning bench, with necessary tools.
3. A distilling machine.
4. Machinery for the manufacturing of gun-caps, with necessary copperplate, &c., &c.
5. A good telescope.
6. A gunpowder mill with rollers.
7. A good supply of gunpowder and gun-caps.
8. Some handsome large square carpets, silks, tumblers and goblets.
9. Some double-barrel guns and pistols, and two good regimental swords.
11. Some European curiosities.

No. 34.

Mr. Flad to the King of Abyssinia.

London, July 18, 1866.

In the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God.

MAY this letter, which is sent by Martin Flad, reach the King of Kings, Theodorus. May the Redeemer of the world give your Majesty health and prosperity. Amen.

On the 10th of July I have by the power and grace of God arrived in good health at this place. Your Majesty's letter, as well as I myself, had by Her Majesty the Queen Victoria a kind and friendly reception.

Her Majesty's Governors take every day great trouble to find the artizans your Majesty wants.

I have received the promise to get my leave after a fortnight. If God Almighty keeps me in health, I shall arrive Massowah at the end of September.

I beg your Majesty to send me word to Massowah whether I may come up to your Majesty by Tigré or whether I have to take the road by Matemma.

There is a great war in Germany. The King of Prussia, united with the King of Italy, is fighting the Emperor of Austria. In a great battle which was fought at Sadowa, the Emperor of Austria had a great loss, and was forced to retire.

May God, our Heavenly Father, protect your Majesty.

(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

No. 35.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 18.)

My Lord, *London, July* 18, 1866.

AS it is of vital importance to the safety of the mission now in Abyssinia under Mr. Rassam, as well as to those who were till lately in captivity there, that there should not be the slightest appearance of any forcible measures being taken against the Emperor Theodorus, I have the honour to bring to your Lordship's notice that I have heard from more than one quarter, that it is contemplated by the Egyptian Government to advance troops to the frontier of Abyssinia for the purpose of settling old boundary disputes, and for further operations as opportunity offered. Mr. Flad informs me that on his way home from the Court of King Theodorus, he heard the report from good authority. During the last few days I have been told by a distinguished officer of the Bombay Army, Colonel Sir H. Green, who has lately returned from a tour through the French possessions in Algeria, that just before leaving Algiers he saw a train of light guns, suitable for mountain warfare, ready for embarkation. These he was told had been prepared for the purpose of being sent to Alexandria for the use of the Egyptian Government in its projected operations against Abyssinia; it was also said that French officers would accompany the artillery to assist, and to do duty with, the Egyptian forces. This was freely spoken of, and as regards the guns, is not an improbable circumstance, as they could be sent by vessel along the coast, and landed at Alexandria without attracting any particular notice. Taking the above into consideration, I cannot help thinking that an early movement against Abyssinia is contemplated by His Highness the Viceroy; I would therefore most respectfully suggest, and earnestly urge, that measures may be taken to prevent a step which would prove so certainly fatal to every European now in Abyssinia—King Theodorus being of a most suspicious nature would at once conclude that the Egyptian move was in accord with the views of Her Majesty's Government, and that it was intended to punish him for his late conduct to Colonel Cameron. It would be all the more dangerous at the present time, when Mr. Flad is in this country deputed by the King to Her Majesty the Queen. It would appear to the King as a direct rejection of his advances, and a breach of good faith with him; the immediate incarceration, if not death, of Mr. Rassam, Captain Cameron, and all the others would follow inevitably.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 36.

Mr. McDowall to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 19.)

My Lord, *7, Strada Irlandese, La Valletta, Malta.*

I CRAVE pardon for addressing you, but having a favour to ask and a proposal to make, was unable to gain your attention in a more regular way.

I must inflict a short biography of my late uncle Mr. Bell, who, eighteen years in Abyssinia, possessed the most unbounded influence over the Emperor, and whilst living always protected British interests. Theodore intended sending him on a mission to the Courts of St. James and the Tuileries, but his death in action in 1860 was about the beginning of the difficulties now existing.

I am aware it is scarcely *en règle* to put forward private claims to influence Government negotiations, but with a semi-barbarous monarch like Theodore I presume my uncle's nephew would be well received. He (the Emperor) sent my late uncle's arms and decorations through Captain Playfair of Aden to our late Governor Sir J. G. Le Marchant, from whom my mother received them.

I therefore would offer myself as a political agent to arrange the affair of prisoners, subject to such instructions as your Lordship would give, and should your Lordship condescend graciously to look favourably upon my offer would hold myself in readiness to proceed to the Abyssinian Court.

Apologising for my diffuseness and intrusion on your valuable time, I am, &c.

(Signed) JOHN M. McDOWALL.

No. 37.

Mr. Hammond to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1866.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you herewith a copy of a letter from Colonel Merewether* relative to a rumour that the Viceroy of Egypt contemplates hostilities against Abyssinia, and calling attention to the danger in which the European captives in that country would be involved if such intentions were carried out.

I have already desired you to make inquiry into this matter, and Colonel Merewether's letter will show you upon what information my instructions were founded.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 38.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received July* 20.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, July* 10, 1866.

I BEG leave to forward to your Lordship the accompanying translation of a letter that has lately reached me from Kerin in the country of Bogos, near the Abyssinian frontier.

The writer, as far as I am able to ascertain, is not a person in whom much confidence can be placed, and, I am informed, formerly belonged to the Roman Catholic Mission at Massowah, but was dismissed for misconduct, and I have thought it better to take no notice of his communication until I receive your Lordship's instructions on the subject.

The country of Bogos appears to be disputed territory, but can hardly be considered as situated within the Abyssinian frontier, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that the Egyptian Government considers its territory to extend to the frontier of Abyssinia, and resents the idea of the formation of an independant State within its boundaries as appears to be the purport of the writer of the letter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

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* No. 35.

Inclosure in No. 38.

Mr. Stella to Colonel Stanton.

(Translation.)

Sir, *Kerén, May* 28, 1866.

IN the year 1854 when I was at Bogos, the Egyptian troops of Taka, residing at Kassala, attacked the country of Bogos, robbed and made slaves of everybody they could lay their hands upon. At that time, Mr. Plowden, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, was at Massowah, and as he favoured me with his friendship, I took the liberty of submitting this case to him, and asked him to do his utmost to liberate the prisoners taken.

Mr. Plowden wrote to Her Britannic Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt on the subject, who took such measures to get the prisoners returned, and from that time up to now I remained here taking care of the tribe of Bogos. Mr. Cameron, British Consul at Massowah, two years and a-half ago visited this country and promised them British protection and I remained here waiting for such. After Mr. Cameron's departure to Abyssinia, the Egyptian subjects from Kassala, Baria, Beni Amer, and others attacked this country twice, robbed Bogos of more than 2,000 cows, took about 200 persons prisoners, and killed 50 men, amongst whom were 2 of my servants.

When the things reached this stage the people of Bogos asked me to write to your Excellency begging of you to protect them from the attacks of these Egyptian subjects, and to force the latter to give up their prisoners, to pay the cost of the cows taken by them, and to make them look upon this country as upon a British possession, hoping that the great British Power will continue to protect them and force the Egyptian subjects to deliver up the goods and persons taken from them.

I beg to excuse my writing to you direct, if I may be useful to you in any way, command me and you shall be obeyed.

I shall consider myself fortunate if you grant me British protection.

Mr. Flad will give you any information you may require about me.

I am, &c.

(Signed) G. STELLA.

No. 39.

Earl Cowley to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 21.)

My Lord, *Paris, July* 20, 1866.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 18th instant, I have made inquiries, through Colonel Claremont, at the War Department, and I have myself questioned M. Drouyn de Lhuys respecting the reports which have reached Her Majesty's Government, of artillery and military officers being about to be sent from Algiers to Alexandria for the service of the Viceroy of Egypt in an expedition which he contemplates against Abyssinia.

Both the Minister of War and M. Drouyn de Lhuys deny all knowledge of such an expedition being in contemplation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 40.

Mr. Murray to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 21, 1866.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 19th instant, I am directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris,* from which you will perceive that the French Government assert that they have no knowledge of the reported intention of the Viceroy of Egypt to commence hostilities against Abyssinia.

I am, &c.

(Signed) STANLEY.

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* No. 39.

No. 41.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Mc Dowall.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 24, 1866.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter without date, offering your services in order to obtain the release of Europeans detained in Abyssinia, and I am desired by his Lordship to thank you for this offer, of which, however, Her Majesty's Government have no occasion to avail themselves.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 42.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 7.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, July* 23, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report that I have taken the earliest occasion of mentioning to his Excellency Raghib Pasha the rumours that have reached your Lordship as to the hostile intentions of this Government against Abyssinia, and requested his Excellency to inform me what foundation there might be for these rumours. Raghib Pasha assured me immediately that the Egyptian Government had not the smallest intention of making any hostile demonstration against that country; and I have every reason to believe his Excellency's assertion, as from inquiries I have made in other quarters I cannot ascertain that any steps whatever have been taken that would give the slightest foundation for the rumours in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 43.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 9.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, July* 31, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the inclosed despatch from the Assistant Political Resident at Aden, dated the 20th instant, forwarding letters from Mr. Rassam, Consul Cameron, and Dr. Blanc, that had reached him on the previous day.

These letters give intelligence from Abyssinia up to the 29th May, and confirm the statement made by Mr. Flad as to the state of affairs in that country, adding that since that gentleman's departure the Emperor has shown marked attention to Mr. Rassam and his party.

His Majesty has, however, evidently set his heart upon procuring the services of skilled labourers, who can undertake the manufacture of cannon as well as shot and shell, and I fear the release of the captives depends very much upon the amount of satisfaction His Majesty may experience at the manner in which his demands are met by Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 43.

The Assistant Resident at Aden to the Earl of Clarendon.

My Lord, *Aden, July* 20, 1866.

I DO myself the honour to forward a despatch received yesterday afternoon from Massowah from Mr. Rassam to your Lordship's address.

2. Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria" left this on the 11th instant, conveying stores and medicines that had been sent for by Mr. Rassam to Massowah, and to obtain any further intelligence there might be from the Mission. On her arrival there, she found that messengers had arrived from the King's camp on the 9th instant, with several letters

from Mr. Rassam, Consul Cameron, and the Europeans lately in confinement in the country. Copies of such of these private letters as I am able to take notice of are inclosed for your Lordship's information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 43.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *Zegay, on Lake Tsana, Abyssinia, May* 28, 1866.

ALTHOUGH my letter which I dispatched to you by Mr. Flad on the 21st ultimo will give you very little news, but the bearer will have it in his power to report to you minutely upon all the circumstances connected with my detention in this country. I hope and trust that on his arrival at Massowah he will find a steamer there to take him to Aden, in which case he ought to be with you before the end of this month. Mr. Flad has written to me from Matemma to say that he had heard there of a regular communication existing (by steam) between Suakin and Suez three or four times a month, and he thought it would be better for him to go up to Egypt through that route than to go to Massowah and Aden. Before he left us I told him that in case he discovered, on arriving at Kasala, that it would be quicker for him to reach England viâ Suakin, he was to go that way—but I told him that as soon as he arrived at Cairo, he was to go to the Consul-General and deliver the package of letters addressed to you, and ask him to open it for the purpose of making himself acquainted with what has taken place. I have also asked Mr. Flad to request our Consul-General to have copies made of the officials, and forward them to you to Aden. I wish very much that you could see Mr. Flad, as I am certain that my last guarded few lines will puzzle you not a little, especially if evil reports have found their way to your place. Ever since the departure of Mr. Flad, the Emperor has been more kind than ever, and indeed not a day passes without his showing me and my party marked attention and civility. He does not think it below his dignity to come and visit me in my tent, and render me such honours as he had never exhibited towards any other representative of a foreign Government before—on several occasions he took me out shooting with him, and a few days ago he presented me with a handsome fowling-piece. He has presented Blanc and Prideaux with three fine horses, decorated with the royal saddle, bridles, and trappings. My horse is a beauty, and is one of the best, easy-going animals I ever rode. He was one of His Majesty's riding horses, and is reckoned very high bred. Blanc's and Prideaux's are very spirited, consequently my companions would rather admire the nags a good distance from them than enjoy their ride. In commemoration of our Queen's birthday, the Emperor gave a grand entertainment on the 24th instant, and fired a royal salute in honour of the occasion—he had nothing but feasting on that day. The courteous attention of the Emperor in honour of Her Majesty has created a good impression amongst both Europeans and natives; and I yet trust that matters will end satisfactorily to all parties concerned. We are all still living with the Emperor in his compound, and he maintains us all in a most generous manner. It is believed that His Majesty will soon start in a war expedition, and he intends to place us during the rainy season in some safe place with the European artizans. We have only had a few showers as yet, but I am told that the heavy rains will set in regularly soon after the beginning of next month. I am glad to say that we are all well, and considering the extensive marshes all around us, it is wonderful that there is so little sickness in the Royal camp. His Majesty sent to ask me the other day (long after Mr. Flad left) to write to the Bombay Government for artizans who knew how to cast cannons, and also for instruments for making the same; I told him that Bombay being a dependency of England, the authorities had no power to do as he requested without the sanction of the Home Government. He wished to send 10,000 dollars for what he wanted, and said that he would double the sum if required—he then asked me to get him some books upon artillery practice, as he has a great number of European workmen here who have been making small cannons and mortars, which were made with rude instruments, and the artillery men he has are not able to fire them properly, that is to say, they cannot aim to a nicety, especially in throwing up shells to the proper place. I told him that I should write to Aden for the books, and as I wish to honour His Majesty, I hope that you will be able, with the assistance of Colonel Woollcombe, to send up some useful books wherein a man may learn how to fire cannons and mortars, and everything to do with shell practice. If you can also manage to send me about 100 or 200 fusees of different sizes for shells, they will be very much appreciated. Our Royal friend here will not understand

what is best to his interests, and thinks that he is not acting in an unfriendly way by keeping us here, and writing for things which cannot be supplied, especially the matter of the artizans. If you are able to comply with my request, kindly have everything you send up to me packed well in wax-cloth and in small parcels, in consequence of the rainy season, and the packages may have to be carried on men's shoulders. If you can also find a book wherein there is a description about melting iron and casting shot, and how to make an oven for the same, our friend would be glad to get it; of course he has a number of people who can read English. Kindly also send me about a dozen pieces of shirting or longcloth, and no end of buttons for shirts also; about five or six dozen shirts made of nice calico but without linen fronts. Everything to do with shirts, either made of silk or calico, are appreciated in this country. I hope you will also remember us in the newspaper line—we have not had any news from Europe ever since we left Massowah, and consequently are all ignorant as to European politics. You cannot confer greater kindness on us than by sending us every scrap of newspaper you can spare, from the time we left you on the October—only please do not send any containing abusive matter. Blanc is out of medicine. He wrote to you by Mr. Flad for some. Kindly try and send them to Massowah as soon as possible, with the things I sent for, in order that M. Munzinger may send them up by the messenger who carries this letter. A messenger reached the Emperor from Dr. Beke yesterday with the report of the latter's detention at Hallai by the Tigré rebels. From my letter to the principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which I send to you herewith for your perusal, you will find what steps His Majesty has taken for his release. The messenger has reported that Dr. Beke had brought a fine gold chain for the Emperor, and a silver one for the shield-bearer, as if the latter ever sits in the presence of his Royal Master. He reported also that Dr. Beke had brought a telegraph with him, whereupon he was asked why his master did not communicate with the Emperor by the electric wire. Kindly try and send us 1,000 or 2,000 dollars to Matemma, to be consigned to Mr. Eipperle, the missionary of the Jerusalem mission there, as we may one day find it useful. I must now conclude, as I find I have written all that can be communicated just now. I shall write again in July, or sooner if required.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

P.S. *May* 29.—The Emperor has replied to Dr. Beke in English, and told him that he ought not to have gone up to Hallai without his leave, especially as he knew that that part of Abyssinia was in a disturbed state. He has informed him that he has written to the chiefs in Tigré, ordering them to send him down to Massowah in safety, and directed him to remain there until he would write and acquaint him by what route he was to come up.

H. R.

Inclosure 3 in No. 43.

Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *Zegay, May* 26, 1866.

WE heard the other day that Mr. Flad was likely to proceed home *viâ* Suakin, in which case this note may reach you before you have any exact appreciation of our adventures and actual position. On the 13th of last month we left, us three, in boats to pay our respects to the King before our departure, and at the same time the Europeans left by land, our point of rendezvous being fixed at a spot near the western extremity of the Lake, where our heavy baggage was to be sent; from thence, once united, again we were to proceed to Matemma. At about 1 o'clock we reached Zegé, and landed at a few hundred yards from the Royal Enclosure. We were received at the beach with the usual honours; the head of the army Ras Engedda, and several other officers of His Majesty's household, greeted us in the Emperor's name; mules from the Imperial stables conducted us to the King's hall of reception; we alighted near the door, and on approaching saw that the hall was crowded with officers in their gala dresses standing on each side; at the top of the hall the chief officers were standing near the throne, but His Majesty was not present. We had hardly entered when suddenly we were all three seized by men posted for the purpose, and our swords torn away from us before we knew where we were; my pouch and cap were also thrown on the ground. All the time I was firmly seized by three men; I was perfectly bewildered, and did not know what to make of it. I looked round and saw Rassam, his coat opened, and held by three men; and turning round perceived that Prideaux was having his sash wrenched from him, making his eye-glass fly backwards a distance of several yards: the sight was so ridiculous that I could not help grinning at the

face the poor fellow was making; the whole occurrence lasted but a few seconds—much less time than it requires to relate. This took place a few yards from the door.

We were then, on a signal from the head Ras, walked up to the end of the room, and made to sit down on a carpet at the foot of the throne, our captors sitting near and behind us. The Ras then with other officers left the place, but shortly afterwards returned with a message from His Majesty to Rassam: "Why did you not bring the prisoners over with you?" Rassam answered, "Because your Majesty allowed them to go by land." The second message was, "Did you not bring a friendly letter from the Queen, and did not I release the prisoners for her sake? It is true that I consented to the prisoners leaving without begging pardon, but I was ashamed to refuse you as you asked for it." Third message, "Why did you send letters to Massowah?" Fourth message, "Did I ask you to write to the Queen for a man to instruct my people, and did you not say that you would?" A letter containing part of the genealogy of the King was then read, and other messages were brought: "That the prisoners had been sent for;" "that our swords had been taken away so that we should not hurt ourselves or others when we heard the bad news;" "that we must not be afraid, but it was only a cloud on our friendship, and that in a few days everything would be all right again." The assembly was then dismissed.

We remained in the durbar, guarded by the Rasses and our first captors, for about an hour, until a tent was pitched for us in the King's Compound. We then proceeded to the tent, and remained in it guarded by the Rasses and a guard until after the interview of the 16th, when once more again we were comparatively free. After the questions had been put to us, the King proceeded to examine our baggage in presence of the Gaffat people, who had been ordered to come with us to the King's camp; arms, ammunition, money, telescopes, paper, and jewels were taken out, a list of these things being made by some of the Gaffat people by the King's order. Afterwards our luggage was sent to us, our servants ordered to attend us as usual, and a present of cows, sheep, bread, &c., sent to us by order of His Majesty. On the 14th our luggage arrived; and having been searched, as the first part of it, and objects of the same nature taken from it, was afterwards sent to us. The Europeans arrived the same day, chained two and two, and placed in an enclosure at the extremity of the camp at about a mile from us.

On Monday morning the 16th, we were called before His Majesty, at about 9 o'clock; we found him standing before his durbar surrounded by his Rasses and several hundred officers, forming a crescent, the Rasses and principal officers being in a line in front of the throne; carpets were spread for us and the Gaffat gentlemen, others were already seated at the right of the throne. After His Majesty had greeted us, he ordered us to be seated on carpets in front of the throne, himself sitting on a small bed placed on the left of the throne; about ten minutes after our arrival, the Europeans were brought in chained two by two. The Emperor sent them a cordial greeting and at once ordered the chains to be taken off from Captain Cameron and from Mr. Bardel, and these two were told to come and sit near us. His Majesty then told the prisoners individually what charge he had against them, and asked them for what reason they had abused him. They all acknowledged their error and prayed for forgiveness; he then ordered his pedigree from the old Emperors of Abyssinia to be proved before us, numerous witnesses stepped forward to swear to the truth of his royal lineage. This concluded, we were told to stand before him; he then addressed us and asked again why we had not brought the prisoners to him, so as to be mutually reconciled, asked us if we were his masters to go against his will. We were then told to sit down again. He afterwards addressed a few questions to Consul Cameron about his not bringing an answer to the letter, and why he had asked to leave in three days.

Consul Cameron answered that he was only acting according to the instructions of his Government, and begged pardon if he had, by so doing, offended His Majesty.

The King then said that he would shortly see us again, to settle different matters, and that the Consul was to remain with us. That day a large inclosure was built in the King's Compound and our tents pitched in it, early the next morning.

On the 17th we were again called before His Majesty, we found in the durbar room only the Guffat gentlemen, Ras Engeddah and a few officers of high rank. His Majesty after some polite queries told us to sit down on carpets spread at the left of the throne; the Europeans were then brought in (with the exception of Captain Cameron and Mr. Bardel, the former being with us) and bowing to the ground awaited the King's pleasure to rise; it being, according to the custom of the country, the manner to implore forgiveness. His Majesty immediately told them to rise, and bowing his head to the ground begged their pardon and afterwards ours for what had taken place between us; we begged him to rise and told him that our friendship for him had never been altered by the misunderstanding that had taken place; when all were seated, he read a letter to the

Queen, and asked Rassam if he was ready to write the letter he had promised formerly regarding the European workmen.

A reply in the affirmative having been given, he told us to be happy and consider ourselves as his friends and to go back to our tents.

A few days afterwards Mr. Flad left us, you know; all our things, except a part of Rassam's pisa, were sent back. His Majesty's constant desire has always been to do his best to make us comfortable; with his own hands he spread carpets in Rassam's tent, the head Ras in mine and Prideaux's; he gave us mules, shields, horses, took us out several times shooting with him a few days ago to witness the trial of a small gun made by the Gaffat gentlemen, and on the 24th gave a great proof of his good will and friendship by feasting to the best of his abilities the birthday of his friend, our gracious Queen.

I can give you but a very concise account of the many events that took place, but believe that the principal facts have been related, at all events I have only spoken of things of which I am perfectly sure; we are still living in the same place, and now that the rainy season is beginning in earnest, the place will soon be a perfect swamp. We got orders about three weeks ago to send all our heavy baggage to Korata; the Gaffat gentlemen are there since Mr. Flad's departure, so that it is not impossible that we may be sent there for the winter, though little is known, or rather nothing at all about His Majesty's intentions. Living in a confined space in the middle of a camp without any sanitary regulations, I fear that our health will suffer; Cameron is very weak and worn out, and even Mr. Stern has lost much of his former stamina; we have all been more or less unwell, and it requires great care to avoid sickness. I took the liberty in my note to you (through Mr. Flad) to ask you to be kind enough to send us some medicine and stores, of both we are much in want. Cameron and myself mess together, and as we are somewhat shaky, are looking forward to vegetables, juices, fish, sauces, brandy, &c. with almost as much impatience as to news about our future fate. I keep no diary, kindly therefore do not destroy this letter as I will ask you to kindly let me have it on my return if ever such an event takes place.

(Signed) H. BLANC.

Inclosure 4 in No. 43.

Captain Cameron to Mr. Hammond.

Dear Sir, *Ziggui, Abyssinia, May* 24, 1866.

MY letter to you from Korata was written under circumstances in which it was difficult to express myself plainly, and my last letters to England, forwarded by Mr. Flad, are so much waste paper. It would not have been honest to that gentleman to trust him with papers which, if he had been arrested on the road, might have brought him into trouble.

I think it, however, desirable to inform you on this occasion, as a long time may elapse before I have a chance of writing to you again, of the real state of affairs as regards myself and the other Europeans detained here.

At the time that I wrote from Korata, I was under the impression that everything was settled. It turned out, however, afterwards that there was a passage in the King's letter, conveying to us his pardon, in which he wished for "pledges of friendship." This meant, in fact, artizans, who were to take our places. And it was not His Majesty's intention to let us go until he obtained these.

In an interview which the King had with his German workmen, he said as much openly. "If I let them go," said he, "what shall I have in hand?" He is afraid, I believe, of reprisals, and, ignorant as he is of European usages, wishes to have hostages in his hands, so as to prevent any aggressive movements on your part. Even an aggressive movement on the part of Turkey, would, I believe, be paid for by us, unless our friend were detained by fear.

The King, however, dissembled his real views, and left it to Mr. Rassam's option to decide whether we should be sent out of the country or not. The latter was only too glad of the opening, fearful as he was that the sight of the missionaries, especially Mr. Stern, might excite the King to some act of violence; and it was arranged that we should leave for Matemma, and Mr. Rassam and his party should go to the King first, for a parting interview, and then join us half-way to Matemma.

We accordingly started, each party in its own direction. Myself and the Magdala prisoners were arrested, after being allowed to go one stage, chained, and stripped of all our money and other property, while Mr. Rassam, Lieutenant Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc were

seized on their arrival at the royal camp, their uniform torn open, their persons searched for arms, and their swords taken away. They were then put in a tent and guarded, close prisoners for three days. We were brought over to where they were.

The accusations against the missionaries were then gone over. They had abused His Majesty's person, and criticised his Government.

The charges against myself were confined to my having come back without an answer to His Majesty's letter, and obeyed the orders sent to me from the Foreign Office, acknowledging the receipt of the King's letter, and ordering me to return to my post immediately.

After the King had finished with us, Mr. Rassam and his party were ordered to rise (the explanation took place in the open air, and before thousands of natives), and Mr. Rassam was very sharply spoken to, for having wished to get us out of the country.

My chains had been opened immediately on my reaching the presence of the King, and I was ordered to place myself with Mr. Rassam and the officers with him, and His Majesty's questions were put to me after I was free from chains.

The others were very roughly cross-examined, and left in chains until the following day.

Mr. Rassam's property had been taken away on his being made prisoner. But now everything is friendly, and our money and other things are gradually being returned.

You will have seen Mr. Flad by this time, and must understand the drift of His Majesty's late conduct.

All I hope is, that Government will be firm, and let him know the truth.

It should not be disguised from him that his course of proceeding is not one which the British Government approves, and if presents or a courteous letter are sent, they should be accompanied by a strong remonstrance, and a demonstration on the Abyssinian frontier.

It would not be a bad thing, if a strong-minded man, with courage and firmness to face consequences, were sent with the next letter.

The best thing would have been to have sent a letter long ago, but not by an officer of rank.

The next best thing would have been to have allowed Mr. Palgrave to come with plain and straight-forward instructions.

Now that we are all in the difficulty together, I believe the best plan will be what I have indicated.

I don't believe that mere presents will ever get Mr. Rassam and his people out. They are looked on as valuable capital, and the King will work his new mine as far as he can.

I will write again when I have an opportunity, but none will occur for some months. We are all tolerably well, that is always ailing, but no acute disease.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON

Inclosure 5 in No. 43.

Captain Cameron to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Zegay, Abyssinia, May* 26, 1866.

I DO myself the pleasure of forwarding you some letters inclosed to Colonel Stanton. The letter to Mr. Hammond may be considered official. I would thank you not to make any official use of those for Danby Seymour and Mr. Hertslet; I only send them to you as they may contain something you do not know regarding our affairs. I have no friend at Aden, except Mr. Steinhäuser; I would beg to be remembered kindly to him, also to Burton, the traveller, when Dr. Steinhäuser writes to him.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 44.

Mr. Rassam to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received August 9.)

My Lord, *Emperor's Court at Zegay, May* 27, 1866.

AT the request of the Emperor of Abyssinia, I was necessitated to despatch Mr. Flad to England on the 21st ultimo, with letters to your Lordship conveying the desire of His Majesty for obtaining, through the aid of Her Majesty's Government, some artizans and

implements for making cannons and muskets. I could not just then write a full report upon all matters, but Mr. Flad would be able to give you a summary of what has taken place from the time I reached the Court of the Emperor of Abyssinia up to the day of his departure hence. Since then the Emperor has been extremely kind and courteous. Indeed, not a day passes without his showing me and my companions, Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, marked civility.

A short time ago he presented us with fine horses, handsomely caparisoned in the Abyssinian style.

On several occasions he has taken me out shooting with him, and a few days ago he presented me with a valuable fowling-piece.

He has visited me again in my tent, and expressed in gratifying terms his esteem for our Queen and her Representatives.

When he learnt the other day that the 24th instant was Her Majesty's birthday, he gave a large entertainment in commemoration of it, and had a royal salute fired in honour of the occasion. Early in the morning he sent to tell me that, as that day was his friend, my Queen's birthday, he had suspended all business, and given himself up to merry-making, for the sake of the regard he entertained towards Her Majesty. His remarkably courteous conduct on that occasion has created a good impression here both amongst the Europeans and natives.

Yesterday a letter arrived from Dr. Beke, in which he informed the Emperor that after he had gone up to Hallai, in Abyssinia, to await a reply to his letter, which he had sent up to His Majesty about three months ago, the rebels of Tigre had placed a restriction upon his movements. Dr. Beke, therefore, begs the Emperor to send and have him released, in order that he may be enabled to prosecute his intended journey to the interior of Abyssinia with the presents he had brought for him from England.

His Majesty sent me a message immediately after the receipt of the above communication to say that he would write to the Chiefs of Hallai and the adjacent districts to have Dr. Beke sent back to Massowah in safety, in order that he might come up to him viâ Kassala and Matemma, and if any accident should befall him he would hold them responsible. "If any serious accident happen to him," said he, "I will show you the severe punishment I shall inflict upon those who injure him." "Did I not on a former occasion," he added, "kill a number of my relatives and their followers to revenge the blood of an Englishman? Why should I now then allow any of my subjects to hurt or molest another?"

The reason I have troubled your Lordship with the above narratives is, because I feel confident that the detention of myself and party in Abyssinia will make Her Majesty's Government anxious about us all, and consequently I deemed myself in duty bound to report the kind and courteous behaviour of the Emperor ever since the departure of Mr. Flad.

I beg to bring to your Lordship's notice, that since my arrival in Abyssinia I have supplied Captain Cameron with 2,800 German crowns (about 600*l.*) for defraying different debts which he had incurred in the country, and which I deemed necessary to square before our departure hence. Captain Cameron's receipts I have the honour to inclose herewith for your Lordship's information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 45.

Mr. Eveleigh to Lord Stanley.—(*Received August* 9.)

My Lord, *Clifton Villas, Maida Hill, London, August* 8, 1866.

AS a relative of Her Majesty's Consul, Mr. Cameron, and with a desire to liberate the captives in Abyssinia, and to turn evil to good account; for although the first natural impression is to revenge such wrongs as they have suffered, yet, under the Christian principles I have been taught and have professed from my youth, and the knowledge I have obtained of that country and the more southern parts, I am sure the injuries can be turned to a far better and more noble account, by opening out a very extensive source of commerce between this country and the parts referred to, thereby extending British influence and trade without acquiring territory, and yet commanding peace and prosperity with far more than indemnity for every expense. I would thank your Lordship kindly to grant me an interview and allow me to explain the plans which I would propose for carrying out these views, by devoting a few years of my life in that country as an ambassage from this Government.

Trusting my devotion to medicine and science for thirty-five years will enable me to render a good account in this as in some other undertakings, I have, &c.

(Signed) GEO. EVELEIGH.

No. 46.

Captain Cameron to Mr. Danby Seymour, M.P.

Dear Sir, *Zigyie, Abyssinia, May* 25, 1866.

I DID myself the pleasure of writing to thank you for your having spoken a kind word on my behalf in the House. I expected at that time to be soon on my way home, but there was a passage in the King's letter to Mr. Rassam which had not been translated properly. It was to the effect that His Majesty wanted pledges of friendship in the shape of workmen. The fact is that we were only to be released if others supplied our place as hostages. It is an ugly business. Mr. Rassam wished to get us out of the King's reach as soon as possible. The latter gave us permission to leave, and after we had gone one stage on our road to the frontier sent soldiers who chained us and put all our property under seal. Mr. Rassam with Lieutenant Prideaux and Dr. Blanc had separated from us, in order to have a farewell interview with His Majesty. They were seized on their arrival at his camp, their uniforms torn open, their swords taken off their persons, their arms, money, and everything else they had taken possession of. They were kept in confinement, but without chains, for three days. We were brought to the camp chained two-and-two. On the day after our arrival we had an interview with the King, My chain was opened and I was ordered to take my seat with Mr. Rassam and his party, who were already on the ground. The Rev. Mr. Stern and the other Magdala prisoners were left in chains till the following day. It was the old story; complaints about having been abused—except as regards myself and Mr. Kerens. I had obeyed orders, and asked permission to go to Massowah without delay, which His Majesty took as an insult.

The charge against Mr. Kerens was a very droll one. He had brought up a carpet of very common pattern—a Turk and Frenchman shooting a lion. This lion was supposed to represent Abyssinia. France and Turkey were the hunters. The carpet had been sent as a present by Mr. Kerens' cousin, my Vice-Consul, Mr. Speedy, and His Majesty construed the pattern on it as a real allegory aimed at himself.

Now everything is friendship. Mr. Rassam, after having got a wigging in public for his having wished to get us out of the country, is again in favour.

You will have heard of the rest of the story by this time, and why he is retained together with us.

On the whole I feel somewhat like the lad in the "Arabian Nights" who made his cream tarts with pepper, and found that in doing so he had committed a great political offence.

I went round the Abyssinian frontier in order to inquire about some Christian Abyssinian women who had been made slaves of long ago, and been lost sight of in the Soudan, and to try and get back some cattle which had been lifted from the vicinity of the Roman Catholic Mission Station on the Bogos. On reaching Kassala I found myself ill with fever, and was afraid to go to Massowah, so I wrote to the King telling him the business I had come upon into the Soudan, and begging permission to go to the English Protestant Mission Station near his frontier, in order to obtain medicine and medical attendance, as I was very ill.

I assure you that I returned to Abyssinia as fearlessly as I would go to London.

Then came the request for toleration from the French Government,—Mr. Stern's beating,—the non-arrival of an answer to a letter the King had sent through me to England, and an order in its stead to go to my post, which, after waiting a few weeks in order to try and arrange the quarrel between His Majesty and the missionaries, I obeyed literally, and have been a prisoner ever since in consequence.

This is about the whole truth put into a nutshell.

I never was more surprised than when I heard that my returning to Abyssinia had been censured in England. If a Consul for Massowah is never to enter Abyssinia for either pleasure or business, without applying for leave from England, there is no use in keeping up the post. In fact, I believe no one could live in Massowah without occasionally seeking the upland. The climate is so bad.

I have nothing to do with parties. My business is to serve the existing Government to the best of my abilities. But truth is truth, and fair play's a jewel, as you say in dear England. It is not quite fair to tear my character to pieces without hearing first

what I have to say for myself. Remember me kindly to Sir H. Rawlinson, and if you have an opportunity, pray thank Lord Chelmsford and the Earl of Malmesbury for their having spoken in my behalf.

I would write to Mansfield Parkyns to do so for me, but I am literally limited to a certain amount of paper in my correspondence just now, and have some other letters to write.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 47.

Mr. Gibson to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 14.)

My Lord, 25, *Moorgate Street, City, August* 13, 1866.

I BEG to inform your Lordship that I have several times offered my services to the late Government to release Mr. Consul Cameron and the other captives now still detained in Abyssinia. My offers were always politely declined. Had I been allowed to proceed the prisoners would long before this have been in England, as I am confident from my knowledge of the language, manners, and customs, I should have succeeded. I attribute the failure of the present mission to sending such a person as Rassam. Those who are acquainted with the prejudices of the different sects of Eastern Christians will understand the antipathy the Abyssinians have to all Christians under the Turkish sway.

Should your Lordship grant me an interview I shall be happy to explain fully the plans I should adopt. I was superintendent of the Red Sea and India Telegraph Company at Kosseir, to which post I was nominated through my knowledge of the country and language.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. GIBSON.

No. 48.

Memorandum by Colonel Merewether, C.B.

THE intelligence from Mr. Rassam, brought by Mr. Flad, is certainly very unfortunate and perplexing. The latest news up to 13th April, brought home by me in June was most satisfactory, everything was progressing smoothly and well, and the very fact, that of the ex-captives being sent off without again going before the King, and which was done with his approval, is now given as the cause for the change in the King's behaviour, was then reasonably considered as most likely to prevent any further unpleasantness. And so it would have done had not some other circumstance raised the King's suspicions, on which he used the departure of the ex-captives without leave-taking as a pretext for detaining and for a short time ill-using the whole. It would appear that in accordance with the sanction of the King, both parties left Korata on the 13th April; the ex-captives by land for Goorgara, at the north-western extremity of the Lake Tsana. Mr. Rassam and his mission, by water, to the King's camp at Gegale. The former were stopped the next day, made prisoners again, all their property taken from them, placed in irons, and afterwards taken to the royal camp. The latter on reaching the King's camp was with his companions suddenly arrested; their swords were taken from them, also their property, and they were placed under a guard. The reason assigned for this treatment was Mr. Rassam sending the ex-prisoners away without receiving a public pardon and dismissal from the King. After three days had passed explanations took place, the charges against Captain Cameron and the missionaries were publicly read out, acknowledged by them to be true, and pardon asked for. The King granted it before the whole Court assembled, and then asked pardon of Mr. Rassam for the treatment he had subjected him to. Mr. Rassam said he was satisfied, and expressed his regret that anything he had done should have annoyed the King, that it was quite unintentional, indeed he believed that he was acting only as the King desired. Amity was restored, and up to the date of Mr. Flad's leaving, April the 21st, the King had shewn to Mr. Rassam the greatest possible courtesy, and the whole party were being well treated; their property had also been mainly restored. The breach of etiquette was, there can be no doubt, only a pretext, the real cause of the change in the King's behaviour was some one having excited suspicions in his mind that, directly Mr. Rassam and the liberated captives were safe out of the country, the British Government would resent the

treatment Captain Cameron had received, either by direct attack or by urging on the Egyptian Government to advance against Abyssinia from that side. There can be no doubt also that the person who did this was the adventurer Bardel, the man who has taken every opportunity of doing injury to Captain Cameron. He told the Chamberlain Samuel, the King had better be careful how he let all the Europeans leave the country. Samuel told the King, and the latter immediately had his fears aroused, and determined on keeping all the Europeans until he had some material guarantee or unmistakeable assurance that no retributive steps were to be adopted against him. In order to get this assurance he determined on keeping Mr. Rassam's party. Captain Cameron despatching Mr. Flad, one of the German missionaries, who had been in semi-confinement at Gaffat, and whose wife and children would remain, with a letter to Her Majesty asking her to send him means and people "who would open his eyes," that is to say, workmen who would develop the resources of his country and teach his people to utilise the valuable products which were to be found in it. This is no new idea of his, and he took advantage of the position he had gained to advance this project, but at the same time to obtain by the fact of his request being complied with a certain assurance that no ill will was borne against him. The acts of the King in April were certainly a breach of the promises he made in February, when on receiving Her Majesty's letter, he released all the captives and handed them over to Mr. Rassam, with permission to take them out of the country. His treatment of Mr. Rassam and the officers with him was undoubtedly most unjustifiable and such as under ordinary circumstances would call for severe measures being adopted; but under the peculiar circumstances of the case, and unless Her Majesty's Government was prepared to engage in a war with Abyssinia and to march an army into the country to bring off Mr. Rassam and all by force of arms, I confess I do not see how severe notice can be taken of these acts of the King. Officially from Mr. Rassam, Government has heard nothing of what was done by the King, the proceedings alone epitomised have been confidentially communicated by Mr. Flad, who brought home the letter for Her Majesty. Another point with regard to the inexpediency of taking serious notice of what has occurred presents itself, and that is the danger of injury if not death to Mr. Rassam, the officers with him, and Captain Cameron's party, on an offensive attitude being assumed. There would be no difficulty in conquering the country and punishing the King, provided Her Majesty's Government was prepared to go to the expense of such an undertaking; but I conclude that is not to be thought of. The only thing that remains and that I would venture to recommend, is that the King's confidence may be won by his requests being frankly and most liberally met, that the means he alludes to, and of which Mr. Flad has a list, should be supplied by Government and presented to the King. That efforts should be made to obtain the services of an enterprising, well-educated person, who would proceed to Abyssinia to set up the machinery which Government sends out, and who would be able to do what the King most requires; to teach his people the use of the machinery, and how to take advantage of what his country contains. This person should be able to superintend everything, and might take with him four or five men of his own selection who would work under him as smiths, carpenters, &c. It is better so than to send simple artizans by themselves who being under no control would quickly destroy themselves by excesses, or fatally offend the King. He and they should go out entirely of their own free will and accord, and should be fully informed of the risk they run and that they are to serve under the King for three years, or longer if agreeable to both parties; that Government are not responsible for their safety or that they should be allowed to return punctually at the end of three years; in this they must depend on themselves and on their satisfying the King; if they work well for him, I am confident, and so is Mr. Flad, that not only they will be perfectly safe but that they will be highly honoured and greatly enriched. I believe myself that such a person could be found who would be glad of so good an opportunity of advancing himself, and I shall be happy to make arrangements for his engagement. All that I think would be required of Government in the event of a person being met with, is that his expenses and those of his companions out, also his and their salaries until they join the King should be paid by Government; and as a provision to them all against actual loss, that Government should guarantee the payment to any persons appointed by them in England of their full salary for three years according to the sum agreed on. Should it so happen that the King failed to remunerate them himself according to the compact, that their health yielded to the effects of the climate, causing their return home or death and their salary was not paid by the King, or that their lives were taken by the King or lost in his service, and he failed to recompense their friends. Beyond the above, Government is to have nothing to do with them.

This superintendent, his assistants, and the articles which it is proposed Her Majesty should send as presents to the King, and of which a list is appended, should all

accompany Mr. Flad on his return to Abyssinia. Owing to the rainy season, Mr. Flad cannot start from the sea coast for the King's camp until early in October. He would have to leave England about the middle of September for Aden, and from thence would be sent to Massowah in Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria." At Massowah he would find letters from the King, telling him what route to follow to join the Royal camp.

Mr. Flad brought a letter from King Theodorus to Her Majesty; another had been previously received in June last, in answer to the one from Her Majesty, delivered by Mr. Rassam. I would suggest that these two letters should be answered in one, which should be as short as possible. The contents of the first letter should be acknowledged with great satisfaction, as what was expected from a Sovereign entertaining friendly feelings towards Her Majesty, and gratification should be shown at the King having so promptly handed over Captain Cameron and the others to Mr. Rassam. Regret might then be expressed that delay should have occurred in carrying out His Majesty's good intentions, and a request that he would speedily complete what had been so well begun, by sending Mr. Rassam, Captain Cameron and all to England, that Her Majesty may hear from them about His Majesty and his country. It might then be added, that in compliance with the request contained in His Majesty's last letter, and to show the friendly feeling felt towards him, as well as a desire to see his country benefited, certain articles were sent for his acceptance, which it was trusted might prove useful in promoting the object His Majesty had in view.

One of the points the King wrote about three years ago was, that he might send an Embassy to England; this might be noticed now with great advantage, and he could be told in the letter, that with a view of enlightening him as to the blessings a merciful Providence had granted this country, as well as the advantages, that wait on the increase of knowledge. If His Majesty would send some of his nobles or able counsellors to England with Mr. Rassam, they would be received with honour, and treated as worthy people coming from a friend. This would, I think, have the best possible effect. It would assist the early exodus of Mr. Rassam and party, and would, in conjunction with the people and presents sent, tend to entirely remove the suspicions which have been so unfortunately raised in the King's mind.

It has been mentioned that it would be best to try and enter into some kind of engagement with the King, that before the people now going to work for him should enter his country, the Europeans there should have left it.

I look upon it as most dangerous to the success of the whole scheme, should this be attempted. It will tend only to confirm the King's suspicions, and would, I firmly believe, cause him to even forego the chance of getting the workmen he is so anxious for, and would lead to the immediate consignment to captivity, not only of Captain Cameron and his companions again, but of Mr. Rassam and his party also, with a certainty of their release being unaffectable without armed interference. On the other hand, fairly and frankly trust the King, show him that his word is fully believed in, lead him to see that the stories which have been told him are false; that nothing but friendly feelings exist towards him; and I am confident no further difficulty will arise, and that he will be only too glad to try and prove his regret for what has passed, and his earnestness in faithful conduct for the future.

It is mentioned in Mr. Flad's Report, and I have heard from other quarters, that an expedition from the Egyptian side against Abyssinia is about to be carried out. This cannot be too strongly deprecated, and if possible measures should be taken to prevent it. As sure as Egypt attacks Abyssinia, so surely will the King believe it to be only at the instigation of the British Government, and so surely will he imprison if not destroy all the Europeans with him.

I would mention one other subject in which the King is deeply interested, and most desirous of assistance in, that is, instruction in the use of artillery. His own people are very deficient in this knowledge, and though he has guns of sorts they are of little value to him.

It was suggested that an artillery officer should be sent out with Mr. Flad. I would not recommend this: it is quite unnecessary to send an officer. A qualified sergeant of artillery, such as there is now in the garrison at Aden, might be sent up to join Mr. Rassam's mission, and remain with it during the time it would have to stay yet in the country. That would give sufficient opportunity for him to show how the gun should be worked, and to allow of translations of range tables, instructions for firing and setting fuzes, &c., being made. I would also recommend that with him a couple of the light 6-pounder Armstrong's, such as were used against the Arabs last winter, which are also in store at Aden, should be sent up, with 100 rounds per gun, as a present to the King: These would be highly valued by him.

One of the first questions King Theodorus would ask of Mr. Flad on his return,

would be, "Did you see the Queen of England?" I would strongly urge that it is a matter of great importance that he should reply in the affirmative, and it would certainly aid greatly towards the early release of those whose departure from Abyssinia is so greatly desired. If Her Majesty would be graciously pleased to grant Mr. Flad an audience, it would do more than almost anything else to promote the success of the object for which he came to England, and for which he left behind his wife and children.

Since writing the above I have, through the kindness of various gentlemen in London, been placed in communication with several persons who have offered their services, but have not yet been able finally to close with any particular one. The last who has applied is most likely to suit, and I think is really inclined to engage himself. As far as he is individually concerned he would have done so this morning; but before completing the arrangement he wished to hear from his friends, to whom he had written on Saturday, but had not received a reply. He is an Irish gentleman, well connected, and has been engaged in important works as civil engineer for the last twenty-two years, and has very strong testimonials. He is exactly the sort of person required, one who would himself be able to superintend the setting up and proper application of machinery, would pick out serviceable and good men to go with him, and while from being a man of good education and steady principles, he would be careful how he conducted himself; he would also be able to control the others, whom he would select, and who would be dependent on him. His salary would be 1000*l.* a-year, and the workmen according to their capabilities. He has had the risk fully explained to him, as also what is proposed in this paper as regards himself and those who go with him; and as far as he was concerned he told me he was willing to engage on the terms, provided his friends approved. He will give a final answer on Wednesday next, when, if it is in the affirmative, he will also give me an approximate estimate of the cost of the machinery and tools he would take with him, as well as the pay to the workmen.

August 13, 1866.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 49.

Further Memorandum by Colonel Merewether.

SINCE Monday afternoon two more gentlemen have expressed their desire to go to Abyssinia, to work under and for the King, so that there are now three applicants. I had another interview yesterday with Mr. Talbot, when he furnished me with a rough estimate of the cost of machinery, which, judging from the list brought to me by Mr. Flad, would be what the King would like to have.

The things mainly desired by the King are—

Foundry and apparatus for smelting. Iron exists to a great extent in his country, with very fair coal and plenty of wood.

Means for making muskets, copper caps, wheeled carriages, and boats.

The first essential for the above is a steam-engine of about 12-horse power. This, once set up, would work everything. This and other articles suggested are, with the prices roughly quoted, annexed:—

	£
1 steam-engine with boiler and fittings complete, 12 horse-power, ready to set up	300
Cupola and fans	50
Puddling and smelting apparatus complete for different classes of iron	400
One vertical drill for general use, including gun and cannon work	100
1 lathe made to order, with tools	100
1 saw bench, large size for heavy timber, with assortment of saws	100
1 brick mould and milling machine	80
1 threshing machine for all kinds of corn	50
1 patent churn	5
Belts for steam machinery	30
Machinery for screw bolts, &c.	20
1 complete set of carpenter's tools	40
„ smith's „	30
1 copper cap-making machine	20
1 gunpowder mill, small size	50
1 ton of assorted steel	40
2 anvils, one 4 cwt., the other 3 cwt., and 1 vice	15

Miscellaneous :—

2 filters one packed inside the other		70
1 small patent water-test chest		
Some paint, oil, and brushes		
1 crate of mixed glass		
2 diamond cutters		
Assorted chemicals to be selected by the superintendent (much required), and some hand lamps, &c.		
Total		1,500

The above are approximate to the rates of the day, given as a rough estimate, but rather over than under the mark. They will all be most useful, and worked by the one engine.

In addition, the following to be purchased, and sent as presents for the King's especial use, from Her Majesty :—

1 Ordnance telescope of good power, with tripod stand		500
A supply of gunpowder and caps		
Some handsome large square carpets		
Some pieces of varied coloured silks		
Half-a-dozen ornamented tumblers, large size		
Half-a-dozen glass water bottles		
1 double-barrelled breach-loading fowling-piece, with a supply of cartridges		
1 double-barrelled Jacobs' rifle, with shell apparatus, 500 prepared shells, and spare tubes	3,000	
A Prussian needle-gun with cartridges		
A Deans and Adams' revolver, latest improvement		
A pair of binocular field glasses		

To work and look after the machinery, the superintendent would require workmen, as below mentioned, with salaries as set opposite to their names :—

	£
1 superintendent, salary per annum	1,000
1 gunsmith	300
1 fitter	300
1 ironfounder	300
1 ship's carpenter	270
1 carpenter	250
1 smith	230
1 general man	230
Total per annum	2,880

These men would on joining the King receive their salary from him, but up to the time of reaching his camp it was proposed all charges on their account should be paid by Her Majesty's Government; this would be equal to three months, one quarter's salary, or 720*l.*; and to enable them all to start fairly a moderate sum should be given to each as an outfit allowance; 90*l.* to the superintendent, and 30*l.* to each of the workmen, or 300*l.* in all. Their passage money to Aden would also have to be paid.

	£
Superintendent, 1st class passage	60
Workmen, 2nd class passage, at 30*l.* each	210
Total	270

The entire expenditure will be as follows :—

	£
Machinery	1,500
Other presents	500
1 quarter's salary	720
Outfit allowance	300
Passage to Aden	270
Total	3,290

Or say in round terms 3,500*l.* Beyond this, Government would be bound to nothing but the guarantee of the three years' salary in the event of King Theodorus failing to pay it. This is most improbable; so that in reality is a mere nominal responsibility. All other risks the men would take on themselves.

There was one other thing recommended in the first part of this memorandum, that a couple, or one might be sufficient, light Armstrong guns, with 200 rounds of ammunition, be sent from the Aden Arsenal as a present to the King. It would be very highly valued; and a serjeant of artillery could very easily be sent up with it from Aden to show its working and teach the King's men gunnery generally, during the time Mr. Rassam may

continue in Abyssinia. The cost of the Armstrong and ammunition I do not know at present.

The scheme is now complete, and ready for Lord Stanley's consideration and decision. Of its success, if thus liberally and generously carried out, I have not the slightest doubt myself. It will reassure the King, remove the absurd suspicions he holds now, prove to him friendly feelings are really entertained towards him in spite of all that has passed, and practically convince him of the value of the friendship of Her Majesty.

The sum may appear large, but I would submit that it is small compared to the object it will gain, and a mere insignificant trifle compared to the cost of a campaign in such a country as Abyssinia.

I would beg the favour of his Lordship's decision being early communicated to me, that I may give a final answer to the three applicants as soon as possible.

They would be greatly obliged by having it on Saturday morning, as they are kept in town until they know the result.

Of the three I would decidedly recommend the first applicant, Mr. Talbot.

14, *St. James's Square*,
August 16, 1866. (Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 50.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Eveleigh.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 17, 1866.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, offering to proceed to Abyssinia in an official capacity, in order to promote the commerce between that country and Great Britain, and I am to thank you for this offer, of which, however, his Lordship has no occasion to avail himself.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 51.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Gibson.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 21, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, offering to proceed to Abyssinia in order to procure the liberation of the British subjects now detained in that country, and I am to thank you for this offer, of which, however, Her Majesty's Government do not propose to avail themselves.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 52.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 28.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, August* 27, 1866.

I HEREWITH inclose you a copy of a letter received a few days since by Mrs. Stern, from her husband, the Reverend H. A. Stern, the Missionary who has been so long a captive in Abyssinia. And in doing so, I may ask whether your Lordship is fully acquainted with the fact that Mr. Stern and the other Missionaries and their wives and children, had all their goods confiscated, and their property of every kind, even to their clothes taken from them and destroyed. Now, my Lord, it is admitted on all hands (except by those who would gladly forget the position into which these poor people have been thrown by the culpable neglect of the commonest act of courtesy on the part of Her Majesty's servants) that the cause of the sufferings of the captives was mainly that of not answering the King's polite letter to Her Majesty Queen Victoria. In Mr. Flad's mission, I believe he was requested to ask for some compensation for the losses he and the rest of the captives had sustained by the confiscation and destruction of all their property. He was consequently referred to Mr. Murray, who I am told, not only refused to give them a farthing, but treated the matter in the most uncourteous and ungentlemanly

manner. Your Lordship is not aware, perhaps, that Mr. Stern had an expensive photographic apparatus, a very fine collection of natural curiosities and books, besides money, clothes, &c., &c., which were all taken away from him by the emissaries of the King, not one iota of which has been returned. I may also state that the Negoos never sent the captives a loaf of bread or a jug of water, during their captivity at Magdala. It has fallen to my lot, my Lord, as the father-in-law of Mr. Stern, to be made acquainted with many facts which have never yet transpired; and those facts go to show circumstances not at all redounding to the credit of the English captives. Nor do I desire to reveal them to their prejudice. One thing, however, I must state, and that is, the unremitting care of Mr. Flad, and the untiring benevolence of that gentleman, were the means of saving the Consul and his friends from starvation for many months. And when supplies of money, &c., were sent from Massowah, the Consul refused the Missionaries any participation in them, although he knew they had been the means of saving him from absolute want, over and over again.

I should not have troubled your Lordship with this statement, but that I felt convinced your Lordship would not concur in Mr. Murray's refusal to give even a suit of clothes for the poor captives to return in, if your Lordship was at all aware of the actual state of the case; and I feel assured that your Lordship's sense of justice to these sufferers will not permit you to treat them with contempt, even if you cannot see that they are entitled to some compensation.

Your Lordship can do as you please as to whether you consider this communication official or private.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

Inclosure in No. 52.

The Rev. H. A. Stern to Mrs. Stern.

My dearest Charlotte, *Zegay, Lake Tzana, Abyssinia, May* 26, 1866.

AFTER such a long period of feverish anxiety and harassing care, I thought that at length our interminable sad captivity was to end. That this fond expectation, like so many others, was doomed to disappointment, you have probably already heard. Painful as it is to cherish gloomy forebodings, I dare not, without practising self-deception, conjure up to my imagination visionary prospects of freedom, which, as the past has so frequently demonstrated, are always destined to be scattered to the winds.

Without adverting specially to the different periods which seemed propitious to close my own personal misery, had not something always, of a local character, intervened hostile to my liberation. I will just mention one or two facts which will convince you that my surmises are not unfounded. It is now nearly three years since these unhappy Abyssinian complications began; of all the causes which produced them, I will not, and dare not, just now, speak. This, however, is certain, that the Negoos was offended because he did not receive an answer to his letter to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, sent to Her Majesty's Government, in 1862. Well, that reply, and a very gracious one too, at last is written; but instead of being immediately dispatched to the King, when it would doubtlessly have effected our freedom, it is, contrary to the advice of the Europeans, and the prisoners here, detained eighteen months at Massowah. Passing over many, many weeks of intense suffering, a better future once more brightens our horizon. Hurrying away from Magdala, we find in the excitement of motion, the exercise of unfettered limbs, and the delight of meeting those dear faces whose smiles would diffuse a sunshine over our hearts, so long inured to prison gloom, something to mitigate, if not to obliterate, the keen trials of the past; when, to our astonishment, shackles once more encircle our wrists, which, after five days of tedious explanations and mutual apologies, are removed—and between conjectures and doubts, hope and despair, we are condemned to pass our time in a dreary enclosure of the Royal camp.

I am no politician, nor do I arrogate to myself such a dignity; but this I know, that procrastination, neglect, and blunders, have inexorably conspired against the mitigation and relief of misery in our unfortunate case. You, and every one here, well know that I am not easily appalled at difficulties, or disposed to cower in the presence of danger, but this perpetual wear and tear of cruel suspense, jars and grates upon my nerves—nay, worse, it shakes and undermines, almost visibly, my once strong and vigorous constitution.

Since the departure of Mr. Flad for England, the Negoos has been very attentive to Mr. Rassam, Dr. Blanc, Lieutenant Prideaux, as also to the late Magdala prisoners. But

cows, sheep, honey, potent hydromel, &c., must not blind us to the various contingencies that may yet arise. I have had bitter experience, and so am not easily gulled by a little subserviency. As far as I can judge from the past, I fear we shall yet have to breast (to use a nautical phrase) many a heaving sea ere we outride the storm.

Do not think that I am desponding or inclined to waver in my trust in the goodness of Him who has hitherto so wonderfully sustained me in all the trials and hardships that have fallen to my lot. No, no, my motto is, and ever will be, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass."

The note I gave to Mr. Flad you will estimate at its proper value.

I should like to write more, but it is interdicted to dilate on our mysterious history.

God bless you and the dear children; and that our Heavenly Father may ere long re-unite us, is the fervent prayer of

(Signed) HENRY A. STERN.

You will communicate this, and the contents of all my previous letters, to whomsoever you may feel disposed.

No. 53.

Mr. Flad to King Theodore.

(Literal translation of the letter to King Theodore of Abyssinia.)

In the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God.

MAY this letter reach His Imperial Majesty the King of Kings, Theodore, which is sent of Mr. Martin Flad. May the Redeemer of the world give your Majesty health and prosperity. Amen.

To God our Heavenly Father be honour and praise now and for ever.

The business your Majesty had sent me for to England is through the grace of Christ our Lord accomplished.

The artists your Majesty were anxious to get are found, and are ready to come with me to your country. On account of the steam engine which is to be made for your Majesty's country, and which is required by the artists I shall bring over to you, my way back to your country is delayed for one month.

If God keeps me in health, I hope to reach Massowah at the end of October or later. Of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, I have, since I arrived here, seen nothing but friendship. For the necessity of life I receive of Her Majesty every day five German crowns.

Once I had a dinner together with Her Majesty's Minister, Lord Stanley, at Her Majesty's Castle; on that occasion Her Majesty talked with me in a very friendly manner.

Regarding your Majesty, the Queen Victoria is a little grieved, saying:—Why has the Emperor Theodore not sent over to me the prisoners, whose relations are daily weeping before me? In reply to this, I said:—After having conveyed the artists to your Majesty, I shall come back and bring the released prisoners over with me to England. This hope I gave to Her Majesty.

The last war in Germany has come to a termination. The King of Prussia, before going to battle, proclaimed a day of repentance and united prayer throughout his dominions; His Majesty humbled himself before God, and was earnestly praying, out of which it came, that he got the victory over all the German Confederations including Austria.

Throughout Europe is great sickness, and a great number of people die every day.

In Persia, sixteen villages were swallowed up from the earth.

Many believers say that the Lord's second advent is near, according to Matthew xxiv. 30, to chapter xxv. 46, and Revelation xx.

May God our Heavenly Father protect your Majesty and give me grace to see you soon in good health and prosperity.

London, September 1, 1866.

(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

P.S.—For the 2,000 dollars I had received from Sheeh Djuma, I bought tools and instruments for your Majesty's workmen, and some good silk, which I hope will please your Majesty.

T. M. F.

No. 54.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received September 5.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, August* 27, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from the Acting Political Resident at Aden, that has just reached me under flying-seal, acknowledging the receipt of your Lordship's instructions which were forwarded to me by telegraph, on the subject of the communication to be made to Mr. Rassam, touching Mr. Flad's journey to England, and reporting that Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" had been despatched from Aden to Massowah on the 10th instant, for the purpose of conveying the stores and money required by Mr. Rassam, and that your Lordship's communication for that gentleman had been forwarded by the same opportunity.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 55.

The Assistant Resident at Aden to Lord Stanley.—(Received September 5.)

My Lord, *Aden, August* 19, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a letter dated 23rd ultimo, from Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt, and to inform your Lordship that in obedience to the instructions conveyed therein, I despatched Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" from Aden on the 10th instant, with the stores and money required by Mr. Rassam, to Massowah, and by the same opportunity I sent him the information contained in the letter above referred to, reporting Mr. Flad's arrival in England, and his being in communication with the Foreign Office on the subject of his journey. I also forwarded the private letters that arrived from the Foreign Office from Mr. Flad, one to the address of His Majesty the Emperor Theodorus, one addressed to M. Munzinger at Massowah, and the third to Mr. Rassam himself.

2. The "Victoria" returned from Massowah on the 17th instant, but I regret to say brought no further intelligence of the mission. M. Munzinger had received no further news from the interior, and was unable to say when messengers might arrive with despatches, he, therefore, did not detain the vessel. He reports that the King is at Debra Tabor, with cholera in his camp, that the Europeans were at Korata and Dedjaz Jabasi, in Tembien, and expected to arrive at Adowa shortly. All the stores, &c., forwarded on a former occasion had deen despatched, and M. Munzinger states that he will lose no time in sending off those that had then arrived.

3. The "Victoria" will again visit Massowah for intelligence in the course of a few days.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 56.

Captain Goodfellow to Mr. Murray.—(Received September 10.)

Sir, *Aden Residency, August* 19, 1866.

THE letters inclosed by you in your note of the 26th ultimo reached me, and they were at once forwarded to their respective addresses by "Victoria," which left this for Massowah on the 10th instant. Trusting that you will convey my best thanks to Mr. Flad for his letter to me, I remain, &c.

(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW

No. 57.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(Received September 11.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street West, September* 10, 1866.

MORE than a fortnight ago I took the liberty of addressing your Lordship on the subject of the captives in Abyssinia, inclosing, at the same time, a copy of a letter from

the Rev. H. A. Stern, my son-in-law, and printed copies of his former letters. Not having been favoured with an answer, I presume they never reached your Lordship; if my conjecture is right, may I take the liberty of asking your Lordship for a reply to this?

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 58.

Mr. Egerton to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 13, 1866.

LORD STANLEY has received your letter of the 10th instant relative to the claims which you state are preferred by the British subjects now detained in captivity in Abyssinia, to compensation from Her Majesty's Government on account of the loss incurred by them in consequence of the confiscation of their property by the King of that country; and with reference to your statement that money and "a suit of clothes" had been refused by this office "to the poor captives to return in," I am directed by his Lordship to request you to state to what circumstances you refer; also, when and by whom such application was made, and whether you possess a copy of the reply to which you refer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. C. EGERTON.

No. 59.

The Assistant Resident at Aden to Lord Stanley.—(*Received September* 15.)

My Lord, *Aden, August* 28, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to state, for your Lordship's information, that I received a despatch from Massowah this afternoon by native boat from M. Munzinger in charge of the Consulate at that place, in it was inclosed only one short note from Mr. Rassam to the address of the Political Resident, a copy of which is attached.

2. M. Munzinger reports that the messenger who brought the above note arrived at Massowah on the 10th instant, and that they state that they did not leave Debra Tabor for fifteen days after it was written, in consequence of Mr. Rassam requesting them to delay their departure, but that on the 10th July, they quitted his camp but were unable to arrive at Massowah earlier on account of the rainy season and flooded state of the rivers *en route*.

3. They report that up to the end of May, the King was at Zeghe, whilst the Europeans were at Korata; that cholera breaking out in the Royal camp, His Majesty removed his army to Debra Tabor, sending Mr. Rassam and his companions to Gaffat, and that up to the date of Mr. Rassam's note he had been well treated, but after that the King's behaviour towards the Europeans suddenly changed in a most unaccountable manner, he caused them all to repair to Debra Tabor, and there insulted them by speech and treated them as prisoners without actually putting them in irons, he took all their property and two days before the departure of the messenger (on the 8th July), sent both the old and new prisoners to Magdala, escorted by Ras Engedda and a strong guard. M. Bardel accompanied them, but apparently more as a soldier of the King than a prisoner, so that now the former prisoners have returned to their old quarters accompanied by the members of the mission.

4. Mrs. Flad was not disturbed, she was permitted to reside at Gaffat and Mrs. Rosenthal was sent to her as a companion. The King is stated to have begged Mrs. Flad not to be alarmed, being, as he was pleased to say, the wife of his son Flad. Messrs. Essler and Schiller were also granted permission to remain in Mrs. Flad's house.

5. The prisoners were supplied with food by the King as heretofore, and none had been sick; Mrs. Waldemer being the only person who had an attack of cholera, which she had got over.

6. Tirso Gobese was reported to have extended his power as far as Gondar, and that the King only possessed Begemeder and the road as far as Magdala; during the time he had been at Debra Tabor, and where he would most probably pass the rainy season, he had lost Agowmedr. Waksham Gobese had entered Adowa and would soon make himself master of the whole of Tigré, as his army were reported to be considerable.

7. As it is very probable that some more messengers may reach Massowah in a few

days, Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria" will be despatched on the 1st proximo for further intelligence, and I trust that I shall then be enabled to report more favourably to your Lordship of the treatment of the mission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

Inclosure in No. 59.

Mr. Rassam to Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *Debra Tabor, June* 26, 1866.

ON the pretence of his having heard from Jerusalem that I had been sent by Her Majesty's Government, on false pretences, for the purpose of obtaining the release of the European prisoners, and after we are out of the country England would revenge the insult offered to her by the imprisonment of our Consul, and also that a railroad had been laid down between Egypt and Kassala for the purpose of transporting English, French, and Turkish troops to Abyssinia, His Majesty has placed strict restrictions upon my movements and those of my party, though I have tried my best to assure him that the report was false, and had been invented by mischievous people who do not wish to see Abyssinia and England on amicable terms. Cholera broke out in the Royal army about the beginning of this month, and has played great havoc in this neighbourhood. We are all, thank God, in perfect health. Please don't allow my papers or letters to be sent up, unless you are certain that they contain nothing but what would please our friend. I do not mean official. I hope you will be able to send the books I sent for, for the Emperor. Please send this note on to the Foreign Office.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 60.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(*Received September* 15.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, September* 3, 1866.

I BEG leave to forward herewith to your Lordship an extract from a Smyrna Journal, "L'Impartial," which purports to be the text of a letter addressed by the Count de Bisson to the "Journal de Nice," on the state of affairs in Abyssinia.

As it appears almost incredible that such a tissue of misrepresentations and falsehood could have been sent for publication without some ulterior object being in view, and as such statements as are contained in this letter, as to the assistance given by the Governor of Aden to the Tigré rebels, might be of very serious consequence to the captives in Abyssinia, should they reach the ears of the King, I have considered it advisable to forward the extract in question for your Lordship's information, in case it might be considered necessary to warn Mr. Flad on the subject before his return to Abyssinia, in order that he might be prepared to meet any question addressed him by the King on these subjects.

It is difficult to see what advantage the Count de Bisson can expect to gain by spreading these false reports, unless it may be the hope that King Theodore may apply to him, as a French Agent, for assistance against the rebels in Tigré and their supposed British allies, and thus to a certain extent acknowledge and strengthen the position he has assumed on the frontier of Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDW. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 60.

Extract from "L'Impartial" of Smyrna.

M. LE COMTE DU BISSON, fondateur de la colonie Française d'Abyssinie, vient d'adresser au "Journal du Nice" la lettre suivante:—

"L'Empereur Théodoros vient d'appeler aux armes le ban et l'arrière-ban de ses vaillants. Deux cent mille guerriers sont réunis en ce moment dans les plaines de Dembéa.

"Les clochés des églises et des monastères sonnent le tocsin trois heures par jour dans

toute l'Abyssinie, et le tambour impérial, résonnant dans les villes, les villages, les hameaux, annonce aux populations fanatisées que la patrie est en danger.

" 'Abba Sanghia! Vive Théodoros!' cri de guerre que retentit d'une frontière à l'autre.

" L'armée va partir pour le Tigré, vaste province montagneuse qui touche à la Mer Rouge, où l'étendard de l'insurrection se promène triomphant.

" Goubassié, nègre de pure race, espèce d'halluciné, se prétendant le descendant de Salomon et de la Reine de Saba, revendique le trône. Quoi qu'il en soit de l'exactitude de ses prétensions, il a reussi à soulever les populations ruinées par les guerres précédentes; les faibles détachements impériaux ont été massacrés, et aujourd'hui il est le maître absolu de toutes ces contrées. Autour de sa personne se sont ralliés les partisans de Négoussié, d'Oubié, de Balgueda, d'Aréa, de Saha Salassé, les souverains dépossédés par Théodoros. Son principal général, Hyaro Mékina, de la race Choa, a sous ses ordres plus de 100,000 combattants.

" Une compagnie Anglaise a vendu des armes et de la poudre à Goubassié. Le Gouverneur de la colonie d'Aden a fait de nombreuses expéditions de fusils réformés et de munitions, et les communications les plus actives pour ce commerce clandestin sont établies entre Aden et le Tigré, par Tarenta.

" Les forces des insurgés se trouvent donc passablement armées; et, sous ce rapport, elles sont supérieures à celles de Théodoros, qui ne possède que 20,000 tirailleurs.

" Toute sa nombreuse et redoubtable cavalerie ne lui sera d'aucun secours, dans cette Suisse Africaine où les luttes à l'arme blanche sont excessivement difficiles.

" Des concessions très-larges ont été faites à l'Angleterre par le chef des rebelles.

" Si le Négous succombe, elle seule en profitera. Elle deviendra la maîtresse de la Mer Rouge et du centre de l'Afrique, la plus riche contrée du globe, en productions tropicales, en mines de fer, de cuivre, de plomb argentifère, d'or et en bassins houilliers.

" La Mer Rouge, donc, sera un lac Anglais, et le percement de l'isthme aura été fait à son profit.

" Mais, victorieux au Tigré, il faudra bien se résoudre à descendre dans les vastes plaines de Dembéa. Là, on retrouvera les centaures de l'Amarha, et nous verrons encore une de ces batailles titanesques auprès desquelles les fusillades de notre vieille Europe ne sont que jeux d'enfant.

" Choc effrayant, duel implacable de 300,000 hommes; combats singuliers, corps à corps, sans quartier ni merci. Vainqueurs ou morts, de prisonniers nulle part; de fuyards pas un.

" En apprenant les succès des révoltés et leurs accointances Anglaises, Théodoros entra dans une de ces colères foudroyantes qui font blanchir son noir visage.

" Il donna l'ordre de mutiler immédiatement tous les captifs Anglais. L'intervention énergique de la belle impératrice sauva seule de cet atroce supplice tous ces malheureux Anglais.

" L'ambassade extraordinaire, confiée au Commodore Rassam et à deux autres personnages, a eu un résultat désastreux.

" Tous ses membres sont aux fers.

" Le Négous avait bien accueilli l'Ambassadeur Rassam.

" Il posa carrément ses conditions à l'élargissement de M. Duncan Caméron et de ces compagnons. Elles furent acceptées avec empressement; les voici:—

" 1. Le renvoi immédiat à Calcutta de toutes les troupes Britanniques réunies à Aden (sept régiments et deux batteries de montagne). Cette clause fut exécutée sans aucun retard.

" 2. L'abandon du territoire envahi par les Egyptiens au nord de l'Abyssinie et la dissolution de l'armée Soudanienne du Vicè-roi.

" Ce second article fut admis également. Mais le soupçonneux monarque déclara à M. Rassam qu'il resterait en Abyssinie jusqu'à l'exécution complète du traite.

" Sur ces entrefaites, l'insurrection Tigréenne prit un développement formidable, et tous, représentants et sujets Anglais, furent incarcérés.

" M. Flad, missionnaire Anglican, fut dépêché à Londres, porteur d'un ultimatum, ave ordre de revenir à Gondar, rapporter la réponse.

" Et pour être certain de son obéissance passive, Théodoros lui dit:—

" 'Tu aimes bien ta femme, tu adores tes enfans, je t'approuve; mais, si tu ne retournes pas, je les fais vendre comme esclaves; la race des parjures ne doit pas exister.'

" M. Flad vient d'arriver à Londres.

" En attendant, l'ambassadeur extraordinaire et sa suite, le Consul-Général, l'Evèque Anglais Stern et dix missionnaires sont au carcan.

" La Propagande Biblique, la plus riche du monde, avait expédié le Docteur Beke

pour traiter de la rançon des captifs. Il n'a eu que le temps de se soustraire à la tempête."

No. 61.

Colonel Merewether to Mr. Murray.—(*Received September* 19.)

Esgair, Machynlleth, North Wales,
September 17, 1866.

Sir,

MR. TALBOT reports that he is getting on very well with the machinery, and has engaged six men. He has also returned the agreement I drew up, duly signed by him. If it is approved by Lord Stanley, I will have similar ones drawn up for each of the workmen in duplicate, one copy for the Foreign Office and one to be kept by each man.

Mr. Talbot and the men want the money sanctioned for them as equipment allowance. I have to-day sent him a note to you—to present at the Foreign Office—mentioning the amount due, and should feel much obliged by your allowing it to be paid to him out of the Treasury grant, that they may get themselves ready in time.

I shall be in town early on Monday next, the 24th, but, of course, could come before if required. Till Sunday a letter addressed to me at Esgair, Machynlleth, North Wales, would reach me direct.

I have not yet got my Aden letters which came by the mail on Saturday, but expect them to-morrow, following me from Edinburgh.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 61.

Agreement with Workpeople going to Abyssinia.

AGREEMENT entered into by on the one hand, and William Lockyer Merewether, Companion of the Bath, Lieutenant-Colonel in Her Majesty's Bombay Staff Corps, Resident at Aden, &c., &c., on the other, to the effect that the said will proceed to Abyssinia, there to enter the service of and work for the Emperor Theodorus, under the following stipulations:—

That the engagement shall be for three years, renewable at the pleasure of the Emperor and the said , but then on terms to be agreed on between them only.

That the salary of the said during this engagement for three years shall be pounds per annum, to be paid by the Emperor Theodorus, except in so far as is below notified.

The salary to commence from date of engagement.

The exceptions are—

1. That salary up to the time of reaching the Emperor's camp equal to about one quarter shall be paid to the said , as compensation for the time expended *en route*.

2. That in the event of the Emperor, in consequence of the death or sickness of the said , failing to act up to the engagement, the account of the three years' salary remaining unpaid to the said is guaranteed, and shall be paid in England to the appointed heirs or authorised representatives of the said

Further, passage-money from England to Massowah, the port of Abyssinia, shall be paid for the said , and a sum of money amounting to pounds given to him for outfit.

On the faith of the above agreement and guarantee the said proceeds to Abyssinia to enter the service of and to work under the Emperor Theodorus, and in so doing he acts entirely of his own free will, and by his own desire.

It is understood that if the said should not proceed to Abyssinia, and should not enter into the Emperor's service, this agreement shall have no effect.

No. 62.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Murray.—(*Received September* 19.)

Sir, *Inverary, Argyleshire, September* 5, 1866.

I HAVE been travelling about the Highlands, and perpetually on the move, or I should have acknowledged before the receipt of your note conveying intimation of the Treasury assent having been given.

I am in communication with Mr. Talbot, and he is busy getting the machinery ready, but owing to its having to be made in pieces not exceeding a certain weight, for convenience of carriage, more time will be required in its preparation than I at first expected. I hope, however, everything will be ready by the 10th of October.

The delay does not so much matter, Flad being in communication with the King can tell him why it is, which will please and satisfy him; and I have written all about it to Rassam in such a way that he may, if he likes, have my letter translated to the King.

I have sent instructions for the "Victoria" to meet me at Suez, calling at Massowah on the way up that she may bring the latest intelligence if there is any. Letters just received from Aden say the "Victoria" had come back from Massowah, but without any letters from Rassam's camp. Native report said that the cholera had broken out in the King's camp at Zeghay, on which the King had sent to remove Rassam and all back to Korata.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 63.

Mr. Flad to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *September* 19, 1866.

YOU will already have heard of the sad news of our friends in Abyssinia; how they were abused by the King; deprived of all they possessed, and sent to Magdala, where I fear all of them will have been put in chains.

Just now I have seen Mr. Murray, and he wished me to write to you, and to inform you of what I just now had told him.

As this mad man is going on in his dishonourable way, once flattering, and a second time abusing and imprisoning those whom he had called his friends, I think it is of no advantage to send him the required artizans, because the release of the prisoners would, I fear, not be obtained. Most likely he would go on in requiring other things from the British Government to which they never could surrender. And they, after having had a great expense, and given to that man six prisoners more, would at last be forced to use their arms, if ever the Government wishes to release the poor sufferers. Therefore I deem it advisable that Her Majesty's Government should at once use stronger terms; and I am sure, that if the last report is true, Mr. Rassam and companions will give the same advice.

On account of this sad news I abstain from going to Leeds this week. If you come to town on Monday please send me a note, and tell me what time I can meet you at the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD

No. 64.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Murray.—(*Received September* 22.)

Sir, 42, *Great Russell Street, September* 21, 1866.

INCLOSED is a translation of a letter just received by me from Mrs. Flad, from which you will perceive that, in consequence of evil reports, Mr. Rassam and the other prisoners have been again under the displeasure of the King, and God only knows what may be the consequence if there does not arise some way of putting a stop to these difficulties. There is but little doubt who it is that is stirring up the King to mischief. Bardel is at his dirty work again.

It would appear that the Jerusalem convent affair is again made a principal matter of

offence, and no doubt it has been much aggravated by designing people. If it could be possible to get the convent restored to the Abyssinian priests, it would take away one great source of the King's complaint.

In 1852 Consul Finn received instructions from the Government to protect these people from the attacks of the Turks. In 1855 and 1857 the same Consul informed the King that he had received instructions from Her Majesty's Government to proteet the Abyssinians, and that all the Consuls at the various places on the way from Jerusalem to Abyssinia were instructed to protect the pilgrims in their journeys to and from these places.

In 1863 some of the monks from Jerusalem arrived in Abyssinia, and made a complaint to the King that they had been expelled from their convent by Turks and Copts, and, when they sought to be protected as heretofore, the then Consul refused to interfere, stating that he had no authority from the British Government to do so; he accordingly had driven them from his house, and refused to have anything to do with the matter. This was one of the causes of the imprisonment of Consul Cameron and the other Europeans.

The Abyssinian priests from that period have manifested the greatest enmity against the British Government. This enmity has induced them to send all kinds of information which has appeared in the English newspapers to the King, and especially that of the reported intention of the Pasha to make a railway from Sowakin to Kassala, in order that troops may be transported to the frontier of Abyssinia, which report, no doubt, has induced the King to act in the extraordinary way stated by Mr. Rassam and Mrs. Flad. In addition to which, many reports which they have picked up in Jerusalem from various parties with whom they have come in contact there have been industriously circulated to the prejudice of the British Government.

I think, if I might take the liberty further to suggest it, that, if it were possible, the convent could be restored to the monks before I returned, which might be accomplished probably by my being sent to Constantinople with a despatch to that effect to the English Ambassador, and then go afterwards to Jerusalem to see it accomplished. That would give a great way towards bringing the King to a satisfactory feeling towards the captives, and would show him that the British Government were desirous of doing everything in their power to restore confidence. I could meet the artisans in Egypt.

But, if after all this the King should go on in his way, then, may the consequence be whatever it may be, attack him at once with your arms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Mrs. Flad to Mr. Flad.

(Translation.)

My dear Martin, *Gaffat, July* 7, 1866.

ONLY with a few words I venture to inform you of our last sad experiences, our present situation, and gloomy future. Now and then I feel as if the seventh tribulation, in which we are at present, wishes to devour us utterly.

On the 2nd of June came the King Theodore to Korata. He returned to Zagie on the 4th. As poor Mrs. Rosenthal had been unwell, she together with her husband accompanied by Dr. Blanc were, through Mr. Rassam's interposition, sent over from the King's camp to Korata. Mrs. Rosenthal soon got better; but our prospects became from day to day more cloudy.

When the first rains began to fall all of us had more or less to suffer from fever. The small-pox also was amongst and around us, and when the King came over to Korata with his camp the cholera broke out there and in the town. We had the most fearful scenes. The priests were day and night engaged in burying the dead. It was most exciting for the nerves, to hear day and night in every house and from the King's camp the "leseo" (lamentation), till at last the King prohibited any more lamentation for the deceased being made.

At this time Mr. Rassam with all those who were with him came over from Zagie to Korata.

On the 12th of June we were ordered by His Majesty to proceed from Korata to Gaffat (near Debra Tabor and three days' journey from Korata).

On the 15th, when we had our encampment at Kassala, a fearful thunderstorm with hailstones came over us. Many of our people were attacked with the cholera, and had to be buried in the morning. Three of our own servants died, and many of your acquaint-

ances; also some of the proselytes. Mrs. Waldmaier had also an attack, but recovered soon. This was only the beginning of the hardships we had to go through. Though hundreds of people were dying around the King, his heart got only more hardened, and by all these visitations from above he became more suspicious and capricious.

Arrived at Gaffat Mr. Rassam with his people were placed at first in the houses of the Europeans, and afterwards in the houses of his Tigré silversmiths, which he had decorated with tapestry of Abyssinian cloths. In the house occupied by Mr. Rassam he placed his own alga ("sufan"). Of all this the natives anticipated bad things to come after, and ere long we had to experience that their fears were correct.

On the 25th of June Mr. Rassam with the once released prisoners, also Messrs. Staiger and Brandeis, and their friends at Gaffat, were summoned to appear before the King at Debra Tabor. After their arrival before His Majesty, to the terror of all, they saw that the Fetha-ne-egest (lodese) was opened. A judgment took place. Messrs. Stern, Rosenthal, and Matterer were charged, that they had calumniated the King before the English Government. He at the same time pretended to have received a letter from his monks at Jerusalem, in which they inform him that a railroad was in work from Suakin to Kassala. To Mr. Rassam he said, "Your mouth (words—speech) is sweet, and you are a good man, but those who are above you are bad; therefore you have to go with me wherever I go."

Mr. Rassam, together with the rest, were kept at Debra Tabor. Only Messrs. Staiger, Brandeis, Essler, and Schiller were permitted to return to Gaffat.

The next day Dr. Blanc and Mr. Rosenthal were allowed to return to Gaffat.

On the 3rd of July the King himself came to Gaffat. All the Europeans went to receive and to salute him. The King, already in bad humour, seeing Mr. Rosenthal, said to him in a most violent manner, "Why did'st thou abuse me?" To Dr. Blanc he said, "Why did'st thou say 'that the Turks will come and take my country?'" Immediately they were transported to Debra Tabor, where they were put, together with Mr. Rassam, in one prison.

They were not put together with other native prisoners.

The King also was angry with Mr. Saalmüller, having, without asking permission, given to Messrs. Staiger and Brandeis a gun to each.

Samuel has made all this mischief, and certainly he has been influenced by M. Bardel, who is in the King's favour.

Messrs. Staiger, Brandeis, Schiller, and Essler had for one day a guard of soldiers in their houses. To me the King sent word saying, "Don't fear, I shall protect you, because your husband, whom we have sent with a message to England, committed you and your children to my care. I will protect you." I don't put much confidence in his words, but prepare myself for the worst. Our friends at Gaffat are just now making a very large cannon for him. He is friendly towards them.

On the 6th instant the King left Debra Tabor. He took Mr. Rassam and all the rest with him, to put them on the fortress Magdala.

Mrs. Rosenthal, after having been guarded at Debra Tabor for two days, he sent her over to me without saying a word.

How I feel under these sad circumstances, being alone with three little children, you may easily imagine. Can it be that we shall meet again—or was our sad parture on the shore of the lake for eternity? Our children are well. Daily they talk of their absent papa, and pray for him.

Now and then it is a comfort to me to know that *their* angels see always the presence of the Lord.

The Lord gives me willingness to suffer, yea, even to die for Him, but my heart pains me and bleeds for our children's sake.

Don't cease to pray for me. I trust the Lord will answer my prayers, which I send up to Him for you.

With the continual prayer that the Lord may protect you and all your ways, I am, &c.

(Signed) PAULINE FLAD.

P.S.—As Mr. Rassam is unable to find messengers I forward this by the two proselytes Hasa and Tarfaye.

P. F.

No. 65.

Memorandum by Colonel Merewether.

THE last mail from India has brought intelligence which most materially alters the status of the Abyssinian question from what it was, when suggestions as to the mode of proceedure to be followed towards the Emperor Theodore were submitted by me.

A letter has come direct from Mr. Rassam, dated Debra Tabor, 26th June, mentioning that the King has placed restrictions on the movements of himself and party, as well as of the quondam captives, by this, I clearly understand Mr. Rassam meant to convey that they had all been placed in confinement, but worded it as above for fear of the letter being intercepted by the King's people. The alleged cause for this treatment was, reports having reached the King from Jerusalem, that Mr. Rassam was playing the King false; that directly the Consul and his companions were got safely out of Abyssinia, a combined force of English, French, and Egyptian troops was to advance on Abyssinia to punish the King for his treatment of the British Consul; all Mr. Rassam's endeavours to disabuse the King's mind had proved fruitless. By the same opportunity a later letter dated 7th July has been received from Mrs. Flad, who was left with her three children at Gaffat, mentioning the imprisonment of Mr. Rassam, at first at Debra Tabor in the meanest possible prison, and further, that on the 6th of July the King had left Debra Tabor, taking with him Mr. Rassam, and all the rest to place them in the fortress of Magdala, where Captain Cameron and others were so long confined.

In July last Mr. Flad come to England, sent by the King. He then brought intelligence of Mr. Rassam and the ex-captives being detained by the King, and privately told of their all having being confined by the King for a few days, then reliberated and treated with due and proper consideration.

At that time two courses appeared left open for adoption, either to take the high hand at once and resent the detention of Mr. Rassam, or taking into consideration circumstances which were also made known at the time, and which afforded some excuse for the King's behaviour, a further attempt should be made by frank and generous treatment to win back the King's confidence, and to induce him to send out of his country all detained. He was anxious to obtain skilled English workmen and machinery, the prompt despatch of both, with some useful valuable presents, seemed likely to gain the object in view. Trusting that it might do so, and wishing to try every means possible before resorting to harsh measures, I suggested the adoption of the latter course, and according to instructions received have obtained the services of a small body of select and well-skilled men who are ready and willing to go out to Abyssinia for the purpose of entering the King's employ. Useful machinery such as would suit the purposes of the King has also been ordered and will be ready early next month.

The imprisonment of Mr. Rassam, the person who was sent to the Abyssinian Court with a letter from Her Majesty, and therefore in the position of an Envoy Extraordinary is so gross an outrage and insult to the English Government that simple adherence to the original plan is rendered impossible.

I would, therefore, now earnestly recommend that Mr. Flad be sent back to Massowah with a letter to the King from Her Majesty pointing out what her intentions had been, but that before her true friendly feelings could be displayed to him intelligence had reached that he, unmindful of the rule existing among all nations which makes the person of an Ambassador sacred, and forgetful of all previous assertions of friendliness, especially of the promise which he had given to send Mr. Rassam and others of Her Majesty's subjects out his country in safety and with honour, had caused Mr. Rassam and the others to be seized and placed in confinement. That such barbarous and outrageous conduct cannot be tolerated, that he will be made responsible for those acts, and for any injury which may happen to Mr. Rassam, or to any of his party, or to any of the British subjects, or of those in service with them. Their immediate release and safe conduct beyond the Abyssinian frontier should be demanded in the first instance, and should this demand not at once be complied with, the King of Abyssinia should be distinctly told that he will be made to answer for the consequences and for the evils which he will bring on his country.

Mr. Flad leaving this on the 3rd of October, would reach Massowah about the 21st or 22nd idem. He would despatch it immediately to the King and await a reply at Massowah.

The arrangements for the workpeople and machinery might still be allowed to hold good, and I should still take them to Massowah, as originally proposed, so that should matters have again changed, and the King make a proper amend, harsh measures might still perhaps be avoided.

Should however it be found on my reaching Massowah, that the King retains Mr. Rassam and the others in close confinement, and will not comply with the demand made upon him by the English Government, then I would strongly advise that no further delay should be allowed, but that the question should be taken up vigorously and every means adopted to show that the promptest measures would be taken to compel him to do so, and to punish him for his insulting outrage.

The threat of punishment having been passed, should be strictly adhered to. There would be no difficulty in administering it when once decided on, and the act of his refusal causing that decision to be arrived at, instructions could be given to me to proceed on from Massowah to Bombay, and there submit the wishes of Her Majesty's Government to the Government of India. The India Office here having been consulted with, the force to be employed for operations in Abyssinia should undoubtedly be sent from India so as to take advantage of native troops on account of greater ease of movement, less expense and sufficient effect. To ensure success it should not be less then 9,000 to 10,000 strong. Speaking briefly, it should consist of three Brigades of Infantry; two having one European and three native regiments; the other four native regiments. Two troops of Horse Artillery, one light field battery, a mountain train, and a select body of good native Cavalry; a strong brigade. European Dragoons, though most excellent in the day, would require too much material to get them easily through a new and difficult country. Such a force under a good General would ensure success. It might be organised and despatched with the aid of the steamers, so as to allow of the campaign being brought to a close before the summer and rainy season next year sets in. One point is most essential, and that is that the command and political relations should be entrusted to one person, the best that could be selected; this selection might be left to the Government of India.

The greater part of Abyssinia is now in a state of rebellion against the Emperor Theodorus, and when it was distinctly proclaimed that war was only being entered upon to punish that monarch for his conduct, that private property and private rights would be respected, and that with the punishment of the King and the release of the British subjects now in confinement the army would be withdrawn, and the country handed over to its legitimate rulers, two-thirds of the people would gladly join against Theodorus, who is merely an usurper and would assist in every way. This would especially be the case in the province of Tigré, through which the force would have to move in the first instance. The distance from Massowah, on the coast, to Gondar, the capital, is only fourteen good marches, and would easily be done in twenty days. Massowah would be the depôt for supplies, replenished from Egypt and India. At the same time that an English force entered from Massowah, an Egyptian one might be moved to act from that side. It would be a move which would meet with very cordial co-operation from that Government. The manner of it might be described on Government deciding on war.

The above is merely what was mentioned by me this morning, I feel confident that if Her Majesty's Government decide on severe measures being taken, that the whole nation will join in acknowledging the necessity and justness of their adoption. I can speak from certain knowledge that there is a very strong feeling of surprise both in England and on the continent that such measures have not been before adopted.'

14, *St. James' Square, September* 25, 1866.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 66.

Dr. Krapf to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 4.)

My Lord, *Kornthal, near Stuttgardt, Wurtemberg, October* 1, 1866.

AS a stranger I feel I have to ask most humbly your Lordship's pardon for having ventured to address these lines; but the well-known kindness of your Lordship, and the importance of the case, which induced me to write, gave me hopes and confidence that my daringness would be kindly excused.

Your Lordship has no doubt obtained recent information that Theodorus, the present King of Abyssinia, has, in the fortress of Magdala, again imprisoned several English and German subjects, including the English Consul Cameron and Mr. Rassam, whom Her Majesty, in 1865, had most graciously despatched as her Ambassador to effect the release of the unfortunate prisoners.

It was to be hoped that this humane measure would be crowned with a happy issue, and for a time it appeared very successful indeed, but some ill-advisers, of whom I know one personally as an intriguer from his childhood, turned the King's mind to thoughts hostile to England, the humiliation of the English having been, in my humble opinion, the

King's aim from the beginning. We must remember that every Abyssinian ruler must have performed some feat which the historiographer can note in the annals of the Empire as the peculiar exploit by which the reign of the deceased King was in a high degree distinguished. When Major Harris, whose dragoman I was in 1841, had, at the order of Her Majesty's Government, delivered handsome presents to Sahela Selassie (the King of Shoa), the royal poets and singers immediately pronounced it as the peculiarity of his reign, that the Queen of the white nations had sent him tribute. We can therefore not be surprised if the haughty Monarch Theodorus resolved on striving for the honour of being reported in the annals of Abyssinia as the lion-like King who has humbled the greatest nation of Europe, thereby showing himself, as he thinks, the worthy successor of David and Solomon, from whom he claims his descent.

My Lord, it can never be my design to give the British Government any advice as to the steps to be taken against the ruler of Abyssinia, who has offended England so glaringly that she would endanger her honour, her interests, and her influence in the countries adjacent to the Red Sea if she would bear this offence without impunity, but having travelled and resided for eighteen years on the East African coast, in Tigré, Shoa, and Amhara especially (as my "Travels, Researches, and Missionary Labours," published in 1860 at London, may show), I think I have obtained some knowledge which, under the present circumstances, when a warlike conflict between Great Britain and Abyssinia seems unavoidable, might be turned to some good account.

No doubt the British Government will hesitate to declare war when they consider that the lives of a number of Europeans is at stake in the event of such a declaration, as the reckless King, on hearing of the English warlike demonstrations, might butcher the prisoners and other Europeans upon whom he can lay hold, immediately and in cold blood. The question therefore arises, whether there is no mode of rescuing the prisoners before the King can harm them, and whether there is not some reason to think that the King will delay the execution of his wrath.

In reference to the latter question I fully believe that the King will postpone his bloody design, especially when he hears that in case of his killing the Europeans the English will give themselves no rest until they have put themselves in possession of his person, of his grandees and advisers. His plan will doubtless be, first, to annihilate, as he thinks, the invading troops, to make as many prisoners of war as he can, and, finally, return victoriously to Gaffat, to slaughter all the Europeans together in the most cruel manner. He of course has no idea of the possibility of being overthrown by the English, as he has never lost a battle in his conflicts with Abyssinian and Egyptian opponents.

But in regard to the speedy release of the prisoners at Magdala and the other Europeans at Gaffat, my humble suggestion is that the English should send an armament of about 2,000 men to the Island of Massowah, in the Red Sea, whence the King will soon hear the news, and the rumour will swell 2,000 into 20,000 men. This news will immediately induce the King to march from Western to Eastern Abyssinia to Tigré, there to meet the invading army. But whilst the English land their force at Massowah, and move them in forced marches up to the high land and frontier of Tigré, which is about four days (80 or 90 miles) distant from the coast, another force of about 1,000 men (chiefly horse) should be sent to the Bay of Tadjourra, opposite to Aden, on the African main, whence they would move inland as far as to the place Doosta, where the noble river Hawash terminates in a lake and sand. The flying column would then, as fast as possible, march along the banks (which abound in wood, and grass, and wild animals), as far as to the point where the Berkona, a contributary stream, falls into the Hawash. The Berkona rises in the Wollo country, Wowakallo, near Totola, where I have passed it as a rivulet in 1841. Having reached the Abyssinian high land, near Lake Haik, in the territory of Tehuladere, the flying force would arrive in two days at the foot of the fortress of Magdala, which the Commandant no doubt would surrender immediately on seeing himself besieged at once by an European force, which could throw shells and rockets in case of refusal.

The Adal, or Damákil tribes, occupying as a pastoral people the territory between the Red Sea, Tayouwa, and the Abyssinian frontier, would scarcely object to an English force marching through their country, if the object would be clearly stated and mentioned to them that their own country would not be hurt, and if besides an adequate present were promised, as they hate King Theodoros on account of his having violated their Mahometan coreligionists in the Wollo country and in other parts of Abyssinia; they would doubtless welcome the English, and supply them with camels, and provisions, and cattle, as they would consider them the deliverers of their Mahometan friends in Abyssinia Proper.

Magdala having been surrounded, a part of the flying division would hasten on to Gaffat to rescue the other Europeans and to take the Royal arsenal at that place. All this could be effected before the King hears of it in Tigré, and before he can send a reply to his Generals at Magdala and Gaffat, in the rear. Neither could he divide his troops, as he has powerful rivals all around in Godjam, in the Wag country, and more especially in Tigré, whose leader, perhaps, would welcome the English coming from Massowah.

But as the Island of Massowah is, together with the country situated between the coast and Tigré under Turkish Sovereignty, the Turkish authorities will no doubt protest against the English marching through the coast district, a protest in which they might be aided by the French Consulate at Massowah. Should this be the case, it might be sufficient to keep a maritime demonstration near Massowah, and by this compel the King to remain in Tigré, whilst the whole English force of 2,000 or 3,000 men would march through the Adal country, to which Turkey has no rightful title. Should she object to the landing in the Bay of Tadjourra, England can reply, that Captain Haines, the Governor of Aden, had, in 1840, bought the Islet Mashaikh, which commands the entrance into that large and safe harbour.

Theodorus never expects an enemy coming from that quarter, as he had never to deal with the Danakil, and is entirely unacquainted with the state of things in that direction, so that the English could be in the heart of Abyssinia before the King is aware of it in Tigré, where he will expect the invaders.

I have taken the liberty to enclose my map of travels which may explain more fully what I mean. The level road along a fine perennial stream cannot but be acceptable to a marching army, whilst the mountainous terrain from the coast of Massowah, in Tigré, and westwards, will present many difficulties, especially in regard to heavy artillery, which in general should be exchanged for that of the lightest calibre, as it will scarcely be wanted except in dealing with fortresses. True, the British army, in coming from Massowah, would sooner be in the cool climate, than in marching over the hot plain of the Adal country. In every case the time between November and April must be used. From May and June it will be fearfully hot in the Danakil country, and the rainy season will begin in Abyssinia.

As the King's army consists chiefly in horse, rockets and shells will be most effectual against it. I have seen Major Harris throwing one evening the whole Shoan army into confusion by firing a few rockets into the air. There is no doubt, an English force of 2,000 or 3,000 men will completely overthrow the numerous army of the King in the first encounter, provided the English Commandant is on his guard against the stratagems, of which the King is very fond, and in which his main strength lies. If that were not the case, it would perhaps not be worth the trouble and expense to employ 3,000 men against an Abyssinian army, which may best be compared to an immense band of tinkers.

It would, indeed, be most desirable that Abyssinia, which has been harassed by revolutions ever since the time of Mr. Bruce (1772), should be regulated, if not permanently occupied, by an European Power, for the Abyssinians will never be able to elevate themselves independently of Europe. Abyssinia excels every other country in Africa by its healthy climate, its agricultural productiveness, and other capabilities. Extended as the Abyssinian empire already is, yet it might seize all Central Africa without somebody disputing or opposing its conquests. If governed by an enlightened ruler, Abyssinia would easily match Egypt, and prove a powerful friend or foe even to India, to which it presents the key.

If the Slave Trade is to be radically destroyed in Eastern Africa. it must be chiefly done in Abyssinia, which presents the high road to Central Africa.

I have no doubt that ere long Egypt or France will be mixed up with that remarkable country, which is a compound of physical and moral qualities—a compound of alpine heights and low valleys, of various languages and religions, of human physiognomies of all shades, in fact what its name shows, a *habeshi* (mixture) throughout.

It is to be hoped that the British Government will not overlook the present rightful opportunity of interfering with that distracted and unfortunate country, which has all things but an enlightened and good ruler. I feel most sorry that England must act in a hostile manner against Abyssinia, which has received nothing but benefits from the English. England has sent costly presents to the rulers of Tigré (Ras Wolda Schattie, through Mr. Salt), of Shoa (Major Harris), and of Amhara (to Ras Ali). Besides England has several times prevented Mehemet Ali Pasha of Egypt from conquering Abyssinia. And now this very England is compelled to assume a hostile attitude against a country which ungratefully is pushing away the hand of friendship. But it must come so in order that Eastern Africa should be drawn into the world's movement, and that England should be, against her will, compelled to be on her guard, and

to secure her standing-point in the Red Sea and her avenues to India, when the great Oriental crisis will come on with the tremendous waves of a raging sea—perhaps at no distant period.

With the repeated prayer for pardoning my liberty, and with the profoundest respect, I am, &c.

(Signed) L. KRAPF.

No. 67.

Colonel Merewether to Mr. Murray.—(*Received October* 4.)

Sir, 14, *St. James' Square, October* 1, 1866.

I HAVE carefully thought over what you told me on Saturday. It was not much, but I could see clearly the Cabinet had found it inexpedient, not to say impossible, to proceed to extremities with King Theodorus. I regret this deeply, because as matters have now come to pass, I am confident the bold and firm attitude is the proper course, and the only one likely now to bring affairs to a speedy issue. The having to put up with further insult from this barbarian tells terribly against us as a nation, both in Europe and in the East.

However, the Cabinet have to decide on that point, and appear to have done so; all I can now do is to give what aid is required to carry out Lord Stanley's wishes, and in furtherance thereof would offer the following suggestions:—

The letter to the King, of which Mr. Flad is to be the bearer, to give it any chance of success, should, I would submit, contain some opening of prospective advantage to the King, provided he releases all the prisoners—advantage which he will be able to see within his reach, and may hear of without the delay of reference to England. To afford this, I would recommend that part of my last proposal should be carried out. That part which related to my following Mr. Flad and taking the artificers, machinery, presents, &c., with me to Massowah. In the letter it could then be mentioned that Mr. Flad was sent in advance with the letter conveying Her Majesty's sentiments, but that a mission was following under an officer who had instructions from Her Majesty and the Government to enter fully into the question of the differences which had so unfortunately arisen, and to act in such a manner as would best conduce to the restoration of that friendly communication which was the object of both to bring about. If the King received Flad properly and was inclined to change his tactics, the fact of my following with the artificers and presents would be a convincing proof to him of the desire of Government to act in fair and full faith towards him, and may afford a good opening for adjustment of differences. The letters he will have received from Flad, written from England, may have helped to bring about that change. If the King persists in the violent and unjustifiable course he has adopted, the artificers can be sent back to England, and little more cost will have been incurred than was originally intended, and it will then rest with Government to decide what further measures should be taken—while, being on the spot, I should be able to send home the fullest information.

Should Lord Stanley approve of this proposal, my best endeavours will be devoted to bring about an amicable settlement of this unfortunate business. If it was required, I should be quite ready to go to Matemma, or to any other place from which negotiations could best be carried on. All that would be necessary would be that I should be allowed to take such other people with me as would give dignity and weight to the mission, things which Mr. Rassam sadly wanted, and that latitude should be given me to decide at once on the spot how the general instructions given me by Her Majesty's Government should be carried out. The question of extreme measures would, of course, not be entered into under any circumstances without reference first to Government.

At this season of the year the squadron in the Indian seas have little to do beyond visiting different places; it might, with great advantage, be sent across from Bombay to Massowah, as many ships as Commodore Hillyar could take with him—to add importance to the arrival of the mission, and to wait there for a time until the future movements of the mission were decided on. This would cause no extra expense, and at this season of the year the climate of Massowah is good enough.

Other points might be discussed hereafter.

Of course with regard to the artificers, they would not be allowed to enter Abyssinia unless matters were materially changed from what they now are, and then only at their own choice and free will. They are willing enough to go, provided there is not more than the ordinary risk attendant on living in a country where law affords no protection, and the will of a despotic Monarch is the only rule.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 68.

Letter from the Queen to the King of Abyssinia.

VICTORIA, by the grace of God, &c., to Theodore, King of Abyssinia, sendeth greeting.

Relying on the assurances contained in your Majesty's letter of the 29th of January, which duly reached us, we were in daily expectation of the arrival in England of our servant Rassam, together with our servant Cameron, and the other Europeans, so long detained in your country, but whom your Majesty had announced that you had sent with our servant Rassam; when Flad arrived, bringing your Majesty's further letter of the 17th of April, in which, while repeating that you had released and made over to our servant Rassam our servant Cameron and the other Europeans in order that they might leave the country, you stated that you had kept our servant Rassam for the sake of consulting together upon the extension of the friendship between us. We will not disguise from your Majesty that we found it difficult to reconcile your assurances with the obstacles which were still opposed to the departure of our servants and the other Europeans from your country; but we were willing to accept the desire expressed by you for the extension of friendship between us, and we accordingly admitted Flad to our presence; and having heard from him your Majesty's wishes, we gave directions for the transmission to your Majesty by the hands of Flad of such articles as we understood from Flad your Majesty desired to obtain; and we also gave our sanction to the engagement in your Majesty's service of skilful workmen such as you desired to employ in Abyssinia. These arrangements were made, and Flad was on the point of leaving England to rejoin your Majesty, when intelligence reached us that you had withdrawn from our servant Rassam the favour which you had hitherto shown him, and had consigned him, together with our servant Cameron and the other Europeans, to prison.

We have received no explanation from your Majesty of the grounds of a proceeding so inconsistent with the assurances and professions formerly made by your Majesty, and we have therefore lost no time in allowing Flad to depart, and have given to him this letter for your Majesty, not allowing ourselves to doubt that immediately on its receipt you will redeem your promises and give effect to your professions by dismissing our servant Rassam with our servant Cameron and the other Europeans, in conformity with the statement made in your letter of the 29th of January.

Your Majesty must be aware that it is the sacred duty of Sovereigns scrupulously to fulfil engagements into which they may have entered; and that the persons of Ambassadors, such as our servant Rassam, and those by whom they are accompanied, are, among all nations assuming to be civilized, invariably held sacred. We have therefore the more difficulty in accounting for your Majesty's hesitation, and we invite your Majesty to prove to the world that you rightly understand your position among Sovereigns, and do not desire to neglect the international duties which it is incumbent on all Sovereigns to fulfil. Your Majesty may be assured that we shall be disposed to attribute to misapprehension on your part, rather than to ill-will towards us, the delay that has occurred in the return of Rassam and those whom you had engaged to send with him; but in the uncertainty which we cannot but feel as to your Majesty's intentions, we cannot allow Flad to be the bearer of those tokens of goodwill which we purposed that he should convey to your Majesty. But in full confidence that the cloud which has darkened the friendship of our relations will pass away on the return of Flad, and desiring that you should as soon as possible thereafter receive the articles which we had proposed to send to your Majesty in token of our friendship, we have given orders that those articles should be forthwith sent to Massowah to be delivered, for conveyance to your Majesty's Court, to the officers whom you may depute to conduct our servant Rassam and our servant Cameron and the other Europeans so far on their way to our presence. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Balmoral, the 4th day of October, in the year of our Lord 1866, and in the thirtieth year of our reign.

Your good friend,
(Signed) VICTORIA R.

(The large Signet.)
(Not countersigned.)

Superscribed:
To our good Friend, Theodore, King of Abyssinia,

No. 69.

Memorandum for Mr. Flad on his return to Abyssinia.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 8, 1866.

THE period having arrived at which you proposed to return to Abyssinia, Her Majesty's Government have no wish that you should prolong your stay in this country.

You will receive with this a letter from the Queen to King Theodore, to be delivered on your arrival at his Court; and that you may shape your language according to its contents, I furnish you with a copy of it.

The King will naturally expect to hear from you what are the feelings of the British Government towards him.

You will not disguise from him that the confidence which they were disposed to place in his promises and assurances, was considerably weakened by his detention of Mr. Rassam and the others, and has been nearly destroyed by the intelligence which has just reached England of his having placed Mr. Rassam, and those whom the King solemnly made over to him for conveyance out of his dominions, in confinement.

You may say that fearing lest evil-disposed persons, seeing their own downfall in the establishment of a good understanding between the British Government and the King, may have endeavoured to infuse suspicion into the mind of His Majesty, the British Government has authorized you to say that nothing is further from their desire or intention, in any way themselves voluntarily to seek to disturb, or to encourage the Governor of Egypt to disturb, King Theodore in the peaceable possession of his dominions; but you will not disguise from His Majesty that in return for such good will, the British Government requires substantial proof on his part that the same good will is entertained by him, and that the first and immediate proof of its existence which can now be given is the release of Mr. Rassam, Captain Cameron, and all other Europeans detained in Abyssinia against their will, and their safe conduct beyond the frontiers of the King's dominions. Their prolonged detention, so far from being a security for the King, cannot fail to obliterate all the feelings of friendship and good will with which he has heretofore been looked upon; and whatever benefit the King may expect from amity with the Queen will unquestionably fail him, if he disregards the claim now made by Her Majesty for the fulfilment of his promises, by dismissing her Ambassador Rassam, and setting free her Consul and all other Europeans in his custody.

You will see that the letter from the Queen speaks only of presents to be sent in return for the prisoners. You are not authorized to hold out any expectation that the British Government will be directly, or indirectly, instrumental in inducing any other Europeans to place themselves in the power of the King. You will not conceal from the King that in coming to a decision to that effect, the British Government have been mainly influenced by the intelligence that has lately reached them; but it will rest in your discretion to point out that if the King really desires to obtain the services of foreigners, his best chance of doing so is to prove, by releasing those whom he now detains against their will, that any persons who may enter into his employment may have no apprehension of similar detention when desirous to depart from Abyssinia.

I am, &c.

(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 70.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 15.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, October* 1, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I received by the last mail from Aden, information that the steamship "Victoria," which had been sent to Massowah in the hope of procuring intelligence of the Abyssinian captives, had returned from that port on the 9th ultimo, without having been able to procure any later intelligence than that already forwarded to your Lordship.

It was the intention of the Resident at Aden to send her again to Massowah on the 20th of September, but I fear we cannot expect, as yet, any further intelligence; as the rains, judging from the unusually high state of the Nile, must have been very severe in the Abyssinian mountains, and it is probable that the communications with the coast are suspended in consequence of the flooded state of the rivers in that country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 71.

Captain Melville White to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 15,)

My Lord, *Richmond, October 15, 1866.*

I RETURNED to town from the Spanish Main on the 11th instant, in consequence of information which reached me of the imprisonment of a Consul and the subjects of Her Majesty in the dominions of His Majesty the Emperor Theodorus. I called the same day at the Foreign Office to make tender to Government of my services in the matter, and was informed that the Ministry were adopting steps for the release of the captives. I was at the same time requested to make to your Lordship in writing, such remarks as I might consider likely to aid the good cause.

I will leave London to-morrow *en route* to Gondar, and will deliver to the prisoners such letters as Government wish to have so transmitted. I will afterwards obtain, with God's aid and I trust your Lordship's sanction, the early restoration of these unhappy ones to the bosom of their families.

I knew the Emperor and his people ere His Majesty ascended the throne; they were struggling, against much difficulty, with modern civilization, and had in their characters much goodness. Astronomy, music, magnetism, and surgery could, when judiciously availed of, achieve excellent results among the inhabitants.

I have taken part in several Consular cases in the countries adjoining the Red Sea, and have almost invariably found that the Consuls have been but endeavouring to honestly discharge their duties at times when they have incurred, from the passions of the people, great personal danger and sometimes death.

His Majesty was, in my opinion, a good specimen of his race; he was capable of great cheerfulness, frankness, and generosity, and for such remote parts at such a time, both polished and talented. He was of great physical courage and could form strong friendships, and might be made even at this untoward moment, and without much difficulty, a warm and perhaps very useful ally of Her Majesty.

Many of the records of my life are at the Foreign Office; in them is to be found the language given below in quotation, and addressed to me by Major-General Sir G. M. Sherer :—

"My dear Captain Melville White, "*Jersey, April* 4, 1863.

"Never can I forget your services during the rebellion in 1857-58. The manner in which you had drilled your Naval Brigade and made them as they really were, most efficient soldiers, does you the greatest credit. Your detachment coming to my aid at so critical a moment was of the greatest possible assistance to me, and seeing your determined conduct on that occasion gave me additional confidence. I think you may be justly proud in having performed such acts of heroism which few men at your age have ever achieved, and can only say that if every officer in India had shown a like front the rebellion would, I consider, have been crushed at the outset.

"Believe me, &c.

(Signed) "G. M. SHERER, *Major-General.*

"*Late Aide-de-camp to the Queen.*"

I herewith forward a Demerara "Royal Gazette," wherein are comments on my past life. I will call at the Foreign Office during the day in order to seek an interview with your Lordship, when I hope to learn the present place of confinement of the Consul, and what articles he was, when last heard from, apparently most in need.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. MELVILLE WHITE.

No. 72.

Mr. Murray to Captain Melville White.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 15, 1866.*

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of to-day offering to proceed to Abyssinia to procure the release of the English captives there.

I am in reply to convey to you Lord Stanley's thanks for your offer, but, as arrangements are now in progress for communicating with the King of Abyssinia, I am to state

that Lord Stanley does not think it advisable to disturb those arrangements by sending another agent.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

P.S. The inclosures to your letter are herewith returned.

J. M.

No. 73.

Captain Goodfellow to Lord Stanley.—(*Received October* 22.)

My Lord, *Aden, October* 1, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report that Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" returned from Massowah yesterday, but has brought no further intelligence regarding Mr. Rassam or his party.

2. M. Munzinger reports that the rumours prevalent in the country confirm the statements made to him by the messengers, and which were reported in my despatch to your Lordship's address, dated 28th August last, and is of opinion that no further letters are likely to arrive from Mr. Rassam until the return of Mr. Flad, but that probably some news of the mission may be sent by Mr. Flad.

3. The King is reported to be still quiet at Debra Tabor, whilst the rebels have conquered nearly the whole country, three provinces only remaining in the King's possession. Waksham Gobesi had taken possession of the whole of Tigré excepting Hamazoi, which he is stated as likely soon to conquer.

4. Being given to understand that Mr. Flad and his party will arrive at Suez on or about the 3rd proximo, and as it would be highly desirable that they should at once proceed to Massowah, I have to inform your Lordship that the "Victoria" will be despatched hence on the 20th instant for that port, and her Commander directed to touch at Massowah on his way up to obtain any intelligence that may have arrived at the coast, and also to enable me to give M. Munziger warning of Mr. Flad's return, that he may make all arrangements with regard to carriage, &c., for that gentleman's upward journey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 74.

Colonel Merewether to Mr. Hammond.—(*Received October* 29.)

Esgair, Machynlleth, North Wales,
Sir, *October* 27, 1866.

I FIND it necessary to give the workpeople some more of the advance sanctioned for them, so I have applied officially to you for the remaining half of the quarter's salary, 360*l.* The first 360*l.* I drew the other day.

I have sent you one of the printed copies of the paper showing all the arrangements connected with the workpeople and presents. In the margin of page 9 I have written in pencil what sums have been drawn previous to to-day.

The machinery and presents will be all ready and packed by the 1st proximo. Everything will be embarked on the 3rd at Southampton, and Mr. Talbot with the men will go on board at the same time. The steamer will quit Southampton on the 4th.

I shall follow by the mail leaving London on the 10th, viâ Marseilles, so as to meet Mr. Talbot and his party at Alexandria.

I spoke to Mr. Murray about my course of procedure in this matter. As you may recollect, when it was decided that one more attempt at pacific solution should be made, I suggested that Mr. Flad should be sent in advance with a letter from Her Majesty, of remonstrance, and that I should follow with the workpeople and presents to act on arrival at Massowah as seemed best. Lord Stanley approved generally of my proposals, and after the discussion of them had been concluded, said instructions should be drawn up before my departure.

As the time for that is approaching, those will, I conclude, be now prepared. Whatever their nature may be, one thing I would point out to be an essential to the success of a pacificatory course, if it should offer, and that is that I should be the bearer of a letter

from the Queen, intimating that I was sent to Massowah by Her Majesty with presents, &c. to show her friendly intentions towards King Theodorus; to communicate with him, and to receive his reply to Her Majesty's letter forwarded by hand of Mr. Flad. Nothing more need be said; indeed, it would simply be an introductory letter. But without it the King might pretend to say, "Who is this person who has come to Massowah? I know him not, nor who has sent him."

Would you kindly consider this, and bring it to Lord Stanley's notice?

The Queen will, I believe, be at Windsor after the 3rd proximo, so there will be no delay or difficulty in getting the letter ready, when approved.

The last intelligence from Aden is satisfactory in so far that no news from Abyssinia is good news. Had the captives been subjected to any further ill-treatment it would certainly have been reported, or Mr. Flad would have written it to Massowah.

The "Victoria" left Massowah on the 27th September; nothing had been heard up to that time of the tremendous battle, taken by the Paris Correspondent of the "Times" from the "Nice Chronicle," and said to have occurred on the 30th July.

On the contrary, our news is that the rebels in Tigré have been steadily and successfully advancing, while the Emperor remained inactive at Debra Tabor.

I have come down into Wales to see my family for a few days, but will be back in London on Thursday evening the 1st proximo, or before if required.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 75.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(*Received October* 30.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, October* 19, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that Mr. Flad arrived at Alexandria yesterday, the 18th instant, and being unable to obtain pratique, proceeded immediately by quarantine train to Suez, *en route* to Aden.

I saw Mr. Flad for a few moments, before leaving the ship, and ascertained from him that all his arrangements were complete and that I could be of no immediate service to him, but, at his request, I have applied to the Egyptian Government for a letter to the Governor of Massowah, desiring him to render any assistance in his power, that Mr. Flad may require for his future proceedings, and I hope to be able to send this letter to the care of the Acting Political Resident at Aden, by the next Indian mail.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 76.

Mr. Hammond to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 31, 1866.

I HAVE shown Lord Stanley your letter of the 27th instant. He was glad to hear that the arrangements for the despatch of the presents, and of Mr. Talbot and his party, are so far advanced, and that they will shortly be followed by yourself.

Lord Stanley does not understand that any special instructions are required for the guidance of your conduct in this matter. According to present arrangements as set forth in the letter from the Queen to King Theodore, of which Mr. Flad is the bearer, the presents are to be lodged at Massowah to await the arrival at that place of the captives against whom they are to be exchanged. If you should be of opinion that it would be advisable that you should also yourself remain at Massowah, as being thereby better enabled to communicate with the captives and Mr. Flad, and if you should be willing to stay there, Lord Stanley would gladly avail himself of your services in that respect. But he does not think it necessary or desirable that you should be furnished with a further letter from the Queen to King Theodore, or that you should attempt to open any direct communication with the King; in fact, Lord Stanley considers that it would be better that your presence at Massowah should not be made known to the King, for if he was made aware that another Agent and another Royal letter were at hand, he would not unnaturally be tempted to defer the release of the prisoners until he had ascertained what that Agent had to say, and what Her Majesty might have written in her letter.

Neither can Lord Stanley anticipate any other reply to Her Majesty's letter, of which Mr. Flad is the bearer, than one which shall accompany the prisoners to the coast. If the prisoners arrive, the presents may be exchanged against them; but as regards Mr. Talbot and the artisans, their departure for the interior, of which no promise has been held out to the King, must be regulated by circumstances; and if at the last hour you should feel doubt as to their safety, you may suspend their departure, or at all events, after stating the case to them, leave them to decide whether they will go or not. You will in no case urge them to go if disinclined.

It will be for you to consider whether, while matters are in suspense, it might not be better on sanitary grounds, to allow the party to remain at Aden.

Lord Stanley desires me to take this opportunity of expressing to you his special thanks for the very great trouble you have been good enough to take in regard to these matters.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 77.

Lord Stanley to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 2*, 1866.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 19th instant, and I have to state to you that I approve the steps which you have taken to further the objects of Mr. Flad's Mission to Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 78.

Colonel Merewether to Mr. Hammond.—(Received November 3.)

Sir, 14, *St. James' Square, November* 3, 1866.

I FOUND your letter of the 31st ultimo on my return to town yesterday, and have to express my best thanks for the confidence placed in me by Lord Stanley, as shown in his not giving any explicit [instructions?], but leaving me to act according to my own judgment, as circumstances may require.

As far as I can tell at present it would be decidedly advisable that I should stay for a time at Massowah, to watch events, collect intelligence, and to be ready to take advantage of any favourable opportunity that may offer, of obtaining the object in view—the release of the captives, and I will gladly remain there.

With regard to that part of my letter of the 27th ultimo to which Lord Stanley dissents viz., that "I should be the bearer of a letter from the Queen," I would venture to explain that I am quite prepared to carry out Lord Stanley's wishes as conveyed in your letter and to appear as little as possible in the matter. But at the same time I would beg to observe that there is something more in my request than appears to be understood from the expressions used by you.

It is just possible that the King may act at once on the receipt of Her Majesty's letter, sent by hand of Mr. Flad, and take measures to cause the transmission of the captives at once to the frontier of his kingdom as far as his power extends.

At the same time it is also possible and more probable he will propose some intermediate course, to which a reply should be at once made. Again between Debra Tabor, where he now is, and Massowah, direct communication is closed by the intervening Province of Tigré being in a state of rebellion, messengers may pass to and fro, but no party could. It is therefore most likely, supposing the King wishes to release the captives without further delay, that he will write down to Massowah to say that he can only forward them to Matemma on the Egyptian frontier, where they will be delivered over. In that case it would be most desirable that I should proceed there with the presents to see that no circumstances should interfere to mar the successful management of the interchange which would then have to take place. The road to Matemma is entirely through friendly Egyptian territory, and I should be careful not to run any risk of endangering myself and those with me.

Massowah is not quite so near to London as North Wales, nor so easy to refer from;

I therefore begged to suggest that I should be entrusted with a letter from Her Majesty merely mentioning who I was, and that I had been sent out to see the conditions of Her Majesty's letter were carried out. This would give me the right, as well as proper weight, to appear in case of an opportunity offering, or of its being of the first importance that I should act at once without having to wait the result of a reference, whereby the loss of the favourable moment might be chanced.

Having such a letter in my posssession I should be in a position to do anything that was required and should not run the risk of being discredited. It may be that I shall not have to use it at all, in which case I shall be very happy in being able to return it as entrusted to me; but I should be very thankful to have it in possession, and Lord Stanley may rest assured I shall not use it unadvisedly. It would in no way alter or affect the previous letter sent by Mr. Flad. I would indeed only supplement it, being in reference to Her Majesty's intentions regarding the presents and what is expected from the King in return.

Any reply from the King to Her Majesty's first letter would of course be forwarded at once to England.

If there is likely to be much delay, Mr. Talbot and party could at any moment be taken to Aden and left there for a while.

In conclusion I beg to be allowed to express my sincere thanks for the gratifying manner in which Lord Stanley has been good enough to notice my endeavours to carry out his wishes.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 79.

Mr. Hammond to Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 5, 1866.

I HAVE laid before Lord Stanley your letter of the 3rd instant, and he directs me to acquaint you that he continues to be of opinion that it would not be expedient that you should be the bearer of a letter from the Queen to King Theodore.

It is difficult to provide beforehand for every contingency that may possibly occur, or to give you precise and definite directions by which to shape your conduct.

According to the arrangement specified in the Queen's letter, of which Mr. Flad is the bearer, the presents are only to be placed in the hands of the King's messengers on the delivery of the prisoners at Massowah. You seem to anticipate that the King may demur to this arrangement, and, pleading his inability either to send the prisoners to Massowah, or to convey the presents back from that place, may offer to effect the exchange of the prisoners for the presents at Matemma, when the prisoners would be in safety, being beyond the Abyssinian territary.

Lord Stanley understands that with reference to this contingency you think it desirable that you should be authorized to convey the presents to Matemma, and there make them over to the King's officers in exchange for the prisoners.

Lord Stanley will not withhold from you this authority, on the distinct understanding, however, that you do not put yourself, or any other Europeans, in the power of the King, unless the prisoners are safely delivered to you, keeping at some place out of the Abyssinian territory, where they are secure from any further attempt which might be made on the King's troops again to seize them.

For obvious reasons it is undesirable that any suggestion should be made by you to the King inconsistent with the terms of the Queen's letter sent by Mr. Flad, or with the Memorandum which Lord Stanley gave to Mr. Flad on his departure, of which I inclose copies for your information.*

It would clearly be imprudent to suggest a new arrangement till the fate of that already explained to the King is ascertained, or without a moral certainty that any such new arrangement will secure the release of the prisoners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

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* Nos. 68 and 69.

No. 80.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Hertslet.

Dear Mr. Hertslet, *Massowah, November* 5, 1866.

I ARRIVED here on the 29th of October. Neither in Egypt nor in Aden they were able to give me any news from Abyssinia. Here I found letters of Mrs. Flad, of which I send you an extract. A letter of Captain Cameron to Mr. Hammond was also here, and a packet of letters of Mr. Rassam to the Resident at Aden. These letters had two days before myself reached Massowah. The "Victoria" returned on the same day to Aden, and I suppose you will get all the news of Abyssinia before this letter reaches you.

There was no road open for me to go up myself, Tigré being still in the hands of the rebel Wagshoom Gobasie; and Gondar, with part of Dembia is taken by Tersa Gobasie. The day after my arrival I dispatched four messengers on two different roads. Two and two were bearing an Amharic translation of Her Majesty's letter with an English copy. I myself wrote to him and explained the reason why Her Majesty's Government would not send up the workmen before he sends over the prisoners. After the "Victoria" returns from Aden I shall send again two messengers.

From the extract of Mrs. Flad's letter you will see that there is not the least hope that Her Majesty's letter will have its effect. There is only one way which the Government ought to take without delay. Captain Cameron, as I hear from M. Munzinger, gives the advice to go to war at once. And this I think is the opinion of all, I doubt whether it will also be the advice Mr. Rassam gives. I send a copy of the extract of Mrs. Flad's letter to Colonel Merewether. I don't know whether he will send it to the Foreign Office. If you think it to be of any use you may make an extract of both and send them to Lord Stanley.

From merchants lately arrived here from Korata I learned that Mrs. Flad, Mrs. Rosenthal, with all the Europeans in Abyssinia, even his own workmen, the King had sent to Magdala. At the foot of the mountain the King has his camp. I fear that if our friends are to be kept a long time on the mountain they will suffer, perhaps die from want of water and food; as, according to the reports I receive from Abyssinia, Magdala is fearfully crowded with people. If ever the Government wishes to do anything for the release of their Envoy and Consul they should lose no time. These are the coolest months here at Massowah. If they wait till the rains commence in Abyssinia nothing can be done before September 1867. And if our people be kept all this time at Magdala they will be starved to death. Between Massowah and Hamazeyn, the first Abyssinian province, there is plenty of water for an army. From Hamazeyn up to Magdala they will have plenty of water, corn, cows, oxen, goats, sheep, game, fowls, &c.

If the Egyptian troops could be used from the side of Matemma and Korata they should not be allowed to enter Abyssinia before their commander (I mean commander of the English army) is able to negotiate with the King. I am certain that if the King should hear that England uses an Egyptian army against him he would kill all the captives, which never would be the case if the English themselves approached his country. Egypt, if used, should not be allowed to enter Abyssinia, but only to guard the western frontier. It is well known how cruel and bloodthirsty fanatical Mahometan soldiers are when allowed to enter a Christian empire. There would be no end of bloodshed, which immediately would lead the King to sacrifice all the Europeans around him. This can be and ought to be omitted.

As I learn from M. Munzinger, my first letter to the King from England will have reached him on the 13th October. My second letter I found at Aden, it not having been forwarded. If the King should come to Tigré, as the natives report, I shall immediately proceed to him with Her Majesty's autograph letter, and the articles I bought for his 2,000 German crowns.

I have no hope that he will consent to Her Majesty's request,* so my prospects would be to be joined to those at Magdala. I am sure none will envy me the happy prospects I have in view. To the letter I sent up on the 30th October I cannot expect to have an answer before forty days. If you would write to me, if you know anything important, and send your letter care of the Resident, Aden, it would reach me before I leave this.

(Signed) J. M. FLAD.

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* This letter gives no hope that the Government would send him the artizans if he would set at liberty the prisoners, but speaks only of articles.

Inclosure in No. 80.

Extract of Mrs. Flad's Letter.

August 2.—I HOPE my letter, which I sent four weeks ago, will have reached you in England. Against the expectation of all of us, and your own, the King changed very soon after you had left us his behaviour to Mr. Rassam.

In the beginning of July, Mr. Rassam (inclusive Cameron, Stern, Blanc, Prideaux, Rosenthal, Kerens or Petro) were sent to Magdala, where, on their arrival, they were put in foot chains.

Only a few days ago I had a letter from Mr. Rassam. They are all in good health, and as comfortable as one can be in an Abyssinian prison, as you from your own experience know. I think they are better off than we are here at Gaffat, in the direct presence of our friend (the King).

It is impossible for me to describe the anguish in which we are living day and night, uneasy of the things our next future will bring upon us. My only comfort is the Lord's faithfulness. I trust he will not forsake us.

Since a fortnight the King lives at Gaffat. He is engaged with his European and native workmen, in making cannon of a very large size. Messrs. Bardel, Makerer, have entered the King's service. Messrs. Stieger, Brandeis, Schiller, and Essler were forced to work for the King. Even myself and Mrs. Rosenthal were forced to do also. He sent eighteen pieees of calico, and thirty native tailors, and made us cut out the shirts and have them sewn. Our present position is equal to that in which the children of Israel were placed under Pharaoh (read Exodus v.).

August 28.—Lately the King expressed himself in the following way: "I know Mr. Rassam is a good man, but on account of the warlike intentions his Government has towards me, I have sent him to Magdala." From some expressions the King now and then makes, it seems his intention is to irritate the English Government until they come and return to him his country, which is nearly all in the hands of the rebels, He would retire and fortify himself in Magdala. From there he thinks he could negotiate with the English to return his country to him, and, as he said some days ago, he thinks he could then make use of Mr. Rassam. "I know," said he, "Mr. Rassam is a great man, and some one will come to ask for him." How the King came to this idea, none of us are able to say. There is no doubt that Dr. Beke's sudden return to England has something to do with it. It made the King believe that England would go to war with him.

A few days ago I had a letter from Mr. Rassam, in which he says that all of them were kindly treated. Every week the King sends very friendly messages to Mr. Rassam. To their guard he gave orders to let their English prisoners have everything they want, only their foot chains should not be taken off. One male and one female servant is allowed to attend on each of them: the rest of their servants are quartered in the houses of the country people.

I am in continual correspondence with those who are at Magdala, but not without great difficulties and dangers. The messengers are more afraid of the King than they would be of water or fire.

September 6.—The King speaks always favourably of Mr. Rassam. We have no doubt, from all the expressions the King uses, that he wishes to use Mr. Rassam to negotiate for him with the English Government after they have declared war with him. I can't say more, as I am afraid this letter might fall into bad hands.

To me the King is friendly. Once he intended to quarrel with me, I believe, from the bad influence of Samuel.

After the cannons are finished, all of us will have to go to Magdala; and when this letter reaches you, you may think that we are in that fortress. May the Lord give me help and strength.

Lately the King said, "Mr. Flad is bringing either something good or something very bad." Every one, the natives as well as the Europeans, are looking towards your return with great anxiety. Some say that you would not be expected back before a year and a half.

No. 81.

Captain Goodfellow to Lord Stanley.—(*Received November* 13.)

My Lord, *Aden, October* 25, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report for your Lordship's information that Mr. Flad arrived here this morning, and informed me that in consequence of certain packages of his baggage containing articles purchased by him for the King of Abyssinia whilst in England not having come out with him, he considered it advisable to await their arrival by the next mail, seven days hence, before proceeding to Massowah; I informed him that I was of opinion that it would be a pity to waste any further time, and that I considered his reaching Massowah as soon as possible was of the utmost importance, even without the articles he enumerated, as they were certain to arrive by the steamer expected on the 2nd proximo, by which date the "Victoria" could take him to Massowah, and return for the packages in question. That by his proceeding to Massowah at once, he could, if not able to proceed up county immediately, write and inform the King of his arrival, and that if even an opportunity should occur for his taking the journey himself, he could not expect to start from Massowah for some days after arrival, owing to the difficulty of procuring carriage, &c., for his luggage at that place, and that, therefore, under any circumstances his immediate departure hence could not but be of the greatest advantage, either in the matter of assuring the King that he had actually returned, and that everything that was required had been carried out during his absence in England, or else to enable him to make preparations for immediate departure on the arrival of the "Victoria" with the cases seven days after his arrival at Massowah.

2. I am glad to be able to state that he has decided on leaving at once, and Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" will put to sea, consequently, to-morrow morning for Massowah to convey him thither, and to return to make the subsequent trip to Suez, touching at Massowah *en route*, as soon as possible after the 2nd proximo.

3. I regret that I should not have been able to let her leave this earlier, but Mr. Flad informs me he requires a number of articles, such as provisions, cooking utensils, bedding, and camp equipage and furniture, before taking his departure; these are not procurable at once, and time is lost in collecting them. I, however, hope to have all his requirements supplied before noon to-morrow, when Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" will leave this. I take this opportunity also of forwarding 2,500 dollars to M. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate, to defray any expenses that may arise, and I trust that my proceedings may meet with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 82.

Captain Goodfellow to Lord Stanley.—(*Received November* 28.)

My Lord, *Aden, November* 3, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report for your Lordship's information that Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria," after leaving this on the 25th ultimo to convey Mr. Flad to Massowah, returned here yesterday for his luggage, and has brought a despatch and some private letters from Mr. Rassam and his party.

2. The despatch to your Lordship's address is attached, and will thoroughly explain the present position of the mission and the other Europeans in Abyssinia; the messengers that brought down these letters arrived at Massowah on the 22nd and 24th ultimo respectively, and they state that the King is still at Debra Tabor, but may possibly come to Tigré, in which case the objection that Mr. Flad has to travel through that province will be removed. Mr. Flad informs me also that he cannot now proceed viâ Matemma, that road likewise being in the hands of the rebels; he states that if he cannot possibly go himself, he intends forwarding a translation of Her Majesty's letter, with a letter from himself to the King, acquainting him of his own arrival and the fact of the artizans being on their way out; and concludes by asking my advice as to whether in the latter case, instead of waiting at Massowah, he might not proceed up to Suez in the "Victoria." I have informed him that I consider that his quitting Massowah again so soon after his return would be extremely objectionable, and that if it is not actually possible for him to start very soon, either by Tigré, or viâ Matemma for the interior, that he cannot do better than acquaint the King by letter with the fact of his return with an answer from Her Majesty the Queen; indeed,

when here I requested him to do this as soon as possible if he found it impracticable to leave Massowah, so that no time might be lost, and that Colonel Merewether might not be delayed at Massowah unnecessarily, and it was with this object I persuaded him to leave this at once, but impressed upon him that he was on no account to leave Massowah itself except for the King's camp.

3. Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria" will start to-morrow for Massowah and Suez, at which latter port she will await Colonel Merewether's arrival.

4. Copies of all the letters just received have been forwarded for Colonel Merewether's information. I trust my proceedings will be approved by your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

Inclosure 1 in No. 82.

Mr. Rassam to Lord Stanley.

My Lord, *Magdala, August* 26, 1866.

I REGRET to inform your Lordship that since the middle of last month, both my companions, Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, and myself, have been chained on the feet by order of the Emperor, on the pretence that Her Majesty's Government has an intention of sending troops to make war against him.

On the 19th ultimo I wrote and apprised you of what had taken place since my letter which I despatched to you at the end of May, but unfortunately the letter was seized by the rebels of Lasta, while the messengers were passing through Sokota.

About the beginning of June the cholera appeared among the Royal troops, w were at Zegay on Lake Tsana, consequently, His Majesty moved up to the mountains towards Debra Tabor. I had to accompany him with the whole of my party on his journey up.

Ever since the departure of Mr. Flad for England, the Emperor has been extremely kind and attentive, and on our arrival at Debra Tabor, on the 15th June, he took us to Gaffat, a distance of about three miles, and located us in comfortable houses in the European quarter. His Majesty actually superintended the furnishing of my room, where he placed his temporary throne for the sake of impressing on his people the regard he entertained for me. We thought we were going to be allowed to spend the rainy season quietly at that place, but unhappily we were soon doomed to great disappointment. The Emperor returned to Debra Tabor as soon as he saw me comfortably settled, and took up his quarters there.

In the course of the ensuing week, he paid me two visits in my house, and he always spoke in gratifying terms of the respect and regard he entertained for our Queen and her Government, and of the esteem in which he held me.

On the 25th idem I was summoned to appear before His Maj sty, and I was asked to take with me the missionaries and any other gentlemen who were with me. I accordingly repaired to Debra Tabor, and took with me Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, Consul Cameron, and Messrs. Stern, Rosenthal, and Kerans. All the Emperor's European artisans accompanied us thither, as they also had received orders to go.

On arriving at the Court, we were ushered into the Royal black tent, and no sooner did we sit down, than the European artisans were summoned by His Majesty, and sent back, accompanied by four Abyssinian Chiefs, with a message for me, to the effect that the Emperor had heard that a railroad had been laid down between Egypt and Kassala, for the purpose of transporting British, French, and Turkish troops thereon, for the purpose of invading Abyssinia. I assured His Majesty that there could be no foundation for this rumour, as when I passed through Kassala, nine months before, even the idea of laying a railroad was not even known there.

Another message was then sent to me that the Emperor had heard from Jerusalem, that I had been sent to him by Her Majesty's Government on false pretences, for the purpose of obtaining the release of the European prisoners, and after we were safe out of the country, my Government would avenge the insult offered to it by the imprisonment of the Consul. This report I did my best to prove a mischievous calumny, and I said that I felt confident that the people who sent that false report, did so for the sake of creating discord between England and Abyssinia. After this, he began to reiterate his grievances against Mr. Rosenthal and Captain Cameron, and ultimately began to send complimentary messages, saying that with regard to myself he entertained the highest confidence in me, and that he did not hold me responsible for the actions of my Government, but, said he,

as he had heard of the hostile designs of my Government, he felt himself bound to watch my movements; and that in future I must live near him. I was told then to remain in the black tent, and he sent and fetched our luggage from Gaffat.

Afterwards I obtained permission for Dr. Blanc and Mr. Rosenthal to return to Gaffat, the former for the purpose of attending a patient who was dangerously ill, and the latter for the sake of joining his wife. Soon after that I was granted a little liberty, as I was allowed to go down to Gaffat to pay some visits, and I was told by His Majesty that he wished me to make myself happy, and to go out whenever I felt inclined.

On the 3rd ultimo the Emperor went down to Gaffat to see one of his factories which was reported to have fallen down. Soon afterwards he returned, and sent to me to say he wished to speak to me; as he also directed that the persons who were living with me in the tent should accompany me, I took with me Consul Cameron, and Messrs. Prideaux and Stern. On approaching the Royal presence I was surprised to find that Dr. Blanc and Mr. Rosenthal had been arrested and brought up to Debra Tabor. His Majesty seemed very much displeased, and began by opening his old grievance against Captain Cameron and Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal, and he tried very much to make my Government a party to the writings against him by the two latter gentlemen. He then proceeded to talk about matters which do not concern either my Government or myself.

We were then all ordered to be taken to a dark room in the Court adjoining his residence, and to be guarded strictly.

After sunset His Majesty began to send me civil messages, and desired me not to give myself up to melancholy, as he had great friendly feelings towards me. I then deemed it my duty to speak to him plainly upon the injudicious course which he was pursuing towards me, who had come to him with a friendly letter from the British Queen. That his treatment of me was contrary to the friendly sentiments entertained by my Government towards him, and to the sincerity which I had always displayed.

Soon afterwards he came himself to pay me a visit, and he brought with him some wine and spirits for the sake of drinking to our healths. He said to me that he hoped I did not mind seeing him angry that afternoon, that I should look to his heart and not to his face, because he esteemed me as much as ever, and as Christians we ought always to be ready to forgive each other. He said that he had an object in what he had done that day, but towards me he was always the same.

I remained in the dark room with my party two days, and on the 5th we accompanied His Majesty eastward, as he had to start with his whole army towards this place. On the third day we reached Aibunkub, a distance of about thirty miles from Debra Tabor. His Majesty was as usual very kind and attentive, but although we travelled with him, and encamped near him, we were strictly guarded.

On the 9th he sent us on to Magdala, on the plea that he wished to place us in a safe quarter for the rainy season, as he intended to march against the rebels, and did not like to leave us in any insecure place on account of the disturbance in different parts of the country. We reached this place on the 12th ultimo, after a march of four days, and the whole time we were strictly guarded. Here we were all placed in one room, and our servants were located in another adjoining ours. We were told that this house belongs to Ras Engeda, the chief Minister.

On the 16th idem the Chiefs of Magdala came to us with a number of chains, and said that as the Emperor had not sent definite orders as to the mode of our imprisonment, they were obliged to be on the safe side by putting our feet in fetters, and so they began to chain my party in the following order, Mr. Kerans, Mr. Stern, Mr. Rosenthal, David Pietro, Consul Cameron, Mr. Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc. A ring of my fetters having broken while they were trying to rivet them, I was not chained till the following day. The Chiefs assured me the chains were not a sign of ill-will, as they were certain their master was my friend, and hoped that before many days were over, everything would be all right again. His Majesty had ordered that all my servants, and those of Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, should be allowed to come up to the fortress, but that the rest of the prisoners, including Consul Cameron, should be allowed only one female domestic each, in accordance with the prison discipline of Magdala. Some bread and a little mead was only allowed to be supplied to us three.

His Majesty had also written to the Magdala authorities, ordering them to be very civil to me, and had said that although he had sent me as a prisoner here, I was still his friend; indeed, the Chiefs have done all in their power to make us comfortable. Since we were chained, they gave me a room to myself furnished with Royal carpets, and one to Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux. Consul Cameron and Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal retain the room in which we were first located, and Messrs. Kerans and Pietro live with our Indian servants in the same apartment.

On the 9th instant I received a friendly letter from the Emperor, asking after my health, and that of Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, to which I had to send him a similar answer.

I have heard from Gaffat that a few days ago, His Majesty made a long speech before his European artisans and others, in which he affirmed his great friendship and esteem for me, but he said for the sake of my Government he had put me in chains, because he had heard from the sea-coast that they had hostile intentions towards him.

Everybody in this country is at a loss what to make of the extraordinary conduct of the Emperor, because, on the one hand, he professes such great friendship towards my Government and myself, and on the other, he seems to believe any story trumped up by evil-disposed persons, who do it for the sake of creating a breach between him and the British Government; and, while declaring himself my best friend, he places me in chains.

He keeps us in this country against the advice of all his best councillors. When he appealed to the opinion of his chief nobles, they all, without any exception, advised him to allow us to return to our country, and that he should place implicit confidence in me.

Dr. Beke, who professes to know the rules and habits of the country, ought not to have come out until he knew that I would not be received, bearing as I was, Her Majesty's gracious letter. His coming, and his abrupt departure, have done no good to the prisoners in whose behalf he had come.

Messrs. Rosenthal and McKelvey were allowed to remain at Gaffat, the former on account of the difficulty of travelling to this place during the rainy season, and the latter on account of being laid up by sickness before our departure. Mr. Kerans and McKelvey had previously volunteered their services to His Majesty; those of the former have been rejected, but the latter's have been accepted. Messrs. Bardel, Makerer, Staiger, Brandeis, Essler, and Schiller, have also entered the Emperor's service.

As I have been in want of money for current expenses, I have been compelled to draw upon your Lordship for 1,000 German crowns, and I trust that you will pardon me for having taken the liberty, on account of the difficult position I am placed in. I fear it will not be an easy matter for me to obtain any further funds in this country.

Thank God, we are all well, and trying to make ourselves as comfortable as possible under the present trying circumstances.

I should feel obliged by your Lordship informing the families of my fellow-prisoners of their well-being.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

P.S. *Magdala, 17th September,* 1866.—Since the date of the above I have received another very polite letter from the Emperor, in which he informs me of his intended journey hither, and asks me not to fear but to be comforted.

He also informs me of his success in having had a large brass gun cast at Gaffat, which is said to be an eighteen-pounder, and about seven feet and a half long.

He has written again to the Magdala authorities about me. He gives them strict orders to attend to all my wants.

He has this time honoured Captain Cameron and the Rev. Mr. Stern with his compliments—the first time he ever did so since my arrival in this country.

H. R.

Inclosure 2 in No. 82.

Captain Cameron to Mr. Hammond.

Dear Sir, *Magdala, August* 20, 1866.

YOU will have received my letter from Zeggie.

At that time I had hopes that we would be left in quiet until the answer arrived to the King's letter, forwarded by Mr. Flad.

The King has, however, now picked a quarrel with Mr. Rassam and his people on the ground of information he states himself to have received to the effect that England intends to attack him.

We all had some rough scenes with him, and expected chains every moment, after his first scene with Mr. Rassam in regard to the report which he says has been conveyed to him about the intentions of England.

Argument is useless with him. He openly laid claims to all the territories of Turkey, and pressed Mr. Rassam to give an opinion in favour of his right.

We are now kept as capital, in order to extort whatever he may want by bullying us.

We were sent up here on the 12th July and chained on the 16th of that month.

We have foot-chains only this time, but are strictly watched and regularly guarded by night and day.

Even correspondence is difficult, as orders have been given to chain us hand and foot, if we are caught writing.

Nothing but an energetic movement into the heart of the country, for the express purpose of rescuing us, can get us out.

Further concessions will only lead to further unreasonable demands.

The King says openly that he expects another Embassy.

Nothing but a rapid movement without warning, be assured, will bring him to his senses.

Above all, the Government should avoid writing strongly, unless they have troops on the spot.

He will only be exasperated, and perhaps deal summarily with us all.

He has received so many strong letters from Egypt that he has no further faith in pieces of paper, and the protest of the French Consul, which was rather a rough one, has done more harm than good, as it was not followed up.

We are all well, thanks to the good climate of this place.

Beg my dear friend Herstlet to excuse my not writing to him this time; I will have another opportunity in a few days; and ask him to be kind enough to communicate the fact of my being in good health to all friends and relations.

Our party consists of Mr. Rassam, Dr. Blanc, Lieutenant Prideaux, Messrs. Rosenthal, Sterne, and Kerens, the Italian, David Pietro, and myself.

The two missionaries Brandeis and Steiger have at last given way and entered the King's service as workmen. Macrain, Bardel, and the boy Mc Kelvie have entered the King's service at their own request, and the two hunters Essler and Schiller have, I hear, done the same.

We know not ourselves what to expect. Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal were told that they should make up for their misdeeds, such as they are, by making themselves useful to him.

They offered to do anything His Majesty required, but we have heard nothing more of the matter, although it may be started again at any time.

In fact, the life and property of none of us are safe as long as the King labours under his present delusion—that we cannot get at him in this mountainous country—and that he has the power of getting everything from Europe by merely keeping and torturing us in this way.

However, while there is life there is hope, and I hope still that we will live through everything, and return to our own country once more.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 3 in No. 82.

Mr. Rassam to Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, September* 17, 1866.

IT is now nearly half-a-year since I had the pleasure of hearing from you, and I attributed the cause of your long silence to your expectation of my departure from Abyssinia, and your visit to England. You must have been sadly disappointed when you heard of the turn the Abyssinian affair took after the account I gave of my success in my letter of March last. Indeed, that happy time seemed to me too good to last; I wish I could write to you fully about all the matters, but my position is difficult, and I must noI make matters worse by writing copiously the history of all that has transpired since arrived in this country. Even when Mr. Flad left, I dared not communicate to you or to Her Majesty's Government what had transpired. I felt convinced that through the veracity of that gentleman and his thorough knowledge of all that had taken place, Her Majesty's Government would find out the state of affairs.

If I live to see you again you will be more than surprised to find that through the foolish talk of some fools and mischief-makers, the good understanding which I had established between the Emperor of Abyssinia and England are destroyed. It is a melancholy affair altogether, and I trust that I shall have it in my power one day to write fully regarding it.

My official to the Secretary of State will inform you of our condition, and I have no doubt that long before my communication of our disgrace reaches you, you will hear it from other quarters; the common saying is, evil reports travel fast.

Between my present position, when I and all my party are strictly guarded, and the disturbed districts between this and Massowah, I find it very difficult to send any letters to the coast. However, I am now trying all kind of ways, and there is no lack of friends who render me assistance; indeed, even in my present unmoveable state, I am not forsaken not even by the King himself. He is continually writing to the Magdala authorities, to show me all the attention in their power, which they do faithfully. They visit me every now and then and tell me not to fear, because that their master esteems me greatly, and doubt not but that everything will be right again soon.

I am the only prisoner at Magdala whom they visit.

The Bishop (Aboona Salama of Abyssinia), though not in chains, no one is allowed to go and see him; we are not placed with the other prisoners as Cameron and his party were, but are allowed to live in houses near the precincts of the Palace.

I am still in the dark as to the cause which led His Majesty to take this grave step, and what he expects to benefit by it; I have spoken to him plainly upon all matters, and he cannot possibly believe that either Her Majesty's Government or the British nation will be flattered at his extraordinary conduct towards me and my party. He still professes to be friendly to me and my Government.

Dr. Beke's foolish mission, it is believed, has done us all great mischief; it is very curious that no sooner did my friend receive his letter than he took it into his head to detain us all in this country, and ask me to send to England for artizans for him. There is no one in this country who approves of the steps which Beke took in the Abyssinian matter, and as our friend is of a suspicious character, of course he could not understand how, after the Great Queen of England wrote to him upon a matter private individuals came forward to beg of him upon their knees to grant them the same favour. Had Beke communicated to me before he addressed our friend in reference to his mission, I would have certainly advised him not to make his appearance. However, it is now no use talking about the past, the mischief has been done, and now we must bear.

It is surmised that his abrupt departure has put myself and party into this fix. It is also believed that the false rumour which reached our friend, that I had been sent on false pretences by the British Government came from Massowah, some fools or mischief-makers, I have no doubt, are at the bottom of it.

The second messenger who came from Beke (and who was half cracked) reported amongst our friend's followers that he had heard a captain of an English steamer abuse the Abyssinians for having Englishmen in prison, and that he had . . . . . them and their King.

I suppose you will wonder what object our friend has in putting us in prison—his conduct has puzzled every one. My own idea is, that he either desires war or trying to intimidate us by forcing Her Majesty's Government to comply with his wishes; however, time will show, our friend has never been known to treat a prisoner so civilly (barring the chains) as he has acted towards me; he writes to the authorities here, although I have imprisoned Mr. Rassam, yet he is still my friend, so you must treat him well; how applicable that common English phrase is, save me from my friends, to my situation, there is no doubt that the conduct of our friend towards me is not admired by anyone; on the contrary, his most faithful followers condemn his act.

The day we were arrested at Zegay, our friend took away all our money, and since then he has only returned to me 1,500 dollars, consequently I have been obliged to draw on Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for 200*l*. As some of the Emperor's artizans here had some money to spare, and they were in want of orders on England, it was very lucky that I managed to obtain that sum, otherwise we might have starved. The rations I am allowed would scarcely feed one Indian servant; it is true that whenever I require anything for the mission, (that is Blane, Prideaux, and myself), the authorities supply it to me, but I do not think it advisable to revert to such an expedient unless I am compelled by want or circumstances.

Perhaps I shall yet be able to obtain some little more cash from the European workmen.

I have not heard whether any money has been sent for one to Matemma. My messengers whom I sent thither in the beginning of June last for stores have not yet made their appearance, because they had arrived at Debra Tabor the day after we left, and the King detained them with him on account of the overflow of the two rivers (Chettes and Bashilo), between this place and Debra Tabor.

As the rains are nearly over, and the water in the rivers are decreasing rapidly, I suppose His Majesty will soon despatch the messengers with the stores.

All the Europeans who are imprisoned with me look to me for assistance, and of course I have to provide them with everything necessary. I send by this opportunity copies of all the correspondence which took place between the Emperor and myself, in case of accident to the originals. They would show how polite His Majesty and I are. I have not had a good opportunity to have the Amharic letters translated into English, nor could I send any copy of them to Government, as they require a good deal of explanation, and I am not in a position to undertake such a task just now. Kindly keep them in your safe keeping until I return, or if you like you can send them to Mr. Layard to keep for me.

I would give a great deal to be able to send a full report to Government upon all matters, but I dared not on account of my fear of endangering the lives of all the Europeans in this country.

I fear your visit to England will detain for some time the messenger I sent with letters at the end of May. I am very anxious that he should return with the things I sent for. I like to please His Majesty, if possible. Things may yet take a good turn, but I doubt it. If our friend make matters up with me before the return of Mr. Flad there may be some hope of patching up matters, but as I am almost certain that that gentleman cannot possibly succeed in his mission to Her Majesty, of course our friend will think that he has a good cause to detain us here.

As I do not like to make the packet very large, for the convenience of the messengers, as they have to smuggle it through no end of dangers, I shall not write to anyone else by this opportunity, and so I shall feel obliged by your sending a copy of this letter to Sir W. M. Coghlan and Mr. Layard. Prideaux begs to be remembered to you and all other friends. He is in perfect health, and bears his misfortune better than anyone else. Please give my love to Goodfellow, and remember me to all other friends who inquire after me. Kindly send me any bit of newspaper which does not contain any abuse.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

P.S.—I shall feel obliged by your sending for the following articles and forwarding them to me by Mr. Flad: one dozen flannel shirts, two dozen snuff boxes, two dozen pencils, one dozen penknives of different sizes, about 100 reels of cotton, lots of needles of different sizes, and common enamelled buttons. If Mr. Flad has left, kindly send them to M. Munzinger and ask him to send them up to me without loss of time.

It is very important that I should keep in favour, and any little present might save no end of trouble. I hope that those things I sent for in May last are now on their way hither.

Farewell, and do not forget me.

H. R.

Inclosure 4 in No. 82.

Dr. Blanc to Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, September* 16, 1866.

I HAVE written already twice on all that happened to us, so I must trust that one will reach. I might send you many pages full of all we feel and see, but *qui bene?* it may perhaps only bring us into a scrape, and after all can do no good.

Abyssinian prison life is a curious one: we are silent prisoners, still the friends of His gracious Majesty, and treated with the favour only shown to a few privileged captives. Want of exercise is a great privation; it is very difficult to walk any distance with our irons. A ring is hammered on each leg (anything but a pleasant operation), and three links passed in the rings keep the legs in close proximity to one another; the iron resting on the ancle is very painful, so that every morning we put some bandages above the ancle to avoid the friction. Still it is a nuisance, as with all care vermin do get into them. We have altogether a curious aspect—nothing of the Officer, the Consul, and the Reverend —some of us, I amongst them, without shoes or stockings (and that for the very good reason that having only a pair of shoes I keep them in case (!!) we should ever go out), with trousers ripped on the side and buttoned so as to be able to put them on, or else made of a very thin Abyssinian cloth, so as to be able to pass between the rings. Clothes more or less worn out, with straggling beards and shaven heads, sunburnt, and

altogether seedy looking, we have more the appearance of real criminals than of mer hostages. Mr. Stern is rather breaking down, he worries too much. Cameron is picking up wonderfully—eats like ten men and absorbs liquid in the same proportion. Mr. Rosenthal is quite well, and Rassam is fat and well, though much older. Prideaux is well too; and though I have suffered much from neuralgia. We are all getting grey, even Prideaux, though it does not show much, on account of the natural light colour of his hair.

Before coming here we used to say that a good glass of ale and a good cheroot were amongst the blessings of civilized life we most regretted; now we only long for a walk, our ambition not reaching even to a ride.

Books, letters, and papers are what we most require. A long day without anything to do but read a stupid book again and again is the Magdala day; the evening, Rassam, Prideaux, and myself have a game at whist; the others are too much down in the mouth, and kill themselves, morally at least, by brooding over their misery. As it can do no good, I for one try to make myself as jolly as possible under the circumstances, rather a difficult thing, but not, however, to be despaired.

Do not forget us a few stores: some tobacco, cheroots, and anything to enliven the poor prisoners.

(Signed) H. BLANC.

Inclosure 5 in No. 82.

Dr. Blanc to Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *August* 25, 1866.

I INCLOSE a letter for Mrs. Blane; read it and kindly forward it to her address.

Who would have thought that our mission, after having been received so well, would have come at last to such a dreadful smash, and that in the space of a few days we would fall from the throne itself to dark prisons and heavy chains. Even in our unhappy circumstances it is a pleasure to know that we personally have done nothing to deserve our fate, a fact His Majesty publicly admitted a few days ago: stating to the Europeans that he loved us though he chained us, and it was solely on account of the news he had received implying duplicity in our Government that he was obliged to deal so harshly with us. For the present we are as comfortable as we can be under the circumstances; if we had a greater command of money it would be better still; we are not much better off than respectable beggars at home.

I wish the splendid food for the million, invented by your late friend in Upper Sinde, was in our vicinity. We have no fruits. Those little crocking prunes, though hard for some teeth, would be very sweet for ours, and under their influence, if applied with tact, would prove the safest way of ridding us of the bile and other obstructions. *Verb. sap.* We want medicines very much, not only for ourselves, but for our native friends. As a rule I do not like to refuse any one now, it would not be prudent; and, if grateful for anything, the Abyssinian is sometimes so if he gets cured from old pox, or such like inveterate disease, which has baffled the skill of all the blacksmiths and such reputed necromancers of the country. We got a few lines from Munzinger two days ago; he tells us that you went home in May for three months. I hope you enjoyed yourself, but also for our sake I hope you have returned to the hot furnace of Aden. I wrote for many things, but, owing probably to your absence, nothing came. If possible, kindly send some comforts, with medicines.

What will be the end of all this embroglio it is difficult to say. I see only one possible solution, one way alone of living in future on terms of friendship with him and other African rulers. Our positions must not be in the way. Anything is better for us than this *status quo*. I firmly believe that, though there is risk, that a policy quite different to the one until now resorted to would be followed by the most happy results.

(Signed) H. BLANC.

No. 83.

Colone Sltanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received November 28.)

My Lord, *Cairo, November* 14, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from the Acting Political Resident at Aden, with its inclosures, which has just reached me under flying-seal, and which contains intelligence from Mr. Rassam up to the 17th September.

At that date Mr. Rassam and his party, as well as Consul Cameron and the other captives were confined, strictly guarded, and with chains on their legs, at Magdala, but otherwise appear to have been well treated, and are reported to be in good health.

The King professes always the most friendly sentiments towards Mr. Rassam, but appears, or pretends to believe that Her Majesty's Government have hostile intentions against him, and are merely waiting till the prisoners are safe out of his country, to commence hostilities.

Mr. Rassam's despatches were brought from Massowah to Aden by Her Majesty's ship "Victoria," which had conveyed Mr. Flad to that port, but your Lordship will perceive, from Captain Goodfellow's despatch, that Mr. Flad anticipates considerable difficulty in reaching the King's camp, as the road from Matemma to Debra Tabor is reported to be in the hands of the rebels, and the date of his departure appears at present very uncertain.

I imagine, however, my Lord, on Colonel Merewether's arrival at Massowah many of the difficulties may be found to be surmountable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 84.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received December* 13.)

My Lord, *Suez, December* 5, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Lordship's information, that all the packages containing the presents for the King of Abyssinia, including these which were unavoidably detained at Southampton for a week after my departure, having arrived here, and been shipped on board Her Majesty's ship "Victoria," I propose embarking at noon to-day, and leaving for Massowah.

The "Victoria" brought no further intelligence of any importance, beyond what has already been communicated to your Lordship by my assistant, Captain Goodfellow. She left Massowah on the 9th ultimo. Mr. Flad was still there waiting to hear from the King how he was to reach the Royal camp. The King was at Magdala, pitched with his army at the foot of the mountain. Great difficulty was experienced in getting provisions there for so large a body, and one report said the King intended moving shortly into Tigré, compelled to do so to obtain food.

Colonel Stanton was good enough to go with me at Cairo to his Excellency Sheriff Pasha, the President of the Council and Minister of the Interior in the Egyptian Government, by which means I have been provided with the proper letters, in case of its being necessary for me to proceed by the Egyptian frontier to Matemma.

I hope to reach Massowah about the 9th or 10th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 85.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(*Received December* 13.)

My Lord, *Cairo, December* 3, 1866.

I BEG leave to forward herewith to your Lordship the original of a document that was presented to me a few days since by the Abbé Stella, a Jesuit priest, who has been residing for some years at Keren, in the country of Bogos, on the Abyssinian frontier, which document purports to be signed by certain Chiefs of that country, and requests British intervention with the Egyptian Government to secure the country of Bogos from the inroads of the Borka and Baria tribes residing within the Egyptian frontier, and further expressing the desire of these Chiefs that their country should be placed under the protection of Great Britain.

I informed the Abbé Stella I would forward the letter which he had delivered me to Her Majesty's Government, and request instructions on the subject of the contents, but carefully avoided giving any hope that their wishes would be carried out, the more so as I imagine any appearance of interference on or near the Abyssinian frontier at the present moment might lead to grossly exaggerated reports in that country, which would add to the already existing difficulties in the way of the deliverance of the captives.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 85.

Letter from Chiefs of Bogos Country to Colonel Stanton.

M. le Consul-Général,

QUE la lettre des gens des pays Bogos arrive à notre Seigneur le Consul-Général d'Angleterre à Alexandrie. Comme vous portez-vous; êtes-vous en bonne santé?

Les troupes Egyptiennes de Kassala avec les gens du Barka et des Baria, nous ayant ravagé, dans ce tems-là M. Plowden (de bonne mémoire), Consul Anglais à Massowah, il nous aidât, en nous faisant rendre toutes les individus et les troupeaux qu'on nous avait volé, et depuis ce tems-là nous avons été tranquilles. Après la mort de M. Plowden arrivât M. le Capitaine Cameron, qui se rendît chez nous, et il nous promît qu'il nous aurait continué l'ancienne protection. A présent nous nous trouvons depuis quelque tems sans protecteur, et nous vous prions, M. le Consul-Général, afin que vous soyez notre père. Depuis deux ans les gens du Barka et Baria, sujets Egyptiens, ils nous tracassent, ils nous volent les enfants et nos troupeaux, et nous vous prious afin que vous nous aidiez pour avoir nos gens et nos troupeaux volés. En outre nous cherchons, et nous aimons de tout notre cœur que notre pays soit à l'Angleterre, et nous ne reconnaitrons autre maître que vous. Le porteur de cette lettre il connait très bien nos pensées et nos pays.

(Signé) GHIORGHIS, *Chef de Keren.*
BERRIK, *Chef de Gioffa.*
IMER, *Chef de Tantaroa.*
DERAR, *Chef de Kodi.*
ADEGH, *Chef d'Asirala.*
GONDER, *Chef de Deghi.*
BEREK, *Chef de Ferrahen.*
ALY BAUHIT, *Chef de Ad-Ibrahé.*
CLAUDISS, *Chef d'Ona.*
AMHARAI, *Chef de Begiuk.*
NESSUR, *Chef d'Ad-Gebsua.*

No. 86.

Lord Stanley to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 15, 1866.

I HAVE to state to you, in reply to your despatch of the 3rd instant, that Her Majesty's Government do not feel themselves in any way called upon to interfere in differences and disputes between native tribes residing respectively within the frontiers of Egypt and Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 87.

Lord Stanley to Lord Lyons.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, December* 29, 1866.

SIR ANDREW BUCHANAN reports a suggestion made by an Armenian at St. Petersburgh, that the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople, if applied to, could obtain the release of the Abyssinian captives.

It would not be right to neglect this intimation, and I have therefore to instruct your Excellency, if any convenient opportunity occurs, to place yourself in communication with the Patriarch, and to enlist his good offices in favour of the captives if he is able and willing to be of service.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 88.

Captain De Dohsé to Mr. Murray.—(*Received January* 3.)

Sir, 20, *Amersham Vale Road, New Cross, January* 2, 1867.

HAVING just now read that Consul Cameron and the missionaries have, notwithstanding so many efforts, not been released yet, I address you again, requesting you to do me the favour of conveying to the Minister of Foreign Affairs my anxious wish that I may be sent to Abyssinia, for the purpose of trying by all means to effectuate the release of the above-mentioned English gentlemen, and to return with them immediately to England.

I explained to Earl Russell, as you are aware, my opinion on the matter, and I repeat that only an experienced and energetic officer will succeed. King Theodorus is a thorough soldier and fond of foreign affairs, therefore, a military mission, as I always said, would alone impose the King. The latter is not one of the savages as people think, he is a Christian and possesses great ambition, like almost all monarchs in the world, especially a man like him risen from the ranks is generally more ambitious and proud. Having always lived amongst soldiers he prefers to deal with officers rather than with civilians. He has good advisers (foreigners), and imitates European monarchs, so that there is no probability that he would accept the presents sent to him. I think he will be highly offended with the sending of them.

Dear Sir, I beg you to assist me in my endeavours, being sure that I shall succeed brilliantly, having been twenty years officer, and being acquainted with Oriental life.

It is now the fourth time I solicit this mission; will you kindly communicate it to the Minister and to recommend me to him? I would be most happy to execute that noble deed, which though dangerous and difficult, would just suit me.

I think it very wrong that others have been sent, who never served this country, and that Lord Russell, after having given him ample explanation, founded upon experience, namely, that civilians like those sent before would never succeed, always declined my request.

Hoping that you will do the best for me, I remain &c.

(Signed) FREDERICK DE DOHSE.

No. 89.

Mr. Murray to Captain De Dohsé.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 5, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, in which you repeat your proposal to proceed to Abyssinia, with the view of obtaining the release of the captives there, and I am to state to you, in reply, that his Lordship is unable to avail himself of your offer.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 90.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received January* 7, 1867.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 10, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report that the "Victoria" anchored here at 8 o'clock this morning, after a rough and tedious passage from Suez, tedious, owing to the defective state of the boiler of the "Victoria."

M. Münzinger, Acting British Consul, immediately came on board bringing a letter from Mr. Rassam, dated the 5th ultimo, this was received at Massowah on the 3rd instant, having been twenty-eight days on the road. A copy of it with explanatory notes by me is submitted herewith.

The letter contains little intelligence beyond the good tidings of the continued perfect health of all. There is, however, one important point, and that is intimation of the receipt of Mr. Flad's first letter from London. Mr. Flad then announced to the King his arrival in London, and the desire of Her Majesty's Government to meet the King's wishes. Mr. Rassam had heard of the arrival of this letter before he wrote, but no change in their position appears to have followed. It remains to be seen what effect will ensue from the

receipt of Mr. Flad's second letter, forwarded from Massowah on the 20th September, and his third despatch on the 31st October. Nothing had been heard of the messenger who carried up the former, and judging by the time Mr. Rassam's letter of the 5th November took on the way, it is not likely any answer can be received to the latter for fifty-six days, at least, from date of despatch, or until the 26th December, I am, therefore, causing the machinery, &c. to be landed and placed in the British Consulate, and to-morrow will proceed on to Aden to procure some stores which are reqnired, and to enable me to send on this despatch. I shall return in the "Victoria" to Massowah in time to receive the expected communication from the King. Mr. Flad is still at Massowah waiting the King's instructions; should these chance to arrive during my absence, and he be summoned by the King to Tigré, I have directed him to proceed at once without waiting for my coming. I take Mr. Talbot and the artisans with me to Aden.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 90.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, November 5*, 1866.

YOUR welcome epistles of the 22nd November, 11th Febrnary, 20th March, and the 13th April, only reached me a few days ago from Matemma, for which I return you my best thanks.

We have not heard from Massowah since the arrival of Mr. Flad there at the end of May,* and the other day, when a messenger brought a note from Mr. Flad reporting his arrival in London, M. Munzinger sent me only a few lines by him acknowledging a letter I had sent; he sent neither a newspaper nor a word of any interesting news. In our present sad position such a neglect adds to one's misery, as we feel that even our agent at Massowah seems to forget us. I wonder what harm he can find in sending us, every now and then, an overland mail which may not contain some obnoxious articles about Abyssinia.

Thanks to Mr. Flad, who has actually sent us news from London; and the only newspapers we have received since our arrival in Abyssinia were sent up by Mr. Flad when he reached Massowah.

I have written over and over again to M. Munzinger, asking him to send me some money, but I cannot get an answer. Not a dollar has arrived for us at Matemma; and if it had not been for the King's artizans, who spared us some of their allowances, we should have actually starved. I have a great number of people who are dependent on me, and, moreover, in our difficult position I have to be liberal.

The messenger I had sent down to Massowah at the end of May, asking for some things for the Emperor, has not been heard of since then, and I cannot make out what has happened to him. His Majesty still continues his friendly communications with me; and no messengers who come here from him are sent without a civil message. He is still at

* I inquired about this, and found it was no fault of M. Munzinger's, He repeatedly sent up messengers, as shown below, but some would appear to have been stopped by the rebels; others never to have been heard of since; and some I have no doubt were secretly stopped by the people about the Emperor. When Mr. Rassam was supposed to be on his way down country, letters and papers were forwarded on the 29th April, and again about 14th May to meet him at Kassala. After Mr. Flad's arrival at Massowah, the following were sent:—July 22, letters and newspapers, viâ Soudan; July 26, letters and eleven cases of stores were sent to Matemma, but were kept for two months at Kassala on account of the rainy season; M. Munzinger's servant then went up and conveyed them on to Matemma, taking at the same time some money. Intelligence has been received of these letters, stores, &c., having been taken on to Magdala; it would appear from Mr. Rassam's present letter of November 5 to have arrived—letters certainly. August 18, a letter, newspapers, and 300 dollars sent viâ Gondar. This man, a very trusty one, was unfortunately caught by the rebels and stopped. August 18, another messenger was despatched with only two letters, one to Mr. Rassam, the other to the King, with inclosure to Mrs. Flad from Mr. Flad. This man's arrival is acknowledged by Mr. Rassam on the 5th November as having come the "other day." August 27, letter to Mr. Rassam sent to Matemma, care of Mr. Eipperle, with 1,000 dollars, thirteen cases containing clothes and stores. September 20, letter from Mr. Flad to Emperor, written from London, with one for Mrs. Flad; also letters from Aden for Mr. Rassam and others, and two home newspapers sent by M. Munzinger. October 26, letter to Mr. Rassam, also some from Aden sent by a boy direct by Lasta (*vide* map); duplicate of letters sent by another boy viâ Gondar. Three newspapers, 200 dollars, some articles for the bishop, and list of all letters despatched from Massowah since June. October 31, Mr. Flad's letter despatched to the King, with others to his friends at Gaffat. November 11, newspapers sent viâ Lasta to Mr. Rassam, but no letters. December 5, letters for Mr. Rassam and all his party sent in one packet, no newspapers, but some clothes for Messrs. Rassam, Blanc, and Prideaux.

In a letter dated August 15 Mr. Rassam had told M. Munzinger not to send any letters up country. M. Munzinger however persevered, and did his best to maintain communication. The disturbed state of the country, and the peculiar position of Mr. Rassam, is rendered thus very difficult.—W. L. MEREWETHER.

Debra Tabor, and it is not yet known when he will join us. Mrs. Rosenthal he has not allowed to join her husband, but made her remain with Mrs. Flad at Gaffat, on the pretence of the road between that place and this being in an unsafe state. His Majesty still speaks in flattering terms of me, and calls me his true friend; nevertheless he still keeps me and my party in chains. How affectionate he is! Some of my party think that His Majesty never intended to let us depart, as he promised to do; but I think otherwise.

I believe the report of Dr. Beke's coming up made our friend suspicious, and I hope that one of these days I shall be able to prove to you my opinion. I only wished that he had listened to you when you advised him to wait and see how I had succeeded with my mission; it might have avoided these complications. It is also premised that we shall never be allowed to leave the country without coercive measures. About this I do not like to give any opinion. I leave it to Her Majesty's Government to do what they think proper.

A few days ago I sent you copies of my correspondence with His Majesty in English and Amharic, and by this opportunity I send you translations of the latter and an epitome of my account current since my departure from Massowah to the end of last September. The reason I have taken this step is, as I do not know what any day may bring forth and we might lose everything; the reason I have not sent them to you in an official form, because I could not do so without writing a long report with them, which would be unwise for me to do under the present circumstances. Kindly keep the whole in your safe keeping until I leave Abyssinia, or the necessary time.

The roads between this and the coast are so much disturbed now that I fear the budget I am now sending will never reach its destination. Remember me kindly to all friends who inquire after me. I am glad to say Blanc and Prideaux are keeping up their spirits, and we are all enjoying perfect health under our present misfortunes.

Happily, we three are still in favour with the Emperor, and he cannot find any cause to complain of me. Although he still keeps me in chains yet he constantly mentions me before his nobles and European servants in flattering terms, and he keeps up his usual friendly correspondence with me.

This place is extremely healthy, otherwise some of us might have suffered from want of exercise. Our imprisonment is quite different from that of Cameron and his party before I came. They were imprisoned in the common jail with more than 200 prisoners, and had to sleep together strictly watched, and only each was allowed a female servant. Now we are treated like State prisoners, and we three are allowed all our servants, and have separate rooms in one compound adjoining the Royal residence. His Majesty wrote several times to the Chiefs here to be very kind to me and to show me great civility, consequently, they have all been very attentive, and pay me friendly visits often. We three have also been ordered rations, but the rest, who are still in disfavour, were disallowed everything excepting our company and the succour I am able to render them.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 91.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(*Received February* 12.)

My Lord, *Cairo, February* 1, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from Colonel Merewether, dated Massowah, 15th January, which has just reached me, under flying seal, and which contains intelligence from Mr. Rassam, dated 12th December, just received at that port.

The position of the captives does not appear to have improved, and the intelligence is far from being satisfactory. The Emperor Theodore is, judging from these accounts, fast losing ground and the position of the rebels improving.

The messengers sent by Mr. Flad to inform the Emperor of his return do not appear to have been able to reach his capital, and the communication with the coast has become more difficult than ever; the road from Matemma is no longer open, and Mr. Flad still remains at Massowah awaiting a reply to his communication, nor has Colonel Merewether been able to send on the party of engineers that accompanied him from England.

Colonel Merewether proposes to return again shortly to Massowah in the hope of obtaining later intelligence from Mr. Rassam, but I fear, my Lord, the situation is not likely to improve as long as Mr. Flad remains on the coast, or until some measures are taken by Her Majesty's Government to convince the Emperor that force will be employed

against him should any further delay occur in complying with the demand for the release of the captives.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 91.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.

My Lord, *Massowah, January* 15, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to report that I returned to this from Aden on the 30th ultimo: no messengers had arrived from the King or Mr. Rassam during my absence, nor had any fresh intelligence been received.

2. As it was advisable Mr. Talbot and his party should learn and practise something of camp life before starting for up-country, I landed and established them at Moncooloo in tents, which I had brought with me from Aden. Moncooloo is on the mainland, about four miles from the anchorage, and where most of the merchants of Massowah resort to at night; for though inland a little it is cooler even in the hottest season. Mr. Talbot and the workmen have resided there since in an enclosure where is a building dignified with the name of British Consulate, but it is nothing more than a rude barn made of small wood, dried shrubs and matting. Wretched as it is, it is still, I believe, what is commonly used in Abyssinia; so after causing a few repairs to be made to it, I gave it over to them to use, as well as the tents. The hut was surrounded by a thick grove of parkinsonia, planted I believe by Mr. Walker, once Vice-Consul; the greater part I caused to be cut down, to make the place cleaner and more healthy.

3. While waiting for intelligence I employed the time in making excursions in the neighbourhood to see places and obtain information about the country.

4. The first spot visited was Ailat, twenty-seven miles nearly due west of Massowah. The road, a mere cattle track, is chiefly along the dry beds of water-courses, or over low hills, occasionally on bits of level plain; with the exception of three places, where gorges have to be ascended or descended, there is no part of the road over which artillery would not drive with ease, and the three exceptions might very soon be made passable by sappers. The first is short, only about 200 yards, but steep, having a direct rise of eighty feet in that distance; it could be zigzagged. The second is much longer, being one mile and a half, but has only a rise of about 400 feet, and were it not for its narrowness, and being clogged with boulders, would be easy enough. There is plenty of earth and bushes on either side to afford material for a road which would stand well until heavy rain washed it away, and a heavy fall is not of frequent occurrence. The highest point crossed was found to be only 989 feet above the level of the sea; there is a gradual rise the whole way. From this highest point, the road descends 200 feet on to the plain of Ailat. At seventeen miles from Massowah, thirteen from Moncooloo, there is a spring of good water always running; but any quantity of water may be obtained by digging a few feet in the sandy beds of the watercourses.

5. Ailat is a fine plain, at the foot of the mountains bordering Abyssinia, twelve miles long from north to south, by five broad, covered at this season of the year with rich verdure, owing to showers falling once in the twenty-four hours. It gets some also of the summer rains, so that it is well off in this respect; any quantity of water may be obtained by sinking wells. The whole plain might be cultivated to great advantage with cotton, wheat, maize, jowaree, &c., were there a good Government to arrange for the cultivators, but the place is unfortunate in this respect; it pays a small tribute to the Egyptian Government for the nominal protection afforded by ten soldiers, and the justice they are supposed to have administered to them by the Governor of Massowah, while they also pay a grazing fee to the Emperor Theodorus, because the ground is considered Abyssinian. The result is, the valley is poorly populated by people who live almost entirely by their cattle, cutivating only a very little jowaree. The village, a scattered one, of about thirty grass and mat huts, is in the centre of the valley. The heat is said to be very great in summer.

6. This would be an excellent place to locate a large body of cavalry on first landing, there being plenty of wood, water, forage, and meat; grain would be scarce at first, but it would soon come in from the countries north and north-west. Besides the water to be obtained by digging, there is a perennial spring on the west side of the valley, two and a half miles from the village. Here also are the celebrated hot springs used by the invalids of the country.

7. There is a road direct from Ailat into Abyssinia, but not a good one. The best in this direction suitable for laden camels passes about eight miles south of Ailat, from which it can be joined. It starts from the same place, Moncooloo, and through the same sort of country as the road to Ailat; but is less difficult, both in the first part and after entering the mountains. Water is more plentiful on it, and is found at the following places, eight to ten miles apart, Zagu, Yamgous, Amba Tokan, Bamba, Ayderess, Kiaguor; Kiaguor is only sixty miles from Moncooloo, and once there, you are on the plateau of Hamozeyn, in Abyssinia. From Kiaguor to Gootofellassee (Koodoofelassy in the map) is only thirty miles of fair road. Gootofellassee is a very healthy place, dry, and not feverish; it is where several roads converge, supplies naturally come to, and could be easily reached from the coast, in nine marches, by an advanced force. From Gootofellassee to Adowa is under fifty miles; the Mareb has to be crossed about midway, but there is no difficulty whatever in the dry, cold season; the depth of the water then being only a few inches. From Adowa any road could be taken as required; but though it is a larger place than Gootofellassee and the capital of Tigré, the latter is the best place for first rendezvous, being most healthy.

8. I proceeded down Annesley Bay to the bottom, and, landing at different places, inquired quietly, through M. Munzinger, about the different roads from that neighbourhood. There are two, one to Halai, taken by Dr. Beke last year, and which is not a good one for laden camels, the other the old Greek caravan road, from Adoolis to Tenafee; this last has not been frequented of late years, and is overgrown with jungle, but it was much used when Adoolis was a Greek Colony, and I cannot help thinking will, on further inquiry, prove as good as any, at any rate well worth examination hereafter should entrance into Abyssinia become necessary. The country on the western side of Annesley Bay is richly green now, in consequence of the constant rain, and the plains are covered with herds of cattle from all parts. Wild elephants were found close to the sea-shore at the bottom of the bay, feeding quietly in the plain. There is a party of 200 Egyptian troops here, protecting the Customs levied on the salt brought from an extensive salt-plain, about twenty miles to the south.

9. There are three other routes into Abyssinia, which formerly were regularly used by caravans, but lately have not been much so: one from Amphilla Bay, direct to Adowa; another from Ead to Sokota; and the third from Tagourra, by Lake Haik, to Begemeder. This last is the most direct to where the Emperor now is confined to; but, from all I have been able to learn, there are great difficulties on the score of water, none but very brackish being procurable. Further particulars about these will be gathered as soon as possible.

10. I returned from Annesley Bay yesterday, and found that messengers had arrived from Mr. Rassam the afternoon before. Mr. Rassam's letter bears date the 12th of December, and, strange to say, up to that time he was still without any intelligence from Massowah, as before shown. Messengers had been repeatedly dispatched by M. Munzinger, and in most instances the very same who had brought packets from Mr. Rassam. None of these have succeeded in reaching their destination, and I have only authentic intelligence of one having been seized, plundered, and imprisoned by the rebels. I can only conclude, therefore, that the men find it more difficult to choose a safe passage back, and are still hanging about in safe spots, waiting for an opportunity to get through the country held by the rebels. This would be the last part of their journey going back, and they probably would not be able to get such good information so quickly as they had at starting on their downward journey, when they had been living for some time in the immediate vicinity of the rebels, and could shape their course accordingly. The Emperor only holds Begemeder now, and is surrounded on all sides by rebels. The messengers dispatched by Mr. Flad, on the 31st October, do not appear to have been able to reach either. Adowa and a portion of Tigré in its neighbourhood is still held by one of the Emperor's partisans. A party of merchants, who passed through it on their way from Gondar to the coast, and who reached Massowah on the 5th January, said they had heard at Adowa the report of Mr. Flad's return from England, and also that messengers from the English were waiting at Adowa, unable to proceed further; among these last will probably be one of the two parties sent by Mr. Flad, with his letter to the King.

11. Mr. Rassam writes:—

"Although the Emperor has not written to me for some time, yet he has not forgotten me altogether; he still sends me civil messages whenever any messenger comes here from his camp; he still calls me his friend. Nothing has been heard of Flad since the letter he wrote to his wife from London, in July last. It may be that when he arrived at Massowah, and heard of our imprisonment, he was obliged to change his tactics. Thank God, we are all well, and trying to make ourselves happy under our present trying position. Abyssinia, on the whole, is a very healthy country, and the place

where we are located now is one of the best spots in the country; we may say we have no other season but spring during the whole year. The nights are always cold, and fire is never an unpleasant object in the room, and a person may wear warm clothing all the year round, and may have nothing but Indian summer clothing, and yet he will not feel the worse for it. The mercury just goes down low enough to make the water very cold, but it does not freeze. In case we have to spend another rainy season in this country, kindly send us as soon as possible a great quantity of vegetable seeds, in order that we might have some nice gardens cultivated. Send us of every variety, that we may see what would grow best in this country. Please send some flower-seeds too, in order that we might have sweet odour as well as nice eatables. In this country nothing is obtainable save meat and grain, and thanks to the Europeans at Gaffat we have abundance of potatoes. This most useful vegetable has been introduced by them, and grows very well in this climate. As I am allowed to have my Indian servants with me, we manage to live comfortably, and are not obliged to revert to Abyssinian food, which Cameron and his party had to put up with before I came to this country. With the exception of our arms, which His Majesty has dispossessed us of (for fear of our committing suicide!), we have all our things with us, and consequently we are able to eat in the European style. With all the misery I have suffered in this country, I cannot but say that the Abyssinians are an extremely kind and civil race, and are not cruel generally to foreigners, as other uncivilized people are. They make very good servants, and have a most estimable point of not deserting a master in the most adverse time. There are here about 400 prisoners, most of whom are confined for political purposes, some of whom are the greatest men in the country. Amongst the latter are the son of Sahela Selassie, the late King of Shoa, sons of Dejag Oubie, the late Ruler of Tigré, and some relations of the late Ras Ali. The Metropolitan of Abyssinia is still confined, and is as strictly guarded as we are, barring the chains. The Chief of the Abyssinian monks is also confined, but he has more liberty than the Bishop. The latter has been very kind, and as the head of the Abyssinian Church he can always render assistance, excepting with the Sovereign of the country. We are confined in the Chief Minister's house, adjoining the Royal residence, on the north-eastern side of the mountain; and the rest of the prisoners, natives, are kept in the common gaol, on the opposite side. This mountain is situated in the Walloo Galla country, about one mile in circumference. It is almost perpendicular on all sides, excepting the north-western point, which is connected to another eminence about a quarter of a mile distant. When we were brought here we were brought this way, but I am told that there is an easier road on the northern side, leading to another entrance to the fortress. We have a garrison of 1,600 fighting men, 600 of whom are musqueteers; the rest are shield and sword-bearers. All the families of the soldiers live up here, and there are water-springs on the top, which yield sufficient water for the general purposes of all the people. There are also a great number of cannon, but there is no one to work them properly. His Majesty is still busy casting guns at Gaffat, but they are so big it is expected they never could be moved for any use in the field, to say nothing of the difficult mountain-roads. We could not be further from the coast than we are now. It would take the best messenger at least twenty days to reach the sea, and he has to pass through rebel country soon after he leaves this place. I believe the distance is almost the same as it is between the coast and this viâ Gondar. If I send through the latter route, the messenger has to pass first the Royal Camp at Debra Tabor, then through the capital, which is in the hands of the rebels of Walkait, then through Tigré, which is mainly in the hands of the rebels of Lasta, and then through Hamozeyn, which is still faithful to the Emperor. But if I sent through Lasta, the messenger has only to pass through the rebels, under the Chief of that district, who is said to rule as far as Halai, where Dr. Beke was imprisoned for a few days. We are determined not to give way to melancholy, but bear every calamity with fortitude, and we will try to make ourselves as happy as possible. With this general anarchy no* knowing what any day may bring forth."

12. Dr. Blanc also sends me a very interesting description of Magdala and their life, which I append for your Lordship's information. The messengers, three servants of Mr. Rassam, who brought these letters, leave again this evening on their return, taking with them letters, newspapers, a small stock of medicines, a few light useful things, and 100 dollars each. They will go by Lasta the same way that they came, and will, I hope, be successful in reaching Magdala. They expect to be from three weeks to a month on the journey, as they will have to proceed very carefully. Some servants of the Aboona will be leaving in a few days with stores for their master, which I procured for him at Aden. With these stores newspapers, medicines, and more money will be sent for Mr. Rassam and his party. If all the messengers dispatched could only have reached, the captives

* *Sic in orig.*

would have been very well off. There are stores, a large supply, and 3,000 dollars, at Matemma; 2,000 of the latter left by Mr. Flad on his way to the coast in June last, while stores, and other 1,000 dollars, have been sent to Magdala by Lasta, Adowa, and Gondar, at different periods since August last. Of these one messenger only has, we heard, been intercepted, plundered, and imprisoned by the rebels in Lasta.

13. From what Mr. Rassam writes, and from all I have been able to gather from merchants and others during my stay in Massowah and its neighbourhood, it is clear that the Emperor's position is becoming most desperate, that his power is rapidly diminishing, and that unless he can manage to make some brilliant stroke worthy of his earlier career, his rule will come to an end within the next few month. Of country in which he can say his authority exists at all, the small province of Begemeder and the little district of Hamozeyn remain, and the inhabitants of the former are only kept in awe by his actual presence among them. In the beginning of December he made a sudden descent on Gondar, caught a few insignificant rebels, and caused all the churches there to be burnt; but he did not dare to remain, and returned immediately to Gaffat, which he proclaimed by herald, should be his future capital. Since then he has been attending only to the casting of guns, which can be of no use to him, while his troops are almost daily deserting him. Last March Mr. Rassam accompanied the King, and saw his army to consist of 80,000 men; now he has not 15,000 with him. Shoa, under Mainlek (the grandson of Sahela Selassie) who escaped from confinement at Magdala about fifteen months ago, has established its independence, and Mainlek is half inclined to move against Theodore. Tadela Goorgul in Gojam can now hold his own, defies the King, and has lately ravaged again Meder and the next district, that supplies might not go to the King. Tissoo Gobezie has an army of 20,000 men, holds Walkait and up to Gondar. Wakshun Gobezie possesses nearly all Tigré, and has a powerful army; while to the east and south in Lasta and the Walloo Galla country, all are in arms and hostile to the King. As long as he can maintain the appearance of royalty, and keep even a small army around him, there is a superstitious feeling attached to him which prevents any of the powerful rebels moving to attack him. But distress and his tyrannical procedure are fast driving his troops from him, his former energy seems to have left him, and it is most probable that a sudden and violent death will before very long terminate his career.

14. I had instructed Mr. Flad to be ready to leave for Matemma should no letter from the King arrive before the 15th instant, to-day. Under the circumstances above-mentioned, and especially considering that Mr. Rassam has not been able to communicate with Matemma since August last, showing that road is also closed, I think it better Mr. Flad should remain here for the present at all events. Mr. Talbot and his party will likewise remain at Moncooloo until matters are more cleared up. I do not think it likely now that there will be any chance of their going to Abyssinia with advantage to the cause on which account they came out. But to insure no reason arising for the Emperor, as long as he retains power, being able to say strict faith had not been kept with him, these people and all the presents should remain on the spot.

15. In the event of the result mentioned in the last part of the 13th paragraph of this letter, there is little doubt that the rebels nearest to Magdala, and who will have the greatest local power, will be only too glad to assist in promoting the release and safe-conduct of the British captives to the coast, and under these circumstances I should at once take the best steps to arrange this. But as long as King Theodorus remains Sovereign of Abyssinia I cannot, of course, allow it to be thought possible for a moment that I or any other person could, on the part of the English Government, have any connection or enter upon any communication whatever with other than the nominal head, with whom Her Majesty's Government is treating. It has been hinted to me that proposals might be made by people at Massowah, but I have been careful to show that no one is acknowledged or understood excepting King Theodore. It is possible that the hints were thrown out by spies from the King's Court; but, be this as it may, to act otherwise than has been done would be a gross breach of faith, and which, if the King heard of, would cause most fatal consequences to the captives now in his power.

16. I leave to-day for Aden, but shall return to Massowah next month, by which time something more should be known.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 91.

Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, December* 10, 1866.

THERE is nothing new, except that Prideaux and myself have built a house, not elegant but at least comfortable compared to our former little hut. If we were free from our chains and allowed to roam about the mountains I would take our detention pretty quietly. The climate is very fine. We sometimes have the thermometer as low as 33° at sunrise, and during the last two months 65° has been the average at 2 P.M. in the sun; at that hour it varies from 95° to 102°. Magdala is one of those small plateaus common in Abyssinia, and all more or less called " ambas "—about a mile in length (north to south), and about half-a-mile in breadth. It is almost flat, except near the south-east extremity, where a few hillocks arise. Magdala is at the entrance of the Walloo Galla country, and separated from Lasta by Taleith and Wadela and other smaller districts. It is about fifty miles south-east of Debra Tabor, but from the River Jiddeh (about half-way) the road is very bad. At that point from the road to Begemeder there is an almost perpendicular descent of more than 3,000 feet and an ascent of the same elevation and difficulty to gain the plateau which separates the Jiddeh from the Rechalo, another stream, both tributaries of the Nile, both almost dry from 1st October to beginning of July, but during part of the three rainy months both rivers are quite impassable except to a few expert swimmers. The plateau between the Jiddeh and Rechalo is very beautiful, a day's march from one river to the other, and, I believe, of the same ascent from north to south; it is called Dohonte, is thickly populated, and is, for its size, one of the richest districts in Abyssinia in cattle and grain. It is the granary of the fort. The descent and ascent of the Rechalo is even worse than the Jiddeh's; it is also about 3,000 feet, the road at some places was so bad that we were obliged to dismount both going down and up. From the ascent on this side of the Rechalo, a gradual incline of about twelve miles extends to the Magdala amba, and to a few other isolated mountains all about 1,000 feet above the plateau, seemingly detached portions of the great Galla country which extends from a few miles from Magdala up to the high land of Shoa. To the west, mountains arise between the amba and the Rechalo; to the east, some distant ones are visible; to the south, one or two smaller than our amba separate us from the high Galla plateau; but, to the north, at about 1,500 yards from the fort, another mountain of comparatively easy access, and separated from the Magdala amba by a small intervening plateau called Salangini, rises about 100 feet higher than the Fort of Magdala. All these plateaus, as well as our amba, are formed of volcanic rocks, and the upper perpendicular wall courts, testing essentially the strength of the place, are formed of beautiful columnar basalt, but the finest specimen I saw was at the extremity of the Begemeder plateau at the descent of the Jiddeh.

The road through Talanta to Lasta and Socata is said to be much easier than the one from Debra Tabor, a large portion of the intervening tract between here and the Tacazze being a low plain. There are three gates at Magdala; I only saw one at the northern extremity through which we came. The ascent through that entrance is not very difficult, as we did not dismount from our mules until we reached the inner gate. The entrance is defended by two wooden doors and a few insignificant earthworks. The garrison consists of about 1,000 men about half-armed with matchlocks. The whole population, including women, children, and prisoners, amount to about 3,000. The greater portion of the plateau is covered with huts; a large open space, however, exists before the King's houses, and another smaller one at the southern extremity near the prison. Our houses are inclosed in a hedge near the King's houses, about ten in number. The Queen, daughter of Dejag Oubie, and her son are amongst the fair inhabitants of the King's inclosure. Water is the great desideratum; it is already getting scarce, but from February to July hardly any is to be obtained on the amba and must be brought from the foot of the mountain, and then even it is far from being abundant. Of prisoners there are about 350 on the mountain; all except our party, the Bishop and the family of Ras Ali, who, like us, have special quarters and guards, are heaped together in three houses. The majority are imprisoned on political grounds, only about sixty are imprisoned for murder or manslaughter; their crime not having been satisfactorily proved, they must wait until further witnesses should appear either in their favour or to prove their crime. Thank God we have up to now been spared the horrors of that place, where hunger, dirt, misery reign supreme; all the prisoners except ourselves and two or three of the prisoners are chained hand and feet, and many, to this already awful torture, poles of wood fixed round their necks and are only allowed a piece of dirty cloth their nakedness. The Bishop is not chained, only watched at night.

(Signed)

No. 92.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.—(*Received March* 14.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 4, 1867.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch of the 29th December last, I have the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch, with which I have forwarded to Colonel Stanton a letter from the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople to King Theodore, exhorting him to set the British captives free. I inclose also a translation of the Patriarch's letter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 92.

Lord Lyons to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Constantinople, March* 4, 1867.

HER Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh reported to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that an Armenian in that capital had suggested that the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople could give useful aid towards obtaining the release of the British captives in Abyssinia. The Secretary of State accordingly instructed me, if any convenient opportunity should occur, to place myself in communication with the Patriarch, and to enlist his good offices in favour of the captives, if he were willing and able to be of service.

I immediately acted upon this instruction, and found the Patriarch extremely willing to give all the assistance in his power. He suggested that the most efficacious means of action which he possessed would be to write a letter to King Theodore exhorting him in the name of religion and humanity to set the captives free. He has sent me a pastoral letter to this effect, in Armenian and Arabic, signed by him, and has desired that it be forwarded to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who has already, he informs me, been instructed to have it conveyed to King Theodore by a Prelate.

I think it prudent, however, to send the letter to you in the first instance, and accordingly inclose it and a translation herewith. Your knowledge of all the details concerning the captives and of the present state of the negotiation for their release will enable you to determine whether or no it is advisable to make use of the letter. If you consider it to be advisable to use it, your best course will probably be to send it direct to Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, and request him to concert measures with the Armenian Patriarch at that place, so that it may be forwarded speedily in the mode pointed out by the Patriarch here.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 92.

Boghos, Patriarch of the Armenians, to Theodore, King of Abyssinia.

(Translation.) *February* 13 (o.s.); 1867.

BOGHOS, Chief of the Bishops, and Patriarch of the Armenians who inhabit Constantinople and the Ottoman Dominions, sends Christian greetings to His Majesty Theodore, King of Abyssinia, and offers reiterated prayers to the throne of Almighty God that He may grant His Majesty long life and perfect happiness, defend his noble person and Royal dignity for the glory and honour of the Christian religion, and continue His favour to him and his Royal lineage as long as the world endures.

I would beg leave to remark, that however great may be the distance between the country of Abyssinia and Constantinople, yet the numerous and manifest virtues with which God has endowed His Majesty, and the justice and clemency of his exalted Govern- added to the many virtues appertaining to the Christian religion, are well known to le servant. His Majesty's goodness to all Christians under the shadow of his d especially to those of our sect whose Patriarch is their spiritual shepherd, n.

seeking an opportunity of offering my prayers and homage to your

Majesty's throne. I therefore now venture to forward my present petition, and avail myself of the opportunity to solicit the pardon and liberation of your Majesty's slaves the English Consul and his companions, who have been for some time past imprisoned in Abyssinia. Indeed, I beg leave to observe, that the said Consul and his companions have been for a very long period in confinement, and that they have no help or refuge save in the mercy and clemency of your Majesty.

Should your Majesty be pleased to pardon them, your doing so would afford much gratification to the whole of our Christian community, and also great satisfaction to the illustrious British Government, whose efforts in the interest of Christianity are well known.

In consideration of the office held by me your spiritual servant, and the remembrance of the saying of our Lord Jesus Christ (on whom be glory and praise), who said, "Forgive those who trespass against you," who preached forgiveness and said, "Do good to those who offend you," and for the sake also of His Mother the Virgin Mary, who teaches us to be compassionate, and who is the only intercessor for us all with Him, I humbly pray my Lord the great and merciful King to pardon and set free the said prisoners. This would be most gracious on the part of the King.

I also beg leave to offer, in anticipation, my thanks and obligations for the goodness of your Majesty's Government, which I do not doubt will be lavished on these prisoners by washing away their offences, and giving to them to drink of the cup of pure forgiveness and freedom.

For the sake of mercy and charity, your Majesty is supplicated to liberate the prisoners. My hope, and the hope of every Christian is, in the mercy and clemency of your Majesty.

I offer my prayers to Almighty God that He may grant your Majesty eternal happiness, and keep you on your throne in glory, honour and victory. May He also cause your Ministers, officers, soldiers, people and subjects to attain abundant prosperity and the enjoyment of peace and tranquillity, as often as the new moon shines forth, and with the dawn of every day.

No. 93.

Lord Stanley to Lord Lyons.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March* 15, 1867.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 4th instant I have to instruct your Excellency to convey to the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for the kind manner in which he responded to your request to lend his assistance with the view of inducing the King of Abyssinia to set at liberty the British captives detained in that country.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 94.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received March 15.)

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 1, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from Colonel Merewether, dated Aden, 15th February, that has just reached me under flying seal, transmitting a letter from Mr. Rassam to your Lordship, together with copies of the correspondence which has passed between the Emperor Theodorus and that gentleman.

From this communication your Lordship will perceive that Colonel Merewether has arrived at the conclusion that there is now little or no prospect of the release of the captives being effected by conciliatory measures, and that he is of opinion a threatening attitude, to be followed if necessary by military operations, should be assumed by Her Majesty's Government.

The arguments advanced by Colonel Merewether in support of his views deserve serious consideration, though it is impossible to foresee exactly what may be the result, to the captives themselves, of following the course proposed by him.

The actual military operations would not, I apprehend, be attended with any great difficulty, provided care is taken to conciliate the inhabitants of Tigré and the other provinces

in rebellion against the Emperor, but the force proposed by Colonel Merewether does not appear to me sufficient for the purpose. The country, so far as I can ascertain, presents serious natural obstacles to military movements, and it would be absolutely necessary to occupy the passes in the mountain with a sufficient force to ensure the line of communications with the sea as well as other strategic points in the country; and deduction being made for these necessary services, the force remaining for ulterior field operations would, I imagine, be too small for efficient action in the difficult country to which the Emperor would probably retreat.

It also appears to me, my Lord, that the greatest caution would be required in ascertaining the exact feelings of the inhabitants of Abyssinia on the subject of a foreign invasion before attempting to penetrate with a small force into the heart of so difficult a country.

Colonel Merewether's remark as to the inexpediency of an Egyptian force being employed as an auxiliary deserves serious consideration, as such a measure might undoubtedly not only prevent any assistance being rendered by the inhabitants to the British force, but might also rouse the whole country to resist the invasion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 94.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.

My Lord, *Aden, February* 15, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a letter from Mr. Rassam to your Lordship forwarded to me under flying seal, also copies of the whole of the correspondence which has passed between the Emperor Theodorus and Mr. Rassam since the latter has been at the Abyssinian Court.

2. Judging by the contents of Mr. Rassam's letter to your Lordship, by the tone of the Emperor's letters 2 and 3 to that gentleman, and by the intelligence I have been able to gather from the other captives, and from those best informed as to the true state of feeling and the motives by which the Emperor is actuated, I feel it my duty to state my conviction,—and it is with great regret I have to do so,—that the last chance of effecting the object of releasing the captives by conciliatory measures has failed. There was the one chance left, that on the Emperor's learning and being gratified at the gracious and generous manner in which Her Majesty had acted in spite of the questionable acts committed by him, that he would have at once released Mr. Rassam, and, to show his sincere appreciation of the extreme forbearance extended towards him, would have, without delay or hesitation, acceded to the requirement of Her Majesty that Mr. Rassam, with all the British subjects detained in Abyssinia, should be sent in safety to the frontiers of the kingdom.

3. From the latter part of the Emperor's letter to Mr. Rassam, dated the 5th January, where he writes, "I wish you to get them" (the skilful artizans) "viâ Matemma, in order that they may teach me wisdom and show me clever arts; when this is done I shall make you glad and send you away;"—it is clear he has no intention of releasing and despatching Mr. Rassam with the others until the artizans and presents have reached him. To agree to this would be contrary to your Lordship's instructions; even did I consider that discretion in that matter was allowed me, it is a course I most certainly should not follow, for, after the experience gained of the Emperor's want of faith, especially latterly, and the capricious manner in which he acts on imaginary grievances, it may be reckoned a certainty that he would retain the whole with the idea of making use of them as a means of gaining other advantages from Her Majesty's Government.

4. Further concessions can only be productive of dangerous and unadvisable delay. Time being now of every importance I have taken on myself to address His Majesty, pointing out in as plain terms as possible that the conditions in Her Majesty's letter, especially in the latter part, must be strictly adhered to, and that a ready and entire compliance with them was necessary before Her Majesty's orders with regard to the presents could be carried out. Copy of my letter is annexed.

5. In the present position of affairs it appears to me better and more just to Mr. Rassam that this remonstrance should come from me than from him. It will avoid the risk which such a measure originating from him might, perchance, cause, and at the same time will allow of his taking the opportunity, should it offer itself, of strengthening the remonstrance by adding his opinion that it will be strictly adhered to. I shall at the

same time forward a letter to Mr. Rassam, carefully worded, giving the nature of the communication to the Emperor.

6. I am the more convinced that it is necessary now to assume a more decided tone with the Emperor, from the intelligence as to the changes that have taken place in Abyssinia since last summer. An account of those I had the honour of submitting on the 15th ultimo, and everything since tends to confirm fully that account. When it was proposed that the Emperor's requests should be met in a liberal spirit, it was believed that he had the power, and might by such treatment be led to exert the will, to fully reciprocate the friendly policy adopted towards him. He was then at the head of a large army moving about in different parts of his dominions. It was then also reasoned, that having the power he would be able to, and would always for his own sake carefully protect the artizans who were willing to enter his country and service.

7. That, however, has now gone from him. The large army seen by Mr. Rassam last March, which was supposed to be still with him in the summer, has dwindled down to 15,000 men, of whom, I have been recently told by a good authority, not more than one-third are well armed, and his rule is now confined to the one small province of Begameder. Mr. Rassam, in a private letter I have from him, dated the 10th of January, adds in cypher, "Emperor has scarcely any country left, so he is desperate." He is surrounded on every side by strong bodies of rebels, who are waiting till his authority tumbles to pieces of itself, only restrained from advancing against him, partly by a superstitious feeling which the Emperor himself has always sedulously fostered, that he has a particular mission to fulfil, and partly by dread of the prowess of his earlier days. In my last despatch I reported "that unless he can manage to make some brilliant stroke worthy of his earlier career, his rule will come to an end within the next few months." His followers continue to desert him, and directly the resources of the sole district left to him get exhausted, which they must shortly be from the surplusage which the presence of himself and army entails, the main portion of the residue will leave him to his fate.

He has added greatly to the unpopularity which his tyranny had caused, by the destruction of the churches at Gondar at the end of last year; and the expression used to me by the authority quoted above, amply conveys the nature of his present position,—"Abyssinia is wearied of him."

8. Under these circumstances it would be manifestly improper, and contrary to your Lordship's wishes, to attempt to effect the liberation of the captives by means of the artizans, and without the artizans the machinery would be useless. Feeling the desperate state of his affairs, the Emperor, if he ever had any intention of acting faithfully, has quite abandoned it now, and is only desirous to get more Englishmen in his power, in the hopes of their serving his ends in his direst extremity.

9. A reply to my letter to the Emperor cannot be expected to reach Massowah before the end of March or beginning of April. Should it be unfavourable,—and I fear there can be no doubt it will be, from the well-known pride and obstinacy of the Emperor,—I would beg your Lordship's instructions for my further guidance, respectfully suggesting, and earnestly urging, the following as the best course to be pursued under the change in the aspect of affairs which has taken place.

10. A communication to be forwarded to me for transmission to the Emperor, intimating that every possible means having failed to induce him to maintain those friendly relations which he professed himself so anxious should exist between Her Majesty and himself, that he had not only imprisoned Consul Cameron, a servant of Her Majesty, and other British subjects, but had violated the laws common between all nations by disregarding the sacredness of the person of an ambassador, in that he had imprisoned and chained Mr. Rassam, who was the bearer of a letter from Her Majesty. That further allowances could not be made for one who had shown himself so regardless of the observances held necessary to be preserved among civilized nations. He was therefore told that the limits to the patience of a great Government had been reached, and he was now solemnly warned that he would be held as personally responsible for the safety of every British subject, and all persons serving them, who were at the present time in Abyssinia, and that only their immediate unconditional release and safe conduct to the coast, combined with a full apology for the gross insult which had been offered, could open the way to the re-establishment of friendly communication hereafter. At the same time a Proclamation might be forwarded, warning all the Chiefs and people of Abyssinia that certain punishment would reach all persons who were in any way concerned in any injury befalling the said subjects; while on the other hand, those who assisted and protected them would be richly rewarded, and gain the favour of Her Majesty the Queen.

11. From all I have heard, and from my own experience of character such as that of the Emperor Theodorus, I am certain no fears need be entertained of any injury

happening to the captives, were such a course adopted as above proposed. Proud, self-willed, and vindictive, the Emperor undoubtedly is; but at the same time he is well aware that their existence is the fairest chance of safety left to him, and he will cling to that as his last resource. But even if risk did attend, I hold it is far better it should be run than that the unfortunate captives should be left to endure the miserable existence they are now subjected to, and which will become more and more intolerable as means of subsistence in the neighbourhood of Magdala gets scarcer, and starvation threatens. The captives themselves urge some such course should be adopted.

12. My own conviction, and it is backed by others who know the country and people well, is, that directly it is clearly understood in Abyssinia that Her Majesty's Government will no longer bear with King Theodore's unjustifiable conduct, the last blow will be given to his power, and the "weariness" of the country be removed, while the release of the captives could be brought about by means of the successful rebels, with whom, under the altered circumstances, communications could at once be opened.

13. Although at the same time that stringent measures are determined on, I would also respectfully suggest that all necessary preliminary arrangements should be made for the despatch of a force from India next summer, so as to be on the borders of Abyssinia by the commencement of the favourable season for operations, viz., the middle of October, in case it should be required. It is just possible that the desired end may be obtained without force having to be used, but it is as well that everything should be ready, and that it should be seen and known Her Majesty's Government was in earnest.

14. More extended knowledge of the country shows that the idea of there being any very great difficulty in carrying out a campaign is purely imaginary. A friendly narrow seaboard lines the easterly frontier of Abyssinia. The approaches to the high plateaus are numerous, and several of them presenting no greater obstacles than could be easily overcome by ordinary energy and good management. Once on the plateaus,—and they are reached less than sixty miles from the coast at the north-eastern end,—a healthy climate is found, abundance of good water, forage, fuel, and the ordinary supplies of the country, meat and grain ("sowaree," a species of millet, sorghum), obtainable in any quantity. Of course it would be necessary, in the first instance, that full commissariat should accompany the force from Bombay. In the war with Persia in 1856–57 every supply was sent from Bombay to Bushire and the Euphrates, and never was an army so admirably furnished as that. If operations continued much would be procured in the country, especially for an army in which the native element chiefly predominated. The Egyptian market would also be close at hand. Camels in any number can be obtained along the sea-coast, also from Bogos and the Soudan.

15. If I was required to offer an opinion as to the nature and extent of the force to be employed, I should say that, taking into consideration the existing favourable state of affairs, the following would be ample:—One troop of Horse Artillery and two light field batteries, or two troops and one light field battery; a full company of Sappers and Miners, a select body; strong brigade of native Cavalry; with one European and six native regiments of Infantry, formed into two brigades; altogether making about 6,000 men. Such a force could be transported with comparative ease, and with less impedimenta than one having more European element. That such a force, under a good General, would do all that is required I am confident; but to ensure success it will be essential that the command and political powers be entrusted to one person, as was the case in the Persian war. He should be given full powers, authorized to entertain temporarily such Abyssinians as he may find necessary; in fact, left to act in the manner he finds best suited to bring the campaign to a rapid and successful conclusion.

16. On a previous occasion it was suggested that an auxiliary force should be moved from Egypt. This I now find would be a grave mistake. It would at once turn from us the rebels, who would otherwise be our greatest assistance. For however much the Emperor Theodorus is hated, the Moslem is hated ten times worse, and were it known that the Turkish Government (for so Egypt is styled) would be engaged in the operations, the whole of Abyssinia would band against us and join Theodore in resisting the detested enemy; not an Egyptian soldier, therefore, should be used, and, at first, too much care could not be taken to prevent the appearance even of employing them.

17. I am now only waiting the arrival of the Right Honourable S. Fitzgerald, who is expected *en route* to Bombay, to communicate to him personally the state of the [illegible]n question. Immediately after that I shall proceed to Massowah to despatch the [illegible]he Emperor, or to act according to circumstances should any different intelli[illegible]e been received. I do not anticipate the latter will be the case.

Mr. Flad is still at Massowah, and I do not see that any advantage will be gained [illegible]g to Matemma. After the Emperor's recent proceedings at Gondar, the road

through that place from Matemma to Debra Tabor will be more hazardous than ever, and not more practicable than through Tigré, and the road by the south of Lake Tsana is said to be closed. The Emperor's statement that he would send to Matemma for Mr. Rassam's stores was, I am sure, an untruth, and used to put off Mr. Rassam; he would not allow the latter's mules to make the attempt for fear they should fall into the hands of the rebels, and he could not despatch his own without a strong force as guard, which he cannot spare; once away from him, too, the men composing it would probably not return. I would take this opportunity of correcting a mistake with regard to Mr. Flad, for which I am in a manner responsible. It was supposed in England, and I was under the same impression, that he was sent from Abyssinia as a messenger from the King; reference to the correspondence between Mr. Rassam and the King, letter No. 25, of 17th April, will show that Mr. Flad was really despatched by Mr. Rassam to communicate to Her Majesty's Government what had occurred and what was required. I regret exceedingly that any misapprehension of the matter lead to a misunderstanding in Mr. Flad's position.

19. I propose letting the artizans and presents remain for the present at Massowah, until an answer from the Emperor to my letter arrives. I do not see any likelihood of the party being able or required to enter Abyssinia, but it will be as well to show that strict faith was kept even to the last. I regret to say that Mr. Talbot, the Superintendent, was brought down in the "Victoria," suffering greatly from fever. He is, however, better, and I trust care and quiet will soon restore him to complete health.

20. Mr. Rassam writes in a private letter, copy of which I do not trouble your Lordship with, as it contains little beyond what he has given in his despatch, that the Emperor, though he professed personal friendship, latterly showed ill-will only to British subjects. For instance, Bardel and Mackerer were released and taken into his employ, while Mr. Kerans, who also offered his services, was refused, "because he was an Englishman and a connection of Mr. Speedy, formerly Vice-Consul at Massowah." This is another proof of the King's determination to persevere in the outrageous course he has adopted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 94.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Emperor of Abyssinia.

Most Gracious Sovereign, *Massowah,*

I TRUST that this will find your Majesty in perfect health. I have received the good tidings that your Majesty has been made acquainted with the contents of the letter from Her Majesty Queen Victoria, brought by the hand of Mr. Flad, and that they have proved gratifying to your Majesty. In the anticipation that the generous and most friendly feelings under the influence of which Her Majesty met in so liberal and complete a manner the wishes expressed by your Majesty in April last, will have given rise to a reciprocal emotion on your Majesty's part,—I approach with the deepest respect, and with the request that complying with the wish expressed in the latter part of Her Majesty's letter, your Majesty will graciously cause the early despatch of the officers deputed to conduct Mr. Rassam and the other Europeans to the frontier of your dominions, to whom I shall be ready to hand over the presents sent by Her Majesty in token of her friendship, at any spot on the frontier your Majesty may be pleased to appoint. To assist in perpetuating strong and lasting friendship between the two countries is, I would beg to assure your Majesty, my sincere desire, and that I may the more readily do so I would crave from your Majesty the favour of speedy arrangements being entered into whereby I may be enabled to carry out to the letter the instructions of my gracious Sovereign, as I am bound and prepared to do.

With the greatest respect, I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 3 in No. 94.

Mr. Rassam to Lord Stanley.

My Lord, *Magdala, January* 10, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of the correspondence which has taken place between the Emperor and myself regarding the letter of Her Majesty of the 4th October, copy of which Mr. Flad had forwarded to him from Massowah.

2. On the 28th ultimo I received letter No. 1, wherein he inclosed to me the identical copy of the Queen's letter, in reference to which he said that he was coming hither to consult me as to the answer he intended to send.

3. From all I can make out it appears that the copy of the Royal letter reached the Emperor on the 19th ultimo, and on the 22nd he sent it to me for my perusal. It was reported that the Emperor did not seem displeased at the receipt of the communication above alluded to, but on the contrary he tried to show that it was favourable. He had said that he hoped he would still obtain his desired object, and when he was asked by one of his European workmen how, he replied that he would employ "bilhat," which word means either craft, cunning, skill, clever policy, or dodge. Some people thought that he would try to reconcile the British Government by releasing us from our chains, and would act the civil towards me, but others were afraid that he would try to intimidate me into getting me to write in his favour. His last correspondence shows that he has pursued a half and half course.

4. In order that Her Majesty's Government may not be deceived in what I communicate, I shall in future write my letters which I may be compelled to send against my will, with folded margin. It would be useless to refuse, as I know it would be of no avail, and my declining to comply may endanger the safety of so many Europeans for whom I am responsible.

5. From all that has taken place, especially from the attitude His Majesty has assumed since the receipt of the Queen's letter, it is impossible to trust him any longer. Presents and artisans may be sent to him, but what security have we that he would let us leave Abyssinia?

6. He has forgiven Consul Cameron and his party no less than four times, and yet he talks as if he had not been reconciled to them; and although he was the one who gave them permission to depart by a sealed letter, and sent an officer named Lij Abetow to escort them, he accuses me of having sent them away without taking them to him. This is the fourth time that he has brought this unfounded charge against me, and although I proved to him by his own letter and the evidence of Lij Abetow that he was the one who sent them away, yet he still persists in recurring to this accusation whenever he wants to threaten me. He knows very well that I could no more send any of the Europeans out of the country than go out of Magdala myself. The fact is, he considers me a great prize, and believes that as he managed to get a small mission after imprisoning Consul Cameron, he may obtain a greater man than I am by confining me and my companions.

7. The tone of his letters above alluded to shows that he is determined not even to take us out of chains unless he obtain what he wants, and the assurance he gives in the latter part of his third letter has been repeatedly made. The first time it was communicated to me in his letter of the 4th February, 1866, six days after I met him.

8. I have sent copies of all my correspondence with the Emperor to Colonel Merewether, the Resident at Aden, to keep for me until I depart from Abyssinia. The reason that I have not forwarded a copy of them to your Lordship is because they contain a great number of points upon which I cannot safely make any comments while I am in my present position. I have written, however, to ask him to send you extracts of what he thinks necessary for the information of Her Majesty's Government.

9. On the 3rd of July last when he arrested Dr. Blanc and Mr. Rosenthal at Gaffat, and brought them to Debra Tabor, and afterwards confined us in the dark room, he made four charges against me; firstly, that I had read Mr. Stern's book, "Wanderings amongst the Falashas," which was published in England in 1861, wherein he made some comments upon the Emperor's mother; secondly, that I had sent away his enemies (the released European prisoners) without taking them to him; thirdly, that he had given Consul Cameron a letter to my Queen, and that he came back to him without an answer; and fourthly, that the Turks had possession of Jerusalem, and that England and France allowed them to keep it. He demanded his patrimony (the Holy City, formerly the

domains of Kings David and Solomon, his forefathers), and said, "I want Europe to restore to me the Holy Land." To this last I replied that in the present state of civilization Europe had no power to dispossess the Moslems of the birthplace of our Saviour, otherwise they would have done it before now.

10. Also, the day we were imprisoned at Debra Tabor, on the 25th of June, one of the charges which were brought against me was that my Government had laughed at him. The cause of this complaint is as follows: when the missionaries' things were seized after their imprisonment at the end of 1863, a letter was found from Mr. Rosenthal to a friend of his in England, wherein he had mentioned that Mr. Barroni, the late British Consular Agent at Massowah, had written to Her Majesty's Government to say that he had received a letter from the Emperor of Abyssinia, wherein he had invited him to come and "get drunk" with him. This expression, it appears, had given birth to some merriment amongst the clerks in the Foreign Office. Mr. Rosenthal had heard this story from a friend of his, and when the letter was translated the word "clerk" was rendered "government" in Amharic. I tried my best to dispossess him of the idea that my Government were in the habit of reading or laughing at such letters.

11. Having heard from Massowah that stores had been sent for us to Matemma, I was compelled to write to the Emperor for permission to send my mules to bring them hither, as it would have been quite impossible to smuggle them through. He has undertaken their transport hither through his people, as he has done on a former occasion; and sent me back the mules with a message that he would not allow them to be fatigued, when he had it in his power to get the things for me. This act of generosity on his part appears the more surprising when it is well known that he did so two days after he received the copy of Her Majesty's letter.

12. At the end of November he made a descent upon Gondar, the old capital of Abyssinia, to attack a small rebel who had been ruling there for some time under Tisso Gobâzay; but when he arrived there and found the enemy had decamped he revenged himself upon the inhabitants of the place by plundering them, and utterly destroying the town by fire, not even sparing the churches, of which there were no less than forty-four. He pretends that he was provoked to that act on account of the mischief the natives of the place had committed in having betrayed my messenger, Daftara Dasta, to the rebels, in consequence of which he had been seized and plundered by them. This man I had sent to the coast at the end of May last, to bring some things from Aden for the Emperor and ourselves, and it appears that while he was passing through Wagara with the Massowah kafilah, he was betrayed by some merchants within a day's journey of Gondar, and captured. I have heard of his safe arrival at Debra Tabor, but plundered of everything. I am trying to get back the letters, and some of the things lost, if possible, through the influence of the Bishop, who is still a prisoner on this mountain.

13. My Lord, I do not think it is within my province to draw out a line as to the future policy of Her Majesty's Government, because, unhappily, I have no more hope of conciliatory tactics having any beneficial effects in humouring the Sovereign of Abyssinia. Every European in the country can vouch for my guarded conduct and the conciliatory policy which I have ever employed towards the Emperor. I have always been too cautious in my transactions with him, and although he tried very often to find me erring, in order that he might have a cause of complaint, yet I have no little consolation in believing that Her Majesty's Government will never have reason to disapprove of my conduct.

14. Her Majesty's Government may rest assured that I shall continue, though in chains, to pursue that conciliatory policy which I have always considered it my sacred duty to follow ever since I had the honour of entering Her Majesty's service. All my fellow-prisoners and myself will leave the grave settlement of this unhappy Abyssinian difficulty in the hands of Her Majesty's Government, and may Almighty God bless their endeavours to do what is right to obtain our speedy release.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 4 in No. 94.

Translation of Letters received by Mr. Rassam from the Emperor of Abyssinia, after reaching him.

1. *In Amharic and Arabic.*—(*Received January* 28, *on reaching the Royal Camp.*)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God. Amen.

From the King of Kings, Theodorus. By the power of God may this reach our friend, who is wishing for our friendship, Hormuzd Rassam. It would have been better for you to have rested to-night, and to-morrow morning we should have had the meeting; but we have been staying in this country which has been devastated, awaiting your arrival, and the troops are in want of food; consequently we have directed the interview to take place between you and me to-day. To-morrow morning we start on our journey. Now come to us.

(Without date.)

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2. *In Amharic.**—(*Received February* 4, 1866.)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God. Amen.

The servant of God and his created being, the son of David, the King of Kings, Theodorus.

To the servant of her whom God has exalted above all Sovereigns and glorified above all princes and people, and made the Defender of the Christian Faith and the succour of the poor and oppressed, Hormuzd Rassam, who is by the power of God endowed with wisdom and a benevolent heart.

Be it known to you that by your favour (*i.e.*, by the favour of the English) we have abundance of fire-arms. We send you one single-barrelled and four double-barrelled muskets, and five single-barrelled pistols, and if besides these you require more to give to persons who ask you for them, by the power of God we will supply you with them. I am the Sovereign of my country and you are the servant of the Queen, my friend, and I should feel hurt if any one asked you for a thing and you refused it them. I do not do this because you cannot afford to make such presents, but having been sent in haste you have had no time to bring such things. When you arrive at your destination, whatever you require of arms or otherwise, Aito Samuel, the Agent appointed between you and ourselves will supply it. Between this and Korato, Aito Samuel will also provide you with 5,000 dollars to spend in any way you like, except in a manner unpleasing to God.

When the men (prisoners) shall be delivered to you if God permit, we will come and wish you farewell; but if we are not able to come to you in person, we will give orders to have you sent to the frontier in safety and honour.

Dated the 4th February, 1866.

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3. *In Amharic.*—(*Received February* 15, 1866, *after our arrival at Korata.*

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

From the King of Kings, Theodorus. May it reach Aito Hormuzd Rassam. How have you passed the time? I, God be praised, am well. How have your brothers (Dr. Blane and Lieutenant Prideaux) passed the time? Ask them from me. After we parted, by the power of God we found two lion cubs and one young antelope, and we have sent them to you. I have come to Metcha expressly for the purpose of inquiring about your safe arrival at your destination. If God permit I shall see you and will come to you in a boat.

(Without date.)

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* This is a translation of an Amharic letter which was sent by His Majesty, with a request that it should be returned to him after it was translated into English.

4. *In Amharic.*—(*Received February* 18, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

By the power of God, when I heard of your safe arrival at Korata I was extremely rejoiced. Be of good cheer; I have ordered Agafaru Golam to proceed at once to release the prisoners and bring them to you, in order that I might send you to your country.

With respect to the four double-barrelled fowling pieces and eight double-barrelled pistols, with their moulds and appurtenances, which you have brought to me. M. Bourgard has written to me to say that he sent to his brother and obtained them for the purpose of presenting them to me. I have therefore ordered 4,000 dollars to be paid to him by the Ingada Ras of Tigré.

You told me that M. Munzinger entertained a sincere regard for me, and consequently when you go I wish to send him by you a token of my esteem. Let me know what will be acceptable, in order that I may prepare it.

(Without date.)

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5. *In Amharic.*

(After compliments.)

I wish to decorate these servants (messengers) of yours, who are present, with the Royal shirt. Be not angry with the servants who informed you of the release of Captain Cameron (at Massowah). I thought that you (*i. e.*, the English) hated me. Because I delayed in answering your letter, O sons of the English, and in order that you might not fear, but come to me from that great Queen, he tried in this way to bring about the interview between me and you, Aito Hormuzd Rassam, who are a great man and my friend. It is necessary that this man should be brought to the notice of the Queen, and you yourself must leave him for my sake. I, on my part, on hearing of what he had done, by the power of God, entertained great affection for him. If you had not come, who would have been able to release the prisoners? and, if I had not met you, how could I have obtained your (*i. e.*, the English) friendship? May our Creator from above love for our sake him who brought about our interview and made us friends, and those who are his creatures from below will love him also. Please God, I shall reward him. I have sent Lej Abitow to Debra Tabor to bring to you my European friends, in order that they might come and see you.

(Without date.)

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6. *In Amharic.*—(*Received February* 24, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

By the power of God, I have been greatly rejoiced at hearing of your well-being.

Dated Friday, the 16th of Zakatul.

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7. *In Amharic.*—(*Received February* 27, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

I acted formerly erroneously, through the devil, without consideration; and now I have ordered Aito Samuel to see if there is any property (belonging to the prisoners) which he can bring to you; and if anything has been lost or spoilt, I shall make it good, not merely for the sake of my friendship for the great Queen, but for the friendship which I entertain for you there, and which is sufficient for me. If I can make compensation from my property to you at all, by the help of the Lord I will do it; if not, I offer my body. When the people (prisoners) reach you in safety, ask them if what they had done was not true; it will be proved to you from their mouth.

I apprehended that I had lost all hopes of your (the English) friendship; otherwise I would not have acted so badly.

Dated 16th of Zakatul.

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8. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 1, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

Tashallaka Walda Gahir has informed me that you wished me to give permission for you to make the messenger a present. You are the servant of her whom God has exalted and honoured; the Queen of England and you are also, by the power of God, my friend;

consequently you are not unable to give remuneration. Except in a way unpleasing to God, do as you please.

Dated 22nd of Zakatul.

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9. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 4, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

The people (prisoners) whom you want, may the Lord bring to you, and may He cause you to reach your country in safety. May the Lord plant my friendship and good-will in your hearts, and may He cause you to open my blind eyes.

Dated 24th of Zakatul.

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10. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 7, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

When the people (prisoners) reach you, we will consult. I have tried to find some nice silk amongst my property, and also in the market in this country, but did not succeed; but of the silks with which you presented I have sent three pieces, with their lining. If they will suit you, make shirts of them, and wear them for me; but if you think they will bring any obloquy on me—because what hurts my reputation hurts yours—send me an answer.

Dated 28th of Zakatul.

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11. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 11, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

Agafaru Golam has sent to inform me that our people (prisoners) had arrived, by the power of God (at Debra Tabor.) I have greatly rejoiced, and I wish you also to be glad. Walda Gahir informed me that you had wished the doctor to go to him (Consul Cameron). Very well; let Aito Samuel go with him at once. When they reach you safely, let me at once know of their arrival, by the power of God, in order that we may have a chat together.

Dated Friday, the 1st of Magabut.

12.—*In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 15, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

Your servant Dasta, who came from Massowah, has informed me of the re-establishment of order in Tigré, and other matters. By the power of God, I have rejoiced greatly. I am glad to hear of their (the prisoners') safe arrival, and of the good health of you all.

Dated Monday, the 4th of Magabut.

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13. *In Amharic.*

(After compliments.)

By the power of God, and the fortune of Queen Victoria and myself, those people (prisoners) whom my friend (the Queen) asked me to release have reached you safely; and when I heard of it I was glad. What my friend the Queen asked me to do I have, by the power of God, performed. In the letter which my friend the Queen sent it is thus said: "We have sent to you Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, who was Governor of Aden, and whom we esteem and trust; consult with him concerning what you require of us, and he will do it for you."* She says, now I am blind, and what I require is a remedy,† to give light to my eyes. As I have gladdened your heart, I wish you to gladden mine, by sending and obtaining for me (such a remedy). Of the translation of the Queen's communication which you gave me,‡ I send you a copy, in order that you may hear it. I wish you to ask the people (prisoners) whom you have, by the power of God, released more your

* I do not know how this passage has crept into the translation. It was deemed inexpedient to discuss the matter.

† A scientific man.

‡ The translation was made at the request of His Majesty, with the assistance of Mr. Prideaux, the Royal Chief Scribe, Samuel, and one of my Abyssinian interpreters.

brother's and Mr. Waldmeier's party, whether it is true that they had abused him (the King) or not.

Dated A.M. 7358, and A.D. 1858, in the year of St. Mark, on the 6th of Magabut.

Charges against the Prisoners.

(After compliments.)

The charges against Cameron, who calls himself Consul, are these:—This gentleman and his agent Bardel sent to tell me that they had come as messengers from the Queen, and wished me to receive them. By the power of God, I sent an escort to Massowah and brought him up. I was then at Debra Mai, in the district of Metcha. When he arrived, I sent my nobles to meet him, and had a salute fired for him. According to the custom of my country, I decorated my house for his reception, and welcomed him therein, by the power of God. He then gave me a letter, which he said was from the Queen; after I had read the letter, he presented me with a double-barrelled gun and a pair of double-barrelled pistols, which he said were presents from the Queen. I bowed on receiving them, and thanked Her Majesty for them. In the letter the Queen said that she wishes to be my friend and relation, and that she heard that I loved and befriended her on account of what I had done for Plowden and his party against the people of my country; that formerly England and Abyssinia had an interest; and now she wished that her Consul should remain with me, and that sportsmen and merchants should be allowed to follow their avocations. He (the Consul) said to me that a Consul from me should go to England, and my sportsmen and merchants also, and that, by the power of God, we (the English) would protect them. I was glad at hearing this, and said, "Very well."

In accordance with the rules of my country, I treated him and Bardel well.

I told the Consul that the Turks had taken my country, and were my enemies; nor had I a ship to do my work, by the power of God, and I said that I wished that the mission and presents which I intended to send to the Queen should be conveyed safely. I gave him a friendly letter to the Queen, and sent him away. The letter which he brought me (from the Queen), and the consultation which we had together, he abandoned, and went to the Turks, who do not love me, and before whom he insulted and lowered me. He stayed with them some time, and returned to me. I asked him, "Where is the answer to the friendly letter I entrusted you with; what have you come for?" He said to me, "I do not know." So I said to him, "You are not the servant of my friend the Queen, as you had represented yourself to be," and, by the power of my Creator, I imprisoned him. Ask him if he can deny this.

The charge against Bardel is this: that he told me that he wished to make me acquainted with the Emperor of the French. I said to him, "Very well;" and sent him. He came back, and said that the Emperor refused to see him. I answered, "Never mind; I have my God." After keeping silence (for some months), he asked me to release Makerer as a Frenchman. I replied that he had formerly told me that he wished to make me acquainted with the Emperor of the French, and on his return (from France) he had told me that he had been ignored. I said then, "For whose sake shall I release him?" and I refused to do so. He was angry at what I said to him; and in my Court he ungirt himself and covered his head with the cloth.* I was annoyed at this, and, by the power of my Lord, I imprisoned him. Ask him if he can deny this.

Charges against the rest of the Prisoners.

The other prisoners have abused me, I am well aware. I used to love and honour them. A friend ought to be a shield to his friend, and they ought to have shielded me. Why did they not defend me? On this account I disliked them.

Now, by the power of God, for the sake of the Queen, and the British people, and yourselves, I cannot continue my dislike towards them. I wish you to make between us a reconciliation from the heart. If I am in fault, do you tell me, and I will requite them; but if you find that I am wronged, I wish you to get them to requite me.

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* A mark of insult in Abyssinia, especially before a Sovereign.

14. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 19, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

With regard to the affair of Cameron and his party, I used to reckon them as my friends and honoured them, and it has been proved to you that they have wronged me. For the sake of our Lord, and, below him, for the sake of the great Queen, my friend, Victoria, I have forgiven them. The contents of your letter have made me glad, by the power of God; I wish to bow my head and kiss your hand and foot. I want you to come to me, in order that we may consult together.

The relations of Cameron and his imprisoned companions have written to me in sorrow about them. By the power of God, and for the sake of my friend the great Queen Victoria, I have been reconciled to them, and by the power of our Creator we will consult on all matters when we meet.

Dated Sunday, the 10th of Magabut.

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15. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 20, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

Unavoidable business has called me hence, and I wish you to remain where you are until I return, when I will send for you.

Dated the 12th of Magabut.

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16. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 21, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

I have been desirous and anxious to have an interview with you, but now I intend to be absent from this place for a day or two. When I return, by the power of God, I will send for you, as I am longing for your friendship. May our Creator cause us to meet in peace, and may He give you and me health.

Dated Wednesday, the 13th of Magabut.

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17. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 23, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

By the power of God, I have returned in safety to my home. I had gone to escort my horses, which were coming to me, and now may He cause me to meet with you, my friend, in safety.

I used to pray to our Creator that the people (prisoners) whom I disliked and imprisoned might reach you in health and safety. Now, firstly, I pray that God may give peace and prosperity to my friend the Queen; and secondly, that He may give you, who are the flower of my gladness, health and long life. I also crave from our Creator that He will cause you to concede me your love. With regard to myself, whether I dislike you or love you, oh English! you can discover from my conduct in the affair of Plowden and Yahames (Mr. Bell). According to the rules of my country and my ability, I used to love and honour them (the English). My love and honour towards them was for the purpose of obtaining the regard of the Queen and yourselves. That love of yours which I was longing for, I feel convinced I have obtained, and, by the power of God, it has given me joy. I send you, by Alaka Engeda, boats. Come yourself and the party of Kantiba Hailo (the European artizans).

Dated Friday, the 15th of Magabut.

NOTE.—After the receipt of this letter, Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, and myself repaired to Zagay. His Majesty gave us a most magnificent reception. He consulted with all his nobles and his best advisers about our leaving Abyssinia, and it was determined that we should all depart hence.

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18. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 28, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

By the power of God, let me know quickly of your safe arrival (at Korata).

Dated Wednesday, the 20th of Magabut.

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19. *In Amharic.*

(After compliments.)

Before this I sent to inquire after your safe arrival, and afterwards Lij Abitow and his party came and informed me of it. By the power of God, I was greatly delighted. I had ordered the party of Kantiba Hailo (the European artizans) to do certain work (to make saddles, shields, &c.); if it is completed, I wish you to hold yourselves in readiness to start (for Europe), by the power of God.

Dated Friday, the 22nd of Magabut.

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20. *In Amharic.*

(After compliments.)

The shirts which you have sent me by Owna Mahomed have reached me, and I return you my thanks for them. Why do you give yourself such trouble and such thought for me? You are my guest, and it is for me to inconvenience myself for you. If God assist you, I wish you to trouble yourself about what I require, but do not incommode yourself by parting with your property, oh my brother!

At Amba Chara, in the Province of Waggara, my toll-keepers seized some messengers who were coming this way with letters.* They imprisoned them and sent the packet to me. I found it directed in an European language, and as I thought it might be your own, I send it to you unopened. If you should find it to be yours, I have directed that your messengers should be released; if not, return the packet to me, and I shall order the messengers to be brought to me.

I have ordered some cows to be given to you, in order that you may have a merry feast. I did not know that your Easter fell before ours, but thought that they corresponded in date, otherwise I would have sent them before. Why did you not inform me, since my house is yours, and the house of your brothers and friend?

Dated Monday, the 25th of Magabut.

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21. *In Amharic.*—(*Received April 5*, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

I have been long fasting, and have abstained from eating meat, and I am anxious to see the light of Easter. Pray that I may see it in health. By the power of God, I will also offer up to Him the same supplication for you.

Dated Wednesday, the 27th of Magabut.

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22. *In Amharic.*—(*Received April* 8, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

May God grant me a meeting with you, my friends, after the light of Easter. The token of friendship, namely, the tin box, which you sent to me I have received with much pleasure, and I return you my best thanks for it.

I have ordered Lij Abitow to take your mules through Dambea, and Kantiba Hailo and Aito Samuel to bring you to me.

Dated 30th of Magabut.

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23. *In Amharic.*—(*Received April* 9, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

I send you good tidings of my having passed Easter. How have, my friends, passed it? Let me know if you have spent it happily and prosperously, by the power of God.

Dated Monday, the 2nd of Miazia.

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24. *In Amharic.*—(*Received April* 10, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

When I heard of your good health and prosperity, by the power of God, I was greatly delighted. Very well, as you say, Lij Abitow shall take them by the lower road, and

* These letters were those I have sent down to the coast, containing communications from all my party. They were sent down again in the beginning of April.

your baggage will cross to any spot which you may choose. I have directed Agafaru Goolam and the party of Aito Kasa to convey it for you.

Dated the 3rd of Miazia.

Note.—After the receipt of this letter, Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, and myself repaired to Zagay, according to appointment, on the 13th April, when we were all arrested on the pretence that we did not take the released prisoners with us.

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25. *In Amharic.*—(*Received April* 17, 1866.)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

From God's slave and his created being, the son of David, the son of Solomon, the King of Kings, Theodorus. To my friend and counsellor, the servant of the Queen of England, Hormuzd Rassam, Esquire.

My desire is that you should send to Her Majesty the Queen and obtain for me a man who can make cannons and muskets, and one who can smelt iron, and an instructor of artillery. I want these people to come here with their instruments and everything necessary for their work, and then they shall teach us and return. By the power of God, forward this our request to England.

(Without date.)

Note.—This letter was received on the 17th April, when His Majesty wished to send Mr. Flad to England to bring him artisans.

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26. *In Amharic.*

(Only contains compliments, without date.)

Note.—This letter was received on the 9th August, after our imprisonment in chains at Magdala.

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27. *In Amharic.*—(*Received September* 15, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

Leh's party left in a hurry, and I could not answer you by them. How have you and your brothers (Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux) spent the rainy season? By the power God be of good cheer, I am coming to you shortly, and we will meet.

Since we separated, a large gun has been cast for me; when it is finished I shall let you know.

By the power of God, I shall not forsake you, so be of good cheer. Ask Consul Cameron, Mr. Stern, and their party, how they have passed the rainy season.

(Without date.)

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28. *In Amharic.*—(*Received October* 3, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

I send you your things by your messenger, who came from Matemma.

(Without date.)

Note.—On hearing that I was sending to Matemma for stores, His Majesty undertook the transportation of them thence to Magdala.

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29. *In Amharic.*—(*Received October* 19, 1866.)

(Only compliments. Without date.)

Copy of Correspondence between Mr. Rassam and the Emperor Theodorus.

(1.)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God!

FROM the King of Kings, Theodorus. May this reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam. How have you passed the time? I, by the power of God, am well. Ask Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, Mr. Cameron, and his party, and Mr. Stern and his party, from me, how they have passed their time.

Your servant, whom you wished me to send to Matemma, I have sent for you. I have ordered your things to be brought to Walmee by camels, and thence I have ordered my people to bring them hither by the power of God.

Mr. Flad has returned to Massowah, and sent me the inclosed letter.* Peruse it, and wait till I arrive, as I am coming to you by the power of God. I will consult with you as to the answer I shall send.

(Without date.)—Received December 28, 1866.

(2.)

(After compliments.)

Mr. Flad has sent (written) to me as follows:—

"I had formerly sent to you Mr. Rassam in the affairs of Cameron and his party, and we heard that you had received him with favour and with friendship. We had also consented to all the things you required, and had given them over to Mr. Flad, but after that we heard that your friendship towards him had changed, but we hope that the friendship existing between us and yourself will not be changed."

This is was what was sent to me, and I am going to reply as follows:—

"Formerly England and Ethiopia were on terms of friendship, and I also, having knowledge of this, used to love you exceedingly. But (since then) having heard that they (the English) have calumniated† and hated me with the Turks, I said to myself, Can this be true? and I felt some misgiving in my heart. However, I trust there is no enmity between Ethiopia and the English, but that there is friendship. We do not esteem those who calumniate and hate the English, and so should you, for our sake, not esteem those who calumniate and hate the people of Ethiopia. Mr. Rassam and his party, whom you sent to me, I have placed in my house, in my capital at Magdala, and I will treat them well, until I obtain a token of your friendship."

I shall write the above to Mr. Flad, and I wish you also, for the sake of obtaining for me their (the Queen's) friendship and love, to write at the same time to the proper authorities, and send the letter to me, by the power of God. It is necessary that you should send a man immediately to us, in order that he may bring us Mr. Flad quickly.

(Without date.)—Received January 7, 1867.

(3.)

(After compliments.)

Mr. Flad has written to me again, and the letter which he has inclosed‡ I send to you herewith.

Now in order to prove the good relationship between me and yourself, let it be shown by your writing and getting the skilful artisans, and Mr. Flad to come viâ Matemma. This will be the sign of our friendship. When you hate my enemies and love my friends, and I shall prove wanting in my friendship towards you, leave me to God (as my Judge). Even Solomon, the son of David, the great King, God's created being and slave, when he wished to build the Temple in Jerusalem, was perplexed (about finding skilful artisans). Falling at the feet of King Hiram of Tyre, he begged him for carpenters and skilful artisans, who assisted in building the Temple. And now, when I used to fall girded at the feet of the great Queen, her nobles, peoples, and hosts, I found Mr. Stern and his party abused me and lowered me. Also when I sent a friendly letter to the great Queen of the English, the Defender of the Faith, the succour of the needy, the friend of God,

* Copy of Her Majesty's letter of October 4, 1866.

† This may have a refereuce to his grievance against Captain Cameron for going to Kassala, when he went down to the coast with the letter to the Queen.—*Vide* His Majesty's letter of 6th Majabut (14th March, 1866), and charges attached thereto.

‡ From Colonel Merewether.

the favourite of God, Victoria, Mr. Cameron refused me an answer. Also you, Mr. Rassam, said that you were coming from the Queen, and came to me. Consenting to this, I received you in a friendly manner, and treated you to the best of my ability. When I read the letter* which you brought me, which asked me to release and pardon† all the Europeans, whom I had hated and imprisoned, I consented, and sent and had them released at once, by the power of our Creator, before I passed the night. Before they came to me I gave them over to you, in order that the Queen and her Government might be pleased. But you, before you asked them as to the crime which they had committed, and which caused their imprisonment,‡ and without finding whether I was wrong, in order that I might compensate them, or if they were guilty, in order that I might obtain a favour§ from the Queen before you brought them to me, you sent them away.‖

I had also heard that the English and the Turks had entered into an alliance. I kept my vexation to myself, and said nothing.¶

Now Mr. Flad has sent me a most friendly and pleasing letter.** As Solomon fell at the feet of Hiram, so I, beneath God, fall at the feet of the Queen and her Government and her friends. I wish you to get them (the skilful artisans) viâ Matemma, in order that they may teach me wisdom, and show me clever arts. When this is done I shall make you glad, and send you away by the power of God.

Written in the year of St. Luke, on Saturday the 28th day of the month Tahsas (answering to January 5, 1867).

Received January 8, 1867.

Copies of Letters from Mr. Rassam to the Emperor of Abyssinia.

(1.)

To His Most Excellent Majesty Theodorus, Emperor of Ethiopia.

Most Gracious Sovereign, *Magdala, November* 29, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Majesty that I am necessitated to write to Matemma for stores, as those provisions you kindly sent me some time ago are nearly finished.

I am sending for this purpose Sarankail, with a few mules, and I beg that your Majesty will give him permission to go, and will extend to him your protection thither and back.

I have heard with regret that Daftara Dasta, whom I had sent to Massowah a few months back, for the purpose of bringing for your Majesty some books for showing the mode of casting guns and shot, and for teaching artillery practice, and other things, has been seized and imprisoned by the rebels while passing through Wajara.

As I am anxious to know the facts of the case, I am sending one of my servants to the house of Dasta at Gondar, to inquire about him, and the things he brought with him; and I trust that your Majesty will grant him leave to proceed on his duty.

I hope your Majesty will pardon me for the liberty I am taking in sending Hailo to convey to you this letter, and in troubling you with the above matters, as I have no one in this country except your Majesty on whom I can rely for assistance.

My companions, Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, Captain Cameron and his party, and Mr. Stern and his party, beg to send their respectful compliments to your Majesty.

Hoping that this letter will find you in perfect health and prosperity, I remain, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

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* Her Majesty's letter.

† This is another interpolation.

‡ These questions were asked, as will be seen from my correspondence with His Majesty, dated 16th March 1866.

§ The favours which he is now asking from Government.

‖ The King gave them permission to go away, as will be seen from His Majesty's letter dated 3rd Mazia; and moreover he appointed an officer to escort them named Lij Abitow. I never did anything without consulting his Baldaraba (Agent), whom His Majesty told me "he esteemed and trusted." The prisoners were forgiven on the 29th January, and again on the 10th Majabut (17th March, 1866), and for the third time, in presence of all, on the 17th April, 1866, when he said, "For Christ's sake let us forgive each other;" and asked all the prisoners to be grateful to Mr. Rassam for their release.

¶ This has reference to the charges which he trumped up on the 25th June, as mentioned in my note of that date.

** Copy of Her Majesty's letter of October 4, 1866.

(2.)

Most Gracious Sovereign, *Magdala, January* 7, 1867.

I have had the honour of receiving your Majesty's two letters; the first by my servant Hailo, and the second by Ras Ingada, together with a copy of my Queen's letter to you, which was forwarded to your Majesty from Massowah, by Mr. Flad.

Agreeably to your Majesty's desire, I have written to my Government about what you have communicated, and I hope that your request will be complied with. I send Mahomed Saeed, one of my servants, with the letter, which I have given to him open in order that your Majesty might have it read if you desire it. Allow me to return you my best thanks for your Majesty's kindness, for having sent to Matemma for the stores I required, and I trust that our Heavenly Father will reward you for your acts of friendship. Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, Captain Cameron, and his party, Mr. Stern and his party, desire to present your Majesty with their respectful compliments.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

(3.)

Most Gracious Sovereign, *Magdala, January* 8, 1867.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Majesty's letter of the 28th Tahsas, which reached me this morning.

I return you my best thanks for the letter you have kindly inclosed me from Massowah. It is from Colonel Merewether, the Resident at Aden, who it appears has been entrusted with the management of what my Queen wrote to you about.

He writes to say that he is anxiously awaiting your Majesty's reply to Mr. Flad's communication.

I have already written regarding Mr. Flad and the articles which my Queen had ordered for your Majesty as a token of her friendship, and that they are to be sent at once to Matemma.

I must take this opportunity of reiterating to your Majesty my assurances that up to this time I have always deemed it my sacred duty, though in chains, to do everything towards cementing the friendship between Ethiopia and England.

It is no little consolation to me to find, from my Queen's letter to your Majesty, how anxious she is to continue her friendship with you.

I pray our Heavenly Father to grant that the friendship which I have been anxious to cultivate between my Queen and your Majesty will be completed to the satisfaction of all.

Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, Captain Cameron, and his party, Mr. Stern and his party, beg to send their respectful compliments to your Majesty.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 95.

Major-General Coghlan to Lord Stanley.

My Lord, *United Service Club, March* 20, 1867.

HAVING acquired considerable knowledge of Abyssinian affairs during my long tenure of office as Political Resident and Commandant at Aden, and having had the honour of being repeatedly consulted by Her Majesty's Government respecting our unfortunate captives in that country, whose release seems as far off as ever, I judged that I might, without presumption, suggest a plan of proceedings which may prove of some service should the persistent obstinacy of King Theodorus eventually lead to hostilities against him.

Encouraged by your Lordship to submit the said draft to your consideration, I left it in the hands of Mr. Murray yesterday.

At the same time, I feel bound to state that in the preparation of this scheme of operations I have availed myself largely of the assistance of the Rev. Mr. Badger. The valuable services rendered by that gentleman in connection with the Persian expeditionary force, the frequent mention made of those services in the official despatches of the late Sir James Outram, and their recognition by the Governments of India and Bombay, as also by Sir Edward Lugard, G.C.B., the present Under-Secretary at War, would be a

sufficient warrant for my recurring to his aid on a question of this nature; but in addition to such recommendations I beg to mention that on several occasions of political importance I have personally learned to set a high value on his abilities in all matters relating to the East.

I am unable to form even an approximate estimate of the probable expense of the suggested expedition, but am of opinion that it would fall considerably short of that entailed by the last Persian campaign, the cost of which must be known at the India Office.

I am not without some hope, however, as already stated in the draft submitted, that such a demonstration as would be made by the preliminary arrangements proposed, if diplomatically conducted with a view to that result, might induce King Theodorus to come to terms, and thereby render actual hostilities unnecessary.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. M. COGHLAN.

Inclosure in No. 95.

Scheme for an Abyssinian Expeditionary Force, by Major-General Coghlan.

IN the event of hostilities against Theodorus, King of Abyssinia, in order to avenge his gross outrages upon British subjects, and his repeated insults to the Government in the persons of Her Majesty's Representatives in that country, it is of the first importance to estimate beforehand the gravity of the enterprise, and to consider the measures best adapted to secure prompt and complete success.

When once such a coercive policy has been decided upon, Her Majesty's Government must be prepared for one of the following contingencies. On hearing of the projected expedition, King Theodorus may—as he is known to have declared—sacrifice every British subject within his grasp; or, on the other hand, he may liberate the captives, offer every satisfaction in his power, and sue for pardon.

A year ago the royal army was estimated at 50,000 fighting men. It is now conjectured not to amount to a fourth of that number, said to be restricted to the Province of Begamider, while several of the other provinces, notably those of Woggera, Wolkait, and Tigré on the north and north-east, Gojam and Shoa on the south, and Lasta on the east, are in open rebellion against him. Further, it is imagined that some of the insurgent Chiefs are capable of coping with Theodorus single-handed, but that one and all shrink from the attempt owing to a superstitious belief in his invulnerability.

Whether such hesitation is to be attributed to that motive or not, it is clear that no great reliance can be placed on those statements which represent the power of Theodorus as tottering to its fall. Similar prognostications have been made for years past, and, thus far, have not been verified by the result.

In order, therefore, not to run the risk of under-estimating the possible resistance of Theodorus, the more prudent course would be to organize a force capable of meeting any army which he may be able to bring into the field.

Consul Plowden, who may be regarded as the best authority on all matters connected with the military resources of the different chieftains, was of opinion that 5,000 disciplined troops would beat their combined forces, and that 10,000 would suffice for a permanent occupation of the country.

But that statement was made in 1854, one year prior to a later despatch which reported the brilliant achievements of Kasai, the future Theodorus, who had already "united the whole of Northern Abyssinia under his sway," and inaugurated a variety of measures calculated to consolidate his authority, and greatly to increase his military power.

It would be well-advised, therefore, to assume, in estimating the probable means of resistance on the part of Theodorus to a foreign invasion, that the defection of some of the prominent feudal Chiefs has been counterbalanced by the strenuous efforts which he has made for years past to equip his soldiers with superior weapons, to have them better drilled and disciplined, and to add to the number and efficiency of his artillery.

Taking this view of the case, the British expedition should not consist of less than 10,000 men of all arms.

A smaller force would probably suffice if full advantage were taken of the actual unsettled state of parties in the country, to enlist one or more of the insurgent Chiefs on our side; but whatever use may be made of native co-operation, it would be highly undesirable that the commander of the British army should not be in a position to dispense

with it, or to avail himself thereof on his own terms, or, in case of need, to punish any treachery on the part of such auxiliaries.

Besides, it would seriously detract from the moral effect which may be assumed to form one of the primary objects of the expedition, to afford the Abyssinians any ground for believing that Great Britain could not obtain the desired satisfaction without their concurrence.

Another consideration which should not be overlooked is that most of these insurgent Chiefs have separate interests, and the greatest discretion will be required to avoid exciting a jealousy between them which might induce the discontented to side with Theodorus rather than with rivals whose co-operation had been preferred to theirs by the invaders.

The same reflection should be borne in mind under another aspect. It can scarcely be doubted that the gloomy anticipations of Consul Plowden twelve years ago would be intensified in their fulfilment at the present time in the event of the overthrow of Theodorus by the British arms. Writing of the King at that period, he remarks: "Should he now or at any time fail in his designs, or fall in battle, the misrule and anarchy that must ensue will baffle all human calculation, and render peaceful interference impossible. Abyssinia must then be left to her destinies, until some European Power shall think it worth while to conquer and instruct the most fertile of the African provinces."

Taking for granted that the Government entertains no such designs as those indicated in the latter clause of the above quotation, and that we should retire from Abyssinia as soon as our legitimate objects were secured, it would be most undesirable in every way to aggravate the intestine strife which would be certain to follow upon the departure of the British force, by fomenting fresh rivalries, or by specially favouring one or more Chiefs who might, owing to their temporary alliance with us, secure a predominance in the country to the prejudice of more rightful competitors. Of course, this subject would assume a different phase should it be intended to establish order prior to our departure. But that supposition gives rise to a variety of considerations which need not be discussed here. One precautionary remark, however, seems called for, namely, that the abandonment of Abyssinia to anarchy will, in all probability, precipitate an attack by the Egyptians from the north, and from Massowah, at which latter place there is a much larger garrison than there has been for many years past.

It is by no means intended by the foregoing remarks that native co-operation is to be dispensed with altogether. It will be advisable, on the contrary, to take every advantage of the friendly overtures of the principal Chiefs occupying the line of march, and, if need be, to secure the neutrality of others during the operations of the British army, whenever those objects can be secured without compromise. They may be made useful as convoys in collecting supplies, keeping the roads open, obtaining intelligence, and in many other subordinate ways most serviceable to an invading army in a foreign country. The selection of such auxiliaries, and their employment, must be left to the discretion of the officer in command of the expedition.

The next subject of importance is the route to be adopted, in order to reach the high table land of Abyssinia. Of these there are several:—

First, that by Tajoarra (opposite to Aden) to Shoa, which has been recommended by Dr. Krapf. But the road is rough, desolate, and barren, and in several parts almost destitute of water. The French traveller, M. Rochet, who traversed it four times, describes it thus:—"Je crois pouvoir dire . . . . . il y a peu de voyages plus fatigants pour l'esprit et pour le corps, plus périlleux à la fois et plus monotone que de parcourir les deserts des Adels." Moreover, it is by no means the nearest route to Begamider, the head-quarters of Theodorus, and although the Shoa people would undoubtedly be ready to co-operate with the British, and might furnish a respectable contingent, nevertheless, as a wide extent of country interposes betwixt them and Begamider, inhabited by warlike Gallas, who would be as jealous of Shoa ascendancy as they may be disaffected towards Theodorus, by contracting any alliance with the Shoans we may run the risk of evoking the antagonism of their Galla rivals, and thereby dispose the latter to gravitate towards the Royal party.

The nearest route is unquestionably by Amphila (Hanfila), situated on the western shore of the Red Sea, opposite to Hodeida; but Moresby describes it as "one of the most wretched places on the coast. The village, which hardly deserves the name, consists of six miserable huts close to the sea, on the verge of a sandy plain, and does not appear capable of furnishing any supplies." Consul Plowden calls it "a bad roadstead and a worse landscape; very unfavourable to the shipment of goods, with little water, and that of a bad quality." Another drawback, which he mentions, is the fierce tribe of the Taltals, who occupy the intermediate region between the coast and the highlands in the interior, and of whom we know scarcely anything beyond their treachery and barbarity. The sole

advantage of vicinity, therefore, is quite neutralized by the difficulties attending that route.

Of the remaining two only called for notice, as any others that might be suggested are comparatively unknown, and therefore inexpedient on an occasion like that under consideration, when our object should be less to explore new lines of access, than to take advantage of those which long experience has proved to be the most eligible.

The two routes above referred to are: that by Zulla, in Annesley Bay, to Halai, and that towards the same point from Massowah. The former is undoubtedly the nearer road, and was in ancient times the principal approach to Tigré, the first Abyssinian province on the high table-land. It is but very little frequented at present; hence it is not likely to furnish supplies in any considerable quantity. Another drawback is the scarcity of water in the level country around Zulla. Still, the route is so much nearer to Tigré that it would be desirable to obtain, if possible, more detailed and reliable information respecting its eligibility for an invading army.

Unless that route, however, is found to possess some peculiar advantages, the other viâ Massowah will probably be found the most eligible. It is the ordinary cafilah road to and from the interior, and Consul Plowden calls it "the most practicable" and "the only one desirable." The country for fifty or sixty miles inland is inhabited by the Shihos, who are accustomed to furnish guides to all travellers, and are nominally under the jurisdiction of the Governor of Massowah. The lofty mountains and narrow defiles within the above-named district are in their undisputed possession, and as the passage is regularly traversed by heavily laden mules, it cannot present any serious obstacles to the impedimenta of an army. The Shihos, though a powerful tribe, have no fire-arms; but instead of opposing, there is every reason to believe that, for adequate remuneration, they would be most ready to facilitate the march of our troops through their territory.

Massowah has a good harbour, and being the principal emporium of trade in that quarter offers facilities for obtaining supplies which would be looked for in vain at any other point on the coast. The existence, moreover, of a regular government on the island and adjoining mainland is another important consideration, presenting as it does perfect security for disembarcation, for the establishment of a depôt, and for co-operating with the movements of the expedition generally.

As Massowah and the neighbourhood form a part of the Turkish dominions, subject to the immediate jurisdiction of the Viceroy of Egypt, it would be requisite to procure the Imperial sanction for the passage of our army through the neutral territory, and for the use proposed to be made of the aforesaid district. It would be politically unadvisable either to ask for or to accept any further concession beyond a general order to the local authorities to afford such succour as may be consistent with the Sovereign's rights and the maintenance of Ottoman neutrality.

The suggested Abyssinian expeditionary force of 10,000 men should be composed as follows:—

Two regiments of Irregular Cavalry, Scind or Sikh.

Three batteries of Light Field Artillery, Armstrong's, all of one calibre for convenience in respect of ammunition; and, if the roads are found practicable, add four eight-inch mortars in park, and a supply of rockets.

Two companies of Sappers.

Three regiments of European Infantry.

Four regiments of Native Infantry, one or two of which to be Sikh.

The constitution of the Staff, and the brigading of the force, are matters of detail which need not be discussed here.

Of Departmental Stores there would be the following:—

Ordnance Park.

Engineer Stores.

Commissariat Stores.

Medical Stores.

Quartermaster-General's Stores.

As an unusually large number of baggage animals will be required, owing to the comparatively small size of the Abyssinian mules, and the difficulty of some of the passes, it would be desirable that a Land Transport Corps should be organized for that special service.

A competent officer on the Head Quarter Staff might be placed in charge of an Intelligence Department, to include a line of electric telegraph to be erected as the force advances into the interior in order to keep up rapid communication with the coast.

The officer in charge of the Commissariat will make arrangements for provisioning the

troops on the estimates prepared by the several departments. He will decide, in concert with the Political Officer, what supplies may be procurable on the spot and in the enemy's territory.

A good supply of rice from India and compressed vegetables from France should be provided. Bags and packages generally should not exceed fifty pounds in weight; two of which to be carried by a mule. In the event of camels being available, double that quantity would form a load. The same department should be provided with a liberal supply of "mussacks" of various sizes.

The officer in charge of the Land Transport Corps would make similar arrangements with the different departments for the number of animals severally required by them. It would further be his duty to provide muleteers and forage, pack-saddles, and other harness for the baggage mules and camels, as well as suitable equipage for sick carriage. It is conceived that the roads are impracticable for ambulances, and dooly-bearers from India would scarcely be available in sufficient numbers. Our chief reliance in this respect must be on the camels and mules of the country. A "kachava," similar to that used in Affghanistan, but much lighter, would be the equipage best adapted to the purpose, if camels are procurable, and a pad with stirrups for mules. This subject should receive early consideration by the Medical Superintendent in communication with the Quarter-master-General's department.

Austrian-Maria Teresa dollars of A.D. 1708 are at present the only coin current in Abyssinia, and bricks of salt brought from the district of Taltals the only small change. Rupees, though refused at first, were eventually received both in Affghanistan and Persia; but those countries already possessed a silver currency of their own, and were therefore better acquainted with the value of our coin. As a similar result may not follow in Abyssinia, the attention of the Paymaster, in conjunction with the Political Officer, should be specially directed to this important subject.

Commanding officers, both of cavalry and infantry, should take care to provide a good supply of boots for their men, and shoes for the horses, and should be reminded that the climate of the highlands, though temperate, is cold enough to necessitate woollen clothing.

The most rigid economy will be requisite in respect of camp equipage, owing to the inferiority of the mules and camels of the country and the ruggedness of the mountain passes. With the exception of a few tents for durbar and other public purposes, none should exceed the Indian-pattern soldier's tent. Officers' must double up.

As the roads into the interior are generally difficult, and would occasionally require to be made for the passage of light artillery and heavy baggage, an ample supply of the requisite tools should accompany the expedition.

As the place of debarcation is presumed to be on friendly territory, the camp equipage and much of the heavy stores might be sent on in advance, and located at an eligible point for a camp, at some distance from the coast, where water is abundant. On the arrival of the troops, they could be marched thither at once, and there prepared to advance into the interior.

It is also supposed that prior to such advance the Political Officer will have entered into amicable relations with some of the insurgent chiefs on the line of march, to secure their neutrality or co-operation. A judicious proclamation might also be issued, setting forth the cause and object of the expedition; that we should discriminate between friends and foes; that all supplies of provisions, labour, and carriage would be liberally paid for; and that no interference with the different religions of the people was intended.

As regards the quarter from which the European troops should be drawn, it might be urged that as Malta is at about the same distance from Massowah as Bombay, it would be preferable to send them from the former garrison; but there are solid reasons for preferring the dispatch of an expedition of this sort from India. In the latter case, the Artillery would have to embark and disembark once only—a matter of great importance with respect to that arm of the service. It is true that European Infantry might be moved without much difficulty through Egypt, and re-embarked at Suez; still regiments from India are to be preferred, because they would carry with them a portion of their native followers—a class on whom the efficiency of a force on an Eastern campaign very materially depends. Moreover, troops with officers and staff of Indian experience would be more at home in Abyssinia than any that could be dispatched from Europe; they would have less to learn.

The foregoing remark regarding followers applies particularly to hospital establishments, which, it is believed, would in that respect be started more complete from India than from the European side, and the probable course of operations renders it important that the medical arrangements should be so efficient as to provide separate establishments for such depôts

as may be expected to be left by the force as it moves into the interior, say, in the neighbourhood of Massowah, at Halai, Adowah, or other places of communication between the coast and the head-quarters of the advanced army.

Finally, for the avoidance of those differences and complications which a divided authority is calculated to engender, it is desirable that the military command and the diplomatic functions should be united in one person.

Preliminary Arrangements.

It will be seen that several important preliminary inquiries are imperatively called for in order to the efficient execution of the foregoing scheme of operations. To institute those inquiries, and to carry out the precursory arrangements, it is suggested that an experienced Political Officer, with an Assistant, should proceed to Massowah, accompanied by the following staff:—

1. An officer of the Quartermaster-General's Department.
2. An officer of Engineers.
3. An officer of Artillery.
4. An officer of the Paymaster's Department.
5. An officer of the Commissariat Department, with his gomastas.
6. An officer of Land Transport.
7. A Medical Officer.

The duties of the Political Agent would be to enter into communication with the Egyptian authorities at Massowah; to sound the temper of the insurgent Chiefs of Tigré; to acquire all possible information respecting the interior; the state of parties, the position and strength of the enemy; to secure, if practicable, a body of native interpreters, and generally to act in concert with the subordinate staff in their respeetive investigations.

The officer of the Quartermaster-General's Department would be charged with selecting the best points for disembarkation, acquiring all available information of the different routes into the interior, the most eligible spots for halts on the line of march, and, in conjunction with the Medical Officer, with choosing the site for the first camp in the vicinity of Massowah.

It would be the duty of the two officers representing the Engineers and Artillery to inspect the roads and passes within the limits of the neutral and friendly territory, in order to suggest what measures would be requisite to ensure their perfect practicability.

The officer of the Paymaster's Department would be directed to confer with the merchants and other traders at Massowah regarding the money current in the interior, the best means of obtaining supplies of the requisite kind or kinds, and how far local resources will be available for the sundry requirements of the expedition.

The Commissariat officer will be called upon to institute inquiries into the different provisions procurable in the country, to what extent they are likely to be forthcoming, and what supplies it would be necessary to take from India. In concert with the officer of the Quartermaster-General's Department, he would also select appropriate depôts for stores in the vicinity of the camp near Massowah.

To the officer of the Land Transport Corps would be confided the task of inquiring what baggage animals are available in and about Massowah; from what adjoining districts others may be procured, and to what extent; what trappings would be required to equip them for the service of the expedition; how forage would have to be provided; and how far local resources could be relied on for an adequate supply of native muleteers and cameleers.

The foregoing officers severally to draw up a full report for the Political Officer in charge, who will submit the same, together with the result of his own inquiries and proceedings, for the consideration of Government.

In order to take advantage of the most favourable season for operations in Abyssinia, the force should advance inland from Massowah about the beginning of October. Between this and then there would not be more than adequate time to institute the foregoing preliminary investigations, and to thoroughly equip the expedition prior to its departure from Bombay.

As the arrangements thus indicated could not be satisfactorily carried out without the cognizance and concurrence of the local authorities, it would be necessary to obtain the prior sanction of the Viceroy or of the Porte, together with instructions to the Governor of Massowah to render to the officer charged with superintending them every proper support and assistance.

In addition to materially promoting the efficiency and success of the expedition, it

is just possible, as was remarked at the outset, that these preliminary arrangements, on coming to the knowledge of King Theodorus, might induce him, through fear of the impending consequences, to liberate the captives unconditionally, and to sue for an amnesty. In such a case, it would be for Her Majesty's Government to decide whether the further progress of the expedition might not be countermanded.

(Signed) W. M. COGHLAN, *Major-General.*

United Service Club, March 19, 1867.

No. 96.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received March 27.)

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 15, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from Colonel Merewether dated Massowah, 28th of February, which has just reached me under flying seal, and which contains intelligence from Mr. Rassam, dated the 29th of January.

At that date the prisoners were all in good health, but with apparently little prospect of being sent out of the country.

The Emperor had desired Mr. Flad to come to him viâ Matemma, and Colonel Merewether was making all the necessary arrangements for his joining without further delay.

Mr. Flad takes with him Colonel Merewether's letter to the Emperor, a copy of which which was lately forwarded to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 96.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.

My Lord, *Massowah, February* 28, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I left Aden on the 23rd instant, and arrived here on the 26th.

2. I found Mr. Flad had received letters from his wife and from Mr. Staiger, one of the German missionaries at Gaffat, despatched on the 15th of February. The former writes as follows, commencing on the 8th :—

"You can't imagine in what great anxiety I am, that there is such a long delay till I can send you a messenger. I should have sent to you long ago, but I am not allowed so to do, until the King has made up his mind to send you an answer. How must you feel all this time to be without any news from us, and how I feel being day and night in suspense about the result of the King's negotiations with Mr. Rassam, and about our future, which will be according to the results, perhaps very bad. I am unable to describe to you. Literally, I can say that tears are my food day and night. You will receive letters from Captain Cameron and Mr. Stern. Both fear that Mr. Rassam will admit the King again to humbug him. Mr. Rassam sends you his compliments, and says that he is very sorry that he did not receive a letter from you; he fears to write to you by the King's messengers, but he will send you a letter by another road. If it would not be too great a risk, I should try to run away, but with three little children this is quite impossible. All your messengers arrived safe. The first two reached Gaffat in six weeks (13th December), the second two in eight weeks (25th December), and the third two, who left Massowah on the 11th December, and by whom you informed the King of the arrival of the machinery, reached us on the 5th January. These latter two had been for five days imprisoned on their road by rebels; fortunately they could save the letters.

"On the 3rd instant, the King sent a second time his Ras Gabie with new and many questions to Mr. Rassam. From this I see that his sending to you will be postponed for another week. The Europeans at Gaffat assured me yesterday that the King is very sorry

for keeping you waiting so long without an answer. I told them that I won't believe them, much less the King, as I fear that the very thoughts of his heart are false. The last rainy season the King made me sew shirts for him, for which he gave me 50 dollars. After he had plundered Gondar he gave me another 50. I would not have accepted these latter, which literally is unjust mammon, if I could not daily have many opportunities of giving it away amongst the poor Gondar people, who wander about here without a home or food, or even clothing—nothing but misery. Mr. Rassam gave me an order for 160 dollars, money taken from us by the King last year at Korata. I have to buy nearly everything, and as provisions and clothing are very dear, it cost me a great deal of money. I have left only a few dollars, but I can get money at Gaffat.

"The 14th. At last the moment has come that I can send you a private messenger. I trust this man will reach you before the King's messengers. One of the King's messengers is Mahomed Sayed, a servant of Mr. Rassam's and a confidant of Samuel's. Yesterday the King said he was going to send, that in case the English Government did not pay your expenses to Matemma, you are to sell the articles you brought for him with his 2,000 dollars and pay your expenses." [A report had got about at Gaffat that Mr. Flad was remaining here because he had no money to pay his expenses up-country. This was untrue; he remained here by my orders.] "But it will be better if you do without his money, else he will call you thief afterwards; better rather borrow the money you want and bring him his articles." [I have supplied Mr. Flad with camels and all he needs to reach Matemma, that the King may not use this as a cause of offence.] "About his negotiations with Mr. Rassam he is very silent. Mr. Staiger will inform you of everything he knows. The King is full of distrust, or rather, I should say, pretends distrust. He says he received last rainy season a letter from an European at Massowah, who informed him that the intentions of the English towards him were bad." [I find that a spy of the King's was here at the end of April and beginning of May last year; he visited the Catholic (French) Mission, and saw there an intriguing priest named Delamonté, who had a copy of Earl Russell's despatch to Colonel Stanton. This Delamonté corresponds, I know, with Bardel, and most probably communicated the essence of that despatch, which was used by Bardel to promote his views.] "And he imprisoned Mr. Rassam because an European would not tell him a lie. He would not trust Englishmen" [a distinction appears to be drawn between an European and an Englishman], "because they would only coax and flatter him until they have their people out of his hands, then they would take them on their steamer and laugh at him. He also said he had not seen Her Majesty's letter, only a copy of it. From this you will see what kind of confidence he has in you, and that all the things you announced to him in your letters were really at Massowah, he would not believe till he sees them. He said it was like the story of a certain woman who informed her guests that she gave them in two covered vessels the 'talák and the tamash' (the two favourite pieces of raw beef in Abyssinia), but uncovering the vessels, the guests found themselves deceived, the one contained the liver, the other the lungs" [only poor people eat the liver in Abyssinia, and the lungs are only given to cats and dogs]. I mention this to make you understand what is in his mind. And I tell you, yea even I entreat you, don't trust, don't trust, don't trust! Even though showing his distrust so openly, he believes that he will coax in more Englishmen. For God's sake keep your hands clean. Don't give any advice, for it will terminate bad. If Colonel Merewether brings the workmen before the King fulfils Her Majesty's conditions, not one single soul will be allowed to leave this country; and the workmen, after their arrival here, might reproach you for having brought them into such circumstances. Why should more people be sent to share in these our miseries? If we shall perish and die, let us do it with honour, submitting ourselves to the Divine will of God. I beg you, I entreat you before the face of God, keep your hands out of the matter. The King's intention is to play a very bad trick. He said to Mr. Waldemeier, 'Call me a woman, if I shall not get them in with all the articles; you don't know our character.' He thinks, I have Mr. Rassam in my hands, and he must assist me to get the things, else I can force him to do so. Oh! gracious God! what may come on us and the poor sufferers at Magdala! If only the English Government would act quickly, they could play him a good trick. They could take his fortress Magdala before he hears of it. But it is not necessary for me to enter into this matter; perhaps they have learned wisdom by experience, and the lessons the King has given them to learn, that neither by the King's threatenings nor by his flattering phrases will they be tempted to come in again" [meaning, I conclude, 'send other people']. I am most anxious for you, fearing that you trust this man too much. The King is, since last week, ill; he uses hot baths; a good many of his concubines also have to use hot baths" [by this I am told to understand he suffers from a dire disease unnecessary to particularize].

"Our three little children are pretty well; they long very much for your speedy

return. I must always keep them near me, as our place is surrounded with huts occupied by soldiers, most likely that we should not run away. Yesterday we and all our people were counted" [as if some move were intended, most probably to send them all to Magdala to join the others], by order of the King. This reminded me of Korata [?] before we left for Europe last year. And now I commend you, myself, our little ones to Him who graciously watches over us. He has counted our days, and our time is in His hands, and not in the King's."

I have given the above *in extenso* and literally, that your Lordship may judge of what is the real state of affairs, and see how a brave woman views it.

3. Mr. Staiger writes, commencing on the 2nd January, "Your letters from London and from Massowah surprised every one here. All of us, and I believe even the King himself, is astonished that your mission to England was crowned with such success, as no one believed that the English Government would grant the extraordinary demands and conditions of the King. Even the King himself had not the least hope, as we now see from his proceedings. Her Majesty's letter to the King made every sincere and sensible man here rejoice; the letter was cordial, but in no way flattering, full of excellent truths, which were well understood by the King. The King sent Her Majesty's letter, soon after its arrival, to Mr. Rassam, who is still in Magdala, in chains. (5th.) To-day we received letters from our friends at Magdala. All mention the arrival of Her Majesty's letter, and the very friendly letter of the King to Mr. Rassam; but none of them, except Mr. Rassam, who still clings very fast to the best expectations of things, trusts in the King's flattering letter. We (the prisoners at large at Gaffat) are of the same opinion, as from many experiences we have lost all confidence in the King. His intentions towards us are not good ones. Up to this day he is friendly towards us at Gaffat, especially towards our wives and children, but we see now and then something like the lightening out of a black cloud. Whether the thundercloud will empty on us with storm and hailstones, or whether it will pass away in mere thunder and lightning, the Lord, who directs everything, alone knows. We are prepared for the worst. It seems to us that the King will not enter into any conditions. He believes that he alone has to make conditions. By the distrust the English Government shows to have in his conduct, his ambition seems to be greatly wounded. This morning, he said, 'The English ought to trust me and send me the articles and men I want from them.' But of releasing or sending away the prisoners he will hear nothing. Ras Ingada and Ras Gabru are just now at Magdala to negotiate with Mr. Rassam on the business. As soon as the King receives an answer he will send you word. Day and night the work is going on at Gaffat. He is in a great hurry to finish his guns, mortars, and waggons." [These will be of no use to him, as he has no skilled gunners.] "The sacrilege committed on Gondar has brought upon him the hatred of the whole nation." [The Aboona excommunicated him for this, but, after three days, removed the ban.] "His soldiers are discontented with him; every day some run away from him and join the rebels. The revolution in the provinces is increasing. This week he plundered Andabeit and Goomu. The inhabitants of those places at first fought with his soldiers, but in the end gave way and fled to Godjam. (The 13th.) At the Royal Court to-day a great consultation took place, the result of which you will learn from the King's letter to you, which was written by him, I am told, in great excitement, and handed over by him to the messengers. You have to come by the way of Matemma. His friendship with England has reached its end. He neither wants now machinery nor workmen; everything you will bring for him is indifferent to him—war or peace. So he is reported to have said, only he wants you to come soon. His messengers for you will leave this to-morrow. From these, his proceedings, you see the whole affair has come to a decided termination; our friendly attempts have hitherto been useless, and will be so in future. He is determined not to give way, but to resist. First, he thinks himself to be in the right; and, secondly, because he doubts that England will make use of her force against him. You know the old proverb they have here, 'that it is impossible mountainous Abyssinia can be conquered by Europeans.'" [A force of less than 2,000 Portuguese, with cannon, entered Abyssinia by the Kinguor road in the middle of the seventeenth century; they were not supported afterwards, so remained and founded a colony, descendants of which are to be found to this day.] "The King firmly believes in this, but we hope England wil soon teach him something better. But England should not make the least delay. If it wishes to do anything it should be done at once, and it should not threaten him before it acts. If this last be omitted, all Europeans he has in his hands will have to pay for it with their lives; a declaration of war and the soldiers should reach Abyssinia at the same time. The best they could do would be if they would send some thousand men by Tajorra." [The route from Tajorra is the shortest and most direct to Magdala, but the inhabitants of the country between Tajorra and Angoba, pagan Danakil, are of the worst description

the most inveterate thieves and murderers on the face of the earth. The distance from Tajoora to Done, near Lake Haik, in Ardoba, is about 220 miles. For the first 100 there is scarcely any water, and that blackish. Until Abyssinia is reached, that is Angoba, there are no supplies.] "From thence they could go with camels to Angoba, which is only a few days' journey from Magdala. In this way they could take Magdala and release the captives even before the King could hear of it. But this should be done with great precaution and speedily, before any hostile movement is made from Massowah. The Roman missionaries at Massowah have added much to the present difficulty and critical circumstances between the English and Abyssinian Governments. The King said this morning that last rainy season he received a letter from one of the Europeans at Massowah, who informed him that the English Government wants nothing but his utter ruin, on which he puts Mr. Rassam into chains. We can only think that this European at Massowah must be a Roman missionary. God only knows how many childish influences have contributed to the present gloomy and sad state of affairs here. You will be astonished at the great alteration of things which has taken place since you left us last year at Zeghe. How much now would I like to write to you if there were 'liberty of the press,' but you know there exists nothing of that kind in this country, and I fear that I have already said too much. If my letter should fall into bad hands it would turn out bad for us.—Dispatched from Gaffat, 15th January."

4. Yesterday evening messengers arrived from Mr. Rassam with news up to the 29th of January; he requests to add as a postscript to his letter to your Lordship of the 10th of January the following:—

"P.S.—Magdala, 29th January, 1867.—Since the date of the above (letter of the 10th) I have received a number of polite messages from the Emperor, but he has not written to me again. I have heard that he has sent on messengers to Massowah, *viâ* Matemma, with an answer to Her Majesty's letter. From all I can make out he wishes Colonel Merewether to come up with the artizans and things sent from England. He is still at Debra Tabor (Debra Tabor and Gaffat may be called the same, they are only about two miles apart); but it is rumoured that he is going to Godjam to punish the rebel there. However, I do not place any faith in this report as this plan was often spoken of before, but never achieved.

"I am glad to inform your Lordship that both my party and myself are well."

In a letter to me he says, "On the 10th instant I sent you a long letter wherein I gave you all the news. As the messengers who carried it promised to reach Massowah in a fortnight" [they arrived in seventeen days], "I hope that by this time you are acquainted with the attitude the Emperor has assumed since his receipt of the copy of Her Majesty's letter. The men promised to return in thirty-five days, and if everything has gone well with them I hope to hear from you about the middle of next month, and know what your future movements are." [Intimation has been sent to Mr. Rassam of all that is being done.] "His Majesty sent back your messengers to Massowah on the 14th instant. One of my men, whom I sent with them, named Mahomed Sayeed, was appointed their leader by the Emperor. He ordered them to return from Massowah with an answer in a month and a-half." [They have not come yet, February 28th.] "If they manage to reach the coast in that time, it will be as much as they could do. I believe he has written to you to come up with the artisans to Matemma. If you are ordered to meet him" [not in the way he expects] "I hope that you will make haste. I believe he feels that he has done wrong, but that he has gone too far to retract.

"I wish I could have lots of money here, as I may find it very useful one day. Please try and send me up cash whenever you can, if possible, through Lasta, otherwise by Matemma." [Money has been sent through Lasta, and more will now be sent by Mr. Flad to Matemma. Messengers despatched from Massowah on 25th October reached Magdala on 25th January; others were despatched in December, January, and this month, who will doubtless reach in time.] "I suppose His Majesty will leave us quiet until he gets a definite answer from the coast, when our fate will be decided. He may get into a towering rage or succumb. Anything is better than this wretched existence, and we have all come to the conclusion that the sooner the crisis comes the better for us. Thank God we are all well and (considering our position) happy."

On a separate slip of paper, which he charged the messenger only to deliver into my hands, Mr. Rassam adds: "It is generally supposed that the refusal of the Emperor to liberate us will be followed by a declaration of war; if so, the following hints may prove useful. Have nothing to do with the Turks, because alliance with the unbelievers will bring on a religious war. Try and obtain the friendship of Wakshim Goluzye, the chief rebel of Lasta and Tigré, and Tissoo Goluzye, the chief rebel on the

road between Adoua and Gondar. They can be very useful in stopping communication between the coast and His Majesty, and in transporting baggage, &c. If the Bishop's assistance be required, I can get him to write to all the rebels to render assistance. There is no respectable man in Abyssinia who approves of His Majesty's conduct, but no one has the pluck to speak plainly to him. He now has scarcely any country left, and yet he brays as if he were Alexander the Great. His power is only now acknowledged wherever he is, and he is so afraid of his troops deserting that he dare not attack any of the great rebels. At Court or here there is no lack of friends, but, as I said before, they are too much cowed to be of any use to us, without knowing what may happen afterwards. If Her Majesty's Government intend to chastise him, there is no use sending an ultimatum before the troops land. A mere letter containing threats will endanger our lives.

5. "Dr. Blane, who is always able to pick up intelligence on the hill, says, in reference to the despatch of the messenger, viâ Matemma, to Massowah, 'It appears that the King expects that all, yourself included, will come up to Matemma, and then he intends to try your friendship by asking you to come to him; he must have strong confidence in the gullibility of the English. I know nothing of the kind will take place, but should some chivalrous feeling induce any one to come up, he or they will be boned, and added to the company now staying at Magdala. Various reports are afloat, but little credit can be given to any. Some say that at first our friend was displeased when he heard that the messenger selected was a Mussulman, but on the man stating that he had been serving him since several years, and had been employed in inducing us to come into his power, the King smiled and chuckled, treated him well, and presented him with a couple of mules.

"A further report is, that His Majesty, on receiving Rassam's letter, wrote to have us three put out of chains, and that Mahomed Saeed himself was to have come, so as to have been able to report to you that we had been freed of our fetters; but having called before him all the Europeans of Gaffat to read to them Rassam's letter, he got angry on remembering his grievances against Messrs. Stern, Rosenthal, and Cameron, and decided on leaving us as we were. There is great despondency amongst the people of Gaffat.

"The cannon mania is at an end; the big guns and remainder of the copper have been buried in the ground, the lighter guns taken to the camp at Debra Tabor. This looks like a move somewhere; Godjam is mentioned, but not believed in. A few days ago the King sent some odds and ends by a Ras, and some money for the soldiers and chiefs here. These have never been so well treated as lately. There is some talk of all prisoners, including ourselves, being taken to the camp, so that the King may look after us himself; I hope not. We are all of us of the same and but one opinion, and pray from all our hearts that business in earnest will shortly begin."

6. The above all goes to confirm the conviction expressed in my despatch of the 13th instant, that any further attempts to win the Emperor over by friendly treatment will be useless. Had he at once released Mr. Rassam and his companions from their fetters, there would have been some hope, and my going to Matemma might then have been considered advisable as a nearer point from which to try and negotiate. But under the present circumstances the latter is undoubtedly out of the question, and the only answer I can give to the messengers of the King of the 14th January, when they do arrive, is that as he has not attempted to show even that he is disposed to act as requested by Her Majesty, I am precluded from taking any steps towards moving from the coast, and that I shall certainly remain until I receive intimation from the King that Mr. Rassam and all the British subjects have been released, and have actually started on their downward journey to meet me.

7. As your Lordship will observe, Mr. Rassam even, who has invariably done his utmost to conciliate the King, has given up all idea of its practicability. His companions in confinement coincide. The German missionaries at Gaffat, who know the King's character well, and have had the best opportunities of watching events, are of the same opinion. My judgment tells me the same.

8. From the very first I ventured to point out that there were but two courses open for adoption in regard to King Theodorus,—most friendly liberal treatment, or forcible measures in punishment of his breach of faith. The first has been fairly tried, and everything possible been done to make it successful, but through the obstinacy of the King it has failed. The second only remains, and I would most respectfully but earnestly urge that now not only is the safety of our countrymen at stake, but the honour of the country is deeply concerned; for the idea of misapprehension on the part of the King, which might have been admitted before, can now no longer be entertained. By his continued retention of Mr. Rassam in confinement he proclaims that he knowingly and purposely imprisons the bearer of a letter from another Sovereign, the Queen of England.

9. Unfortunately, owing to the near approach of the hot season, which renders the

country between Abyssinia and the sea almost impassable by troops, active operations cannot well be entered upon before October next, but I trust that on Her Majesty's Government deciding on vigorous measures being adopted, preparations for the organization of the necessary force may be taken into immediate consideration, so that the troops may be ready to move at the earliest possible moment.

10. While quite agreeing with Mr. Rassam and the others, who have expressed an opinion on the subject, that the threat and display of force should be synchronous, I would also venture to recommend strongly that the course suggested by me in the tenth paragraph of my despatch of the 13th instant should be entirely foregone. The position of the Emperor is now so hazardous that any day information may be received of his authority having come to an end. It would then be of the greatest value that I should have it in my power to announce authoritatively to the people of the country that Her Majesty's Government had determined on punishing King Theodore for his treacherous conduct, and to call on all well-wishers to the British Government to assist in protecting its subjects in Abyssinia, warning every one that the King will be held strictly responsible with his throne and life that not the slightest injury reaches Her Majesty's subjects; while all who may assist in any harm which may come to them will assuredly meet with the severest punishment; while, on the other hand, those who aided and protected them will be honoured and most liberally rewarded by Her Majesty.

11. It may possibly be that the opportunity for using this may not arise; but it is very probable at the same time that it will. The intelligence now forwarded shows that the King's position is getting daily worse and more desperate. The patience of the country, well nigh exhausted before, was further heavily tried on the occasion of the desecration of the churches at Gondar. It is wonderful the King is still borne with. His health is very bad, his sufferings great from a hopeless disease, and that made worse by excessive intemperance. Provisions in Begmedar are nearly exhausted, and there is no where else to look for more. His army is fast leaving him; and though he is said to have given out that he is going against Tadeba Guialoo, the rebel chief in Godjam, every one knows he cannot attempt it. First, he has not sufficient troops left with him to insure success, and, next, if he went out of Begmedar, it would be occupied by the rebels of Lasta and Walkeit, and he would lose his stronghold Magdala. It would be most fortunate for us if he could be induced to make the attempt; but he is too cunning to risk it. It would seem strange to those unacquainted with the people how these rebels, who have such strong forces at their disposal and who defy his authority, should not close with him and attack him now he is so weakened. But the best informed assure me that as long as there is any chance of Theodorus rising again, such is the dread of him personally, none of the rebels will advance on him, or attempt to find him. Were they positively assured his course had come to an end, they might then be induced to act, and be found most useful.

12. As Mr. Rassam writes, "At Court and here there is no lack of friends" to the British. One curious thing, and I don't know whether it may be taken as symptomatic of the desperate condition of the stateship, but the Chamberlain Samuel, the man who, with Bardel, was supposed to be at the bottom of all evil towards the captors, whatever may have been his views and intentions formerly, has completely turned round. Mr. Rassam now writes about him: "Samuel has lost the greater part of the Royal favour, because it has been proved that he favoured the English. The fact is, there is no man in the country who is so faithful to his liege as this Samuel; and because he has been trying all he could to benefit his Royal master, by getting him to be on good terms with us, he is distrusted. Some of the released prisoners used to think that he was implicated in their former trials. However that may have been, his honest friendly feeling towards the British has been proved to me beyond doubt. That he is anything but unfriendly towards us, though he considers himself bound to love and obey his Sovereign, I have lately been able to prove to both Cameron and Stern." Those two gentlemen have written to me they are quite convinced of Samuel's probity now, and Dr. Blanc says the same.

13. I hear that the road from Matemma to Debra Tabor is open. How long it will remain so is a question. But I consider it right now that Mr. Flad should leave at once for Matemma, taking with him the articles he purchased for the King in England, and he will start directly the camels required have come in. In the present critical state of affairs, and to provide as far as possible against the King having any pretext for ill-treating the captives in his power, either at Gaffat or Magdala, I have paid all Mr. Flad's expenses to Matemma. He has written to the King, announcing his departure from this, and requesting an escort may be sent to meet him at Matemma. By Mr. Flad I have sent my letter to the King (copy of which was forwarded to your Lordship) unaltered, saving the word "ask" for "crave" has been substituted in the latter part. I am afraid it will have no

effect on the King, to induce him to change his tactics; but it will show him no further friendly advances can be made until the prisoners are received by me free. Mr. Flad's further stay at Matemma might have jeopardized the safety of his wife and children. I did not think it necessary he should await the arrival of the messengers now *en route*. Had nothing detained them, they should have been here ere this; but there are some disturbances on the Egyptian frontier which they would not like to face, and they may, therefore, be still at Kassala, where Mr. Flad would meet them. The disturbances are not of an extensive nature, and would not affect Mr. Flad's progress, as I have given him firmans and letters to all the Egyptian authorities *en route*, who will furnish him with sufficient guards. Should the messengers arrive even a fortnight after his departure, I could easily send a speedy camel-post after him, with fresh instructions and other letters if necessary. Mr. Flad, marching with laden camels, should reach Matemma in about twenty-five days; he will probably be detained there a short time for the escort.

14. On my way up from Aden I called in at Amphilla Bay, and found it admirably suited for the debarkation of troops; good anchorage; water good and plentiful; and one of the easiest and best roads comes down from Abyssinia to it—a road constantly used by caravans (camel), who take backwards and forwards the salt obtained near Amphilla. The people in the country are simple and friendly disposed, and there are no Egyptian troops there. M. Munzinger, the very zealous Consul here, has made an excellent survey of the road from Massowah to Kingour and Goafiloosee, formerly mentioned by me. This will be forwarded to your Lordship separately. As soon as M. Munzinger has dispatched Mr. Flad, he will proceed to Tokonder, and return viâ Amphilla, to survey and map correctly those two routes to the plateau of Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 97.

Commander Manners to Lord Stanley.—(Received March 12.)

My Lord, 4, *Felbrigg Terrace, Ealing, March* 11, 1867.

I BEG most respectfully to submit, for your Lordship's consideration, a subject which, I trust, may be deemed of sufficient importance to warrant the attention of Her Majesty's Government. I allude, my Lord, to the unfortunate position of the British Consul and others in Abyssinia, and the steps which might be taken for their release.

I do not presume, my Lord, to submit the following remarks from personal interested motives, being 49 years of age, probably too old for such an important undertaking; but simply from a belief the course I am about to propose the best that could be adopted. I base this, from the local knowledge I possess during a long term of service in command of various vessels of war on the Abyssinian coast, as well as having travelled in Abyssinia and being associated with the natives and acquainted with their habits, as also the trade of the country. I would most respectfully submit as follows:—

That an officer should be sent to Massowah, to treat with the King of Abyssinia for the release of the prisoners, and having a steamer with presents on board, only to be given on his delivering up the unfortunate captives.

That this officer should have a knowledge of the country, natives, and trade; that he should have full discretionary power to act as the exigency of the case and the interests of Her Majesty's Government demanded, and select the most intelligent natives to convey despatches to or from the Abyssinian Monarch.

Should my services be required, my Lord, I am ready to act under the orders of Her Majesty's Government.

My testimonials are as follows:—

From the Government; from the Spanish Government, having been presented with an Order from the Queen of Spain; from the late Lieutenant-General Sir James Outram, G.C.B.; Admiral Sir H. Leeke, K.C.B.; Rear-Admiral Sir Stephen Lushington, K.C.B.; General Hurnell; Commodore Porter; and others.

A steamer could readily be obtained at Bombay or Aden.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. E. MANNERS,
Commander of the late Indian Navy.

No. 98.

Mr. Murray to Commander Manners.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 14, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, suggesting a plan calculated, in your opinion, to effect the release of the captives in Abyssinia, and, in conveying to you his Lordship's thanks for your offer of assistance, I am to state to you that Her Majesty's Government have no occasion to avail themselves of your services.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 99.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received March* 21.)

My Lord, *Red Sea, March* 4, 1867.

I AM sending you by this mail officially further intelligence from Abyssinia, but will take the liberty of adding the following demi-officially:—

The King will not release Rassam and the others unless forced to do so. This is the opinion of all the captives themselves, and of every one who knows Theodorus. He might have done it at first on learning the results of Flad's journey, but he never will now. He hopes to get more people into his power so as to have greater hold on the English Government in his extremity, and then, as he believes, to get anything he chooses to ask for. If he had the opportunity he would seize and imprison a first class Embassy without the least compunction.

The truth is he is desperate; his enemies are closing round him; his power is daily getting less and less; and his health is destroyed by long-existing syphilitic disease.

He cannot last much longer either politically or physically, and if the season had only allowed of it, this would of all others have been the time for a prompt and vigorous display of force.

Everything is in our favour; the country is wearied of this capricious tyrant, for such he has become. Disgusted with him as the people were before, they are ten times more so since his desecration of the churches at Gondar, and that act has gone far to take from him the superstitious awe he has hitherto commanded.

Once proclaimed that we entered the country solely for the purpose of punishing this tyrant, removing him from his throne, and releasing the British subjects held captive by him, and that done that we should leave the country to be ruled after its own devices, we should have almost every man ready heart and soul to assist us. All they want is to be quit of him, and could they count surely on his destruction or removal, they would close in on him to-morrow.

The season being so far advanced, the only thing that can be done is to watch events during the summer (or winter they call it in Abyssinia), and to be ready to use the rebel power if reason or opportunity should see the advisability of doing so. It is for that reason I ask to be able authoritatively to announce, should opportunity offer, to the rebels and to the country generally, that Her Majesty's Government assuredly intend to punish Theodorus directly the season opens.

The release of the captives might be effected without the need of a blow being struck, after all, by us. At any rate it would help towards the security of the captives; rewards being promised to those who protect them and severest punishment to all involved should a hair of their heads be injured.

M. Messajah, the Missionary Archbishop of the Gallas, a very intelligent old man, who has lived for twenty-five years in the Galla and Abyssinian countries, and knows Theodorus well, assured me he felt convinced Theodorus would carefully preserve the captives to the very last, as his last resource.

I put it: might not Theodorus, driven to a stand in Magdala, in a fit of desperate intoxication, cause to be murdered, or even murder with his own hand, the whole of the captives? He replied, No: the order in the first instance would not be attended to; in the

second, he would be restrained and even killed sooner. There are many friends in Magdala even, he added.

The above is the only condition under which it would be advisable that your intentions should be publicly made known.

It would, of course, be better if the declaration of war and landing of the troops could be synchronous. But it appears to me an impossibility, now-a-days, to keep the preparation of the force, which would be going on in Bombay, a secret. The press would be sure to get hold of it, and though Theodorus does not see Bombay dailies, there are Bombay merchants at Massowah who would not fail to hear from their friends what was going on, and get instructions to prepare to profit by the coming campaign.

There is also a Roman Catholic missionary establishment, which receives papers from Europe, Turkey, and Egypt, one at least of whose members I know corresponds with the arch-intriguer Bardel, and who would be sure to send him tidings of what was intended. The one blow must therefore, I think, anticipate the other.

With regard to the force to be employed, I consider 6,000 men ample to enter Abyssinia with; composed as recommended. Too many Europeans would only trammel, owing to the larger commissariat required, and native troops will be excellent against such enemies as we should encounter. The Horse artillery and cavalry will be the most useful and important part of the force. The latter should only be native.

As a precautionary measure another brigade of native infantry might be prepared and sent to the coast as a reserve, and to help, if required, in keeping open communication; but not more than the 6,000 mentioned should be ordered for the force to enter the highlands at first.

If I might be allowed to make the suggestion, it would be an important point if it could be arranged with Lord Cranbourne that the formation and management of the expedition should be left entirely to the Bombay Government, as being nearest to the scene of action.

It would not be in better hands than Sir Robert Napier's, with Mr. Fitzgerald at the head of the Government. The only aid required from the Supreme Government would be in providing troops to garrison the stations temporarily denuded of Bombay troops. Sir Bartle Frere, who will shortly be in England, will, I have little doubt, say the same.

That the war will be a popular measure with the nation, I have not the least doubt. And in connection with foreign, European, opinion I cannot disguise from your Lordship that it has been a matter of astonishment that Her Majesty's Government have borne with Theodorus so long. Our Arab neighbours think the same, and I trust I may be excused when I add, that though it will entail expensive outlay, the money will be well spent in restoring easily, and at comparatively small cost, the prestige of our name, which is reckoned lower than it should be.

In respect to the artizans, they had better be sent home at once. There is no chance now of their having to go into the interior, and having nothing to do they would soon lose health, beside being an unnecessary expense. I would have brought them back with me this time, but the messengers from the King might arrive at Massowah any day, and it would be as well not to show even the least change until those messengers had received their answer; or it was clear they could not reach Massowah.

I regret to say the leader of the party, Mr. Talbot, is little better. The illness has affected his head very much, and it is feared the affection may become chronic, unless he is quickly removed to a cold climate. He will be sent home at once.

The attempt to utilise them has unfortunately failed. Had it succeeded, it would have been a cheap way of arranging the business. As it is, a good deal of the original expenditure on them will be returned by the sale of the machinery and most of the other presents which were to have accompanied them to the King.

I considered Mr. Flad bound in honour, as well as for the safety of his family, to return to Gaffat directly means showed, but I have doubts, myself, whether he will be able to get beyond Matemmah. The road is said to be open now, but it is very questionable how long it will remain so.

Apologising for troubling your Lordship at this length, I remain, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 100.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 10.)

My Lord, *Massowah, February 28, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith rough sketch map in original, with copy of itinerary and observations made by M. Munzinger, Acting Consul, of the road from Massowah to Kiaguor, on the plateau of Abyssinia.

2. M. Munzinger deserves credit for the prompt manner in which he carried out my wishes in this respect.

3. I would venture to suggest to your Lordship that were the map lithographed and some copies prepared, as also the itinerary printed, they might be found very useful hereafter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 100.

Notes and Route Observations supplied by M. Munzinger to accompany his Survey Map of the Roads from Massowah to Kiaguor.

THERE are only two roads leading to Northern Abyssinia which are worth close examination, because they alone are practicable to camels:—

One is by Tokonda,* following the well-known torrent of Hadas, to the foot of the Taranta Mountain, where it turns to the left, then along another torrent to the ascent to Tokonda, which could easily be made practicable for any carriage.

The other is to Kiaguor.

This last was the object of my excursion from the 28th to the 30th January. I went up by the way of Dasuas, and returned by that of Aly Gady. The former is somewhat the shortest, crossing the mountains by two steep ascents. The direction is almost south-west till longitude 39° 5′ and latitude 15° 10′, where it joins the other road of Aly Gady. It has been followed by several travellers, but from its comparative difficulty need not be described here.

The latter, by which I returned, is the best road, and is as follows:

It starts from Arkeko, and is divided into three parts—

I. The open low country.

II. Following the torrent Aly Gady.

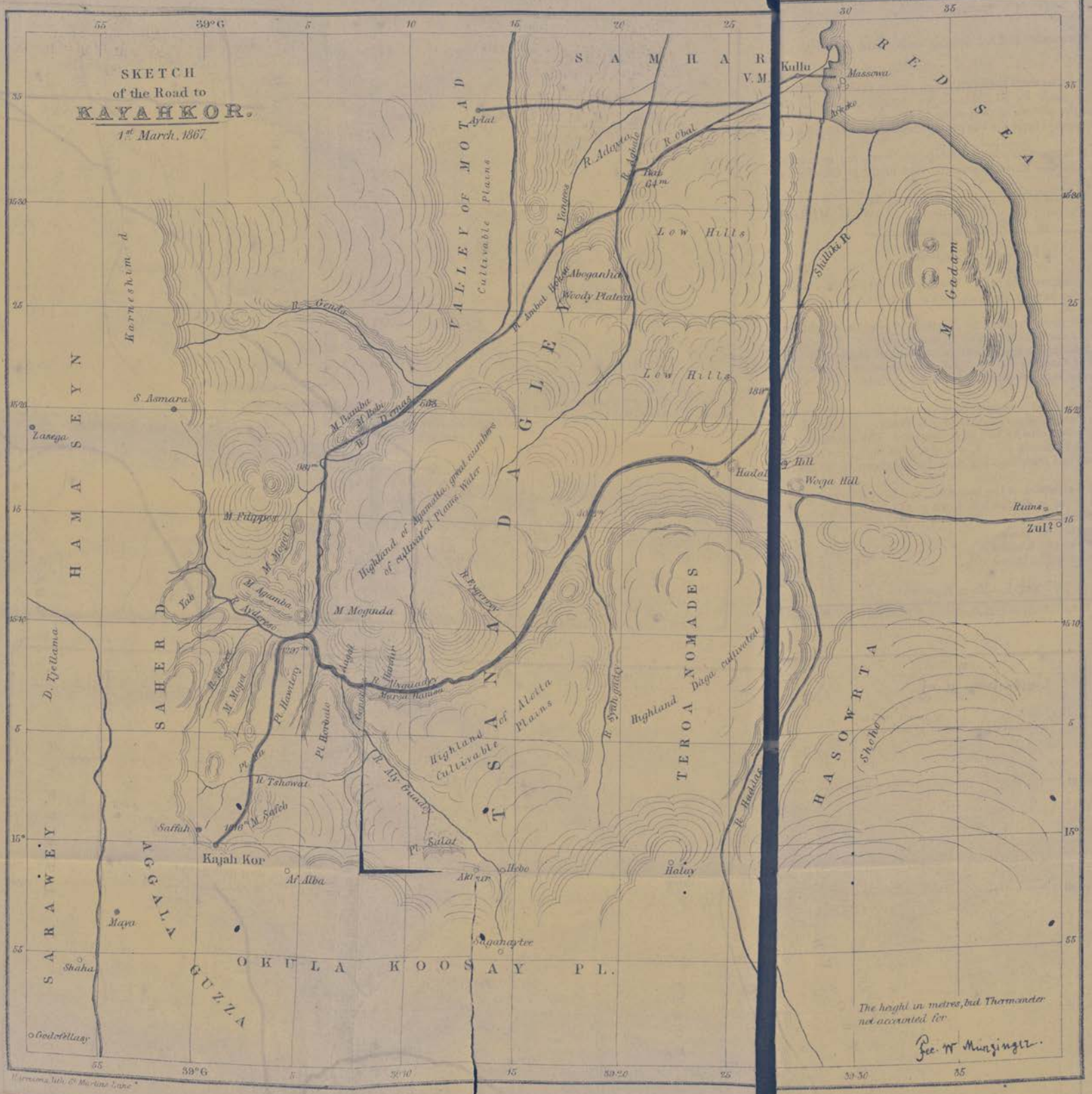
III. The ascent and plain to Kiaguor.

The distances are indicated in hours.

Part I.—From Massowah.

No. of Stations.	Name of Station.	Direction.	Distance in Hours.† H.	M.	Remarks.
1	Arkeko	S.	2	0	Road over hard open plain. Large village. Detachment of Egyptian troops here. Water plentiful.
2	Entrance of Shilliki Pass	S.	3	20	Road over plain. Flat open country. Many gum trees (Babul), Acaria Arabica. Water obtained by digging a few feet in bed of torrent.
3	Pass of Shilliki ..	S. 10 W.	1	25	This pass is a large smooth dry bed of a torrent; in rainy season carries water off to the sea. Water obtained by digging.
4	Hill Hadaley . ..	S. 20 W.	1	25	Road level at first, but hilly towards Hadaley. Water obtainable by digging. There is water in wells at Saheto, 30 m. East; and plenty at Wooja, 1 h. E. 10 m. S.; and at Zoola, 4 h. E. At Wooja the Ali Gady and Hadas torrents unite, and form one to Zoola. The road to Halai and Tokonda is up the Hadas.
5	In the torrent Ali Gady	W.	1	0	Road open and level; rather woody; small hills about.
	Total of I ..	..	9	10	

* "Degonta" in Keith Johnston's Map.
† Each hour about 2½ miles average.


SKETCH
of the Road to
KAYAHKOR.
1st March, 1867
SAMHAR
RED SEA
Kullu
Massowa
Aylat
VALLEY OF MOTAD
Cultivable Plains
Low Hills
Aboganha
Woody Plateau
Shilliki R.
M Gadam
Karneshim d
HAMA SEYN
S. Asmara
Zasega
M Filippos
M Mogot
M Agamba
Yab
M Moginda
Highland of Agamatta, great numbers of cultivated Plains Water
DAGLEY
TSANA
TEROA NOMADES
Highland of Alotta Cultivable Plains
Highland Daga cultivated
HASOWRTA
(Shoho)
Hadal
Woga Hill
Ruins
Zul?
D. Tjellama
SAHERD
Saffah
Kajah Kor
Af Alba
Hebo
Halay
Maya
Shaha
Godofellasy
AGGALA GUZZA
OKULA KOOSAY PL.
Saganaytee
The height in metres, but Thermometer not accounted for
Fec. W. Munzinger.
Harrisons lith. St Martins Lane

PART II.—Road along the Ali Gady Torrent.

No. of Stations.	Name of Station.	Direction.	Distance in Hours.	Remarks.
			H. M.	
1	First halting place ..	W.	1 20	Torrent broad and tolerably level; partly wooded (Babul); low hills on either side.
2	Second halting place ..	W. S W.	1 0	Torrent broad; running water.
3	Of Eygerrey . ..	S. W.	4 25	The torrent winds much, and has some narrow rocky places, but without difficulty. The narrowest places are after 1 hour, where is running water; after 2 h. 40 m., and close to Eygerrey, the hills on both sides get nearer and higher.
4	Marsa Hamsa . ..	W. S. W.	2 0	Winds much, but no narrower.
5	Haufur	W.	1 0	One narrow road, more difficult from boulders, but can be easily made good.
6	Gannalee	W.	0 45	Road more open.
7	Augal	N. W.	0 50	Road good. A large torrent joins here from the left, bringing down the waters of all the country between Halai and Kiaguor; especially those of the torrent Tshoat, which offers a very fine smooth but longer road to Kiaguor. I had no time to examine it.
8	Torrent changes here, becomes Aydereso	N. W.	1 0	Here joins the first-mentioned road from Arkeko. Water above and below. Many Babul trees. Torrent large and country more open.
9	.. .. ..	..	0 15	To the upper water and to the foot of ascent where the torrent is left.
	Total II ..	..	12 35	

PART III.

No. of Stations.	Name of Station.	Direction.	Distance in Hours.	Remarks.
			H. M.	
1	Ascent	S. 30 W.	1 0	Not very steep; no obstacle for camels; round stones in road, but no narrow passage; road could easily be made very good.
2	From top of ascent to hill 1 h. from Kiaguor	S. 20 W.	3 20	For 1 h. 50 m. road is open, very bare, dry, woodless, and strewn with round stones. The last 1 h. 30 m. pass through a large forest to the torrent Tshoat. Half-an-hour from the road there is running water. Hills on right and left.
3	From the hill to Kiaguor	S. 30 W.	1 0	Plain open country; plenty of cultivation. Kiaguor surrounded by a hill. I did not go beyond the Hill Station No. 2.
	Total of III ..	..	5 20	

From Kiaguor to Gotafalasee is eight hours' journey (22 miles). Behind Kiaguor the road ascends the hill, not practicable at present for camels, but can be easily made so. Once on the top the road passes over level plateau to the village of Mya (four hours), there descends, crosses the Mareb, and ascends again the other side, no difficulty whatever, to the village of Shaha (two hours), and on to Gotafalasee in two hours more.

The Mareb is passable at all times.

Gotafalasee is the great market-place for Northern Abyssinia, and lies in the midst of the fertile plain of Saramey. It is only about nine hours' journey from Tsazaga, the residence of Djaj Hailoo, the King's Governor of Hamasen.

General Observations.

As will be seen, there is no want of running water anywhere except in the first part of the journey, but even there it may be got by digging; and at Wooja, one hour east from Hadaley, there is plenty of good water.

From Arkeko to Hadaley is 6 hours 10 minutes march, less than 20 miles.

From the commencement of Part II, from the torrent the whole way up there is plenty of water.

These are styled torrents, but they are dry watercourses becoming torrents in the heavy rains.

Wood is to be found at all places.

Few or no supplies in the shape of grain, excepting at Kiaguor and Gotafalasee. Beef and mutton plentiful everywhere. Grass to be found at all the places, from October to May.

The tropical rain line is at Eygerrey.

The country till the Ady Gady torrent is reached belongs to any one.

On the left of the torrent upwards to Hadas belongs to the Tora, nomades nominally Egyptian subjects, Mussulmans, 700 or 800 spears.

The country on the right of the Aly Gady belongs to the Catholic tribe of Zana-Fagley, which has fixed settlements on the highlands near Halai. Eight small villages, of which the largest are Akrom and Saganaytee. These people have extensive land, but only muster 800 spears.

The Tora and the Zana-Fagley in the winter months bring their flocks and herds down to the low lands near the coast to graze. During the tropical rains from June till September they remain on the highlands to cultivate. On the right and left of the Aly Gady torrent are fine plateaus, 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the level of the sea, large plains, well cultivated, water plentiful. The one named Agamatta is only about 18 miles from Massowah, and would make an excellent encamping place.

From Aydereso upwards the ground belongs to the tribe Angana, having five villages, one of which is Kiaguor.

The Angana are subject to a larger tribe, the Aggala Goorra, having seventeen villages. The chief of these two tribes is the son of Anda Mikael, who does homage to Waksheim Gobazye, the rebel leader of Lasta and Tigre.

On the right of Kiaguor are the tribes Laber and Wagerthee, having eight and four villages respectively. They are subject to Dejaj Hailoo, as is all the land beyond the Mareb.

The heights are given from observation of the boiling point.

(Signed) W. MUNZINGER, *Acting Consul.*

No. 101.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 15.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, April 12, 1867.*

THE refusal of the Emperor Theodore of Abyssinia to comply with Her Majesty's demand for the liberation of the British subjects and other persons under British protection whom he has so long held in captivity cannot but cause Her Majesty's Government to feel much difficulty as to the course now to be pursued for insuring the freedom of those unfortunate individuals, without involving the British nation in a war with that monarch, which, even if successful, as it could not fail to be eventually, would under any circumstances be exposed to many risks, and must inevitably occasion an outlay from the national Treasury far exceeding the heavy expenses that have already been incurred, besides leading to complications the nature and extent of which it is not possible to foresee.

Under these circumstances I trust your Lordship will not take it amiss if I respectfully venture to submit for your consideration the following suggestions, which my special knowledge of the subject enable me to make.

It is necessary to premise that a short time before I left England for Abyssinia, in November 1865, the Earl of Malmesbury did me the honour to consult me as to the best road into that country in the event of its becoming necessary for a British army to invade it. In reply, I explained to his Lordship that the readiest access is from the west coast of Annesley Bay, south of Massowah, where the edge of the table land, at an elevation of upwards of 8,000 feet, approaches within twenty miles of the seashore, as I had already pointed out to your Lordship's predecessor in office, Lord John Russell, in a letter addressed to him from Mauritius on December 26, 1859, accompanied by a map.

After my arrival out in Abyssinia I wrote several letters to Lord Malmesbury, giving him an account of my journey to the edge of the table land up the valley of the River Hadas, and of my discovery that this river falls into Annesley Bay, near the site of the ancient city and port of Adulis; thus establishing from actual observation the correctness of the opinion I had long entertained as to the facility of entering Abyssinia in that direction.

Being anxious that the knowledge thus acquired should be at the service of Her Majesty's Government, I lost no time in communicating it to Colonel Merewether, Her Majesty's Political Resident at Aden, to Colonel Stanton, Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, and to Captain Robert A. Parr, of Her Majesty's ship "Lyra."

Some time after I had made these several communications, I learned that there is a far preferable road by the way of Senafé, either fr m the head of Annesley Bay or from Harena in Hawakil Bay, which road I have reason to believe was made known to your Lordship's department by Mr. Salt many years ago.

Since my return to England I have been given to understand that the approaches to North-Eastern Abyssinia have been examined by Colonel Merewether, and reported on by him to Her Majesty's Government; and I take it for granted that this road by Senafé has received that officer's special attention.

But though it is now incontrovertibly established that, for the general purposes of invasion or occupation, Abyssinia may be easily and best entered from the north-east, still if the object were to intimidate the Emperor Theodore, by at once seizing on his strongholds, or if it were desired to liberate the British captives at Amba Magdala by a *coup de main,* another road altogether different might be taken in preference, namely, one running westwards from the sea-coast at Raheita, just within the Straits of Babelmandeb.

This road formed the subject of a letter addressed by me to Lord Malmesbury, on March 28, 1866, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose. And I may be allowed to repeat here, as stated in that letter, that as long ago as December 9, 1843, this road was pointed out by me to the Earl of Aberdeen, then Foreign Secretary, in a memoir on the commerce of Abyssinia; and that it likewise formed the subject of a report which I drew up at the instance of Sir William M. Coghlan, and which was sent in by him to the India Office on December 17, 1864.

Subsequently to the date of my communication to Lord Malmesbury of March 28, 1866, and whilst I was still in Abyssinia, I addressed letters to his Lordship on three several occasions, namely, on April 3rd, 9th, and 27th of the same year.

The first two of these letters related to the progress of Mr. Rassam's mission, and do not now require further notice; of the third, viz., that of April 27, I beg leave to inclose a copy.

It will be perceived that in this letter, which was written after I had received intelligence of the liberation and approaching departure of the captives, I predicted that even if they were allowed to depart, Mr. Rassam himself would be detained by the Emperor; and I suggested a course of action upon the assumption that such would be the case. Unfortunately, the result turned out much more unfavourably than I had anticipated, and subsequent events have proved even more calamitous.

When I had the honour to wait on your Lordship in July and August last, Mr. Flad had just arrived in England with certain proposals on the part of the Emperor Theodore to the British Government, and your Lordship had already in contemplation a definite course of action with reference to those proposals. Though at the time I entertained doubts as to the result, it would, under the circumstances, have been ill-timed and injudicious on my part had I attempted to thwart the proposed course. I therefore waited till the time should come when the failure of the plan then entertained would render some other course necessary.

That time having now arrived, I beg leave to solicit your Lordship's serious attention to the contents of my two letters to Lord Malmesbury of March 28 and April 27, 1866, and especially to the latter, as forming the basis of the plan which I would venture to propose for adoption, and as supplementary thereto I would beg leave to add the following observations.

It is presumed that, whatever may be the intentions of Her Majesty's Government as regards future political or commercial relations with Abyssinia, they have no special desire to cultivate the personal friendship of the present reigning Sovereign, or to support him or his dynasty on the throne in preference to any other pretender.

Consequently, there is no objection to the principle laid down in my letter of April 27, 1866, that Waagshum Gobazye, the hereditary Prince of Lasta, and the actual possessor and ruler of Tigré and North-Eastern Abyssinia, has a *primâ facie* right to the sovereignty of the entire empire, nor to the proposal that, with a view to the liberation of the captives at Magdala, the British Government should afford that Prince a certain amount of encouragement and support.

As stated in that letter, a few hundred muskets, with an ample supply of ammunition and a number of Congreve rockets (transportable where artillery could not be, and better suited for the purpose), and in addition to these a moderate subsidy in money, are all that would be requisite. Perhaps a few European soldiers might at the same time be introduced to fire the rockets and drill the natives in the proper use of the muskets; but this would depend upon circumstances.

But, in addition to this material support, it would be necessary to exert certain moral influences. The Roman Catholic Mission, long established at Massowah and in North-

Eastern Abyssinia, is in friendly if not intimate and confidential relations with the Waagshum, or with some of the principal chiefs acknowledging his supremacy; and it is essential to the well-being and success of any negotiations that may be entered into with that Prince or his partisans that the members of that Mission should not merely be friendly disposed, but should be induced to co-operate with the agents of the British Government.

The sympathies of the Roman Catholic missionaries being naturally with France, as the leading Power of their religion, it might perhaps be deemed expedient to act upon them through the French Government, in which case the recognition of Waagshum Gobazye as Emperor of Abyssinia might be made by the Governments of France and England concurrently. Otherwise, some other means of influencing the members of the Roman Catholic Mission would doubtless present themselves to Her Majesty's Government.

If, as I believe to the case, there are several Frenchmen in the employ of the Waagshum or some of his Chiefs, their services might possibly be rendered available, and so might render unnecessary the employment of Englishmen; and, indeed, unless there should be any political objections to such a course, it might possibly be deemed more prudent, in order to obviate the risk of Theodore's attempting the lives of the British captives, that in the first instance France and Frenchmen should alone show themselves openly.

The Waagshum, thus aided and supported, should be induced to march at once upon Amba Magdala, through the upper country, along the eastern edge of the table-land, the summit of the ghauts. The distance of Magdala from the southern extremity of Annesley Bay, in a direct line, by the way of Senafé, is about 250 geographical miles.

In mentioning this road, it is right to explain that there are three ways of penetrating into Central and Southern Abyssinia from Massowah or its vicinity: viz. (1) the lower road, north-westward, through Bogos, Kassala, and Matemmah; (2) the middle road, south-westward, through Hamaseyn and Tigre, crossing the River Takkazye; and (3) the upper road, southwards, by Halai, Tokunda, or Senafé, along the high land, in which are the sources of the Takkazye and its tributaries. These three roads are marked approximately on the inclosed map of Abyssinia.*

From the peculiar physical character of the Abyssinian table-land, the third of these roads is by far preferable to the other two, the selection of either of which latter for the march of an invading army would be attended with considerable loss of time, might occasion the illness or even the death of a large number of men, and might even place in jeopardy the success of a campaign. It may not be irrelevant to mention that the upper road was taken by Don Christopher de Gama, when he entered Abyssinia in 1541, at the head of 500 Portuguese, to assist the Emperor against the Mohammedans.

In a Lecture on "Abyssinia and the Abyssinians," delivered by me in the Theatre of the London Institution on January 16, 1867, I explained fully the peculiar physical character of the country. Inclosed is an extract from that Lecture, which is highly deserving of consideration, as bearing on this important subject. It will also serve to correct the erroneous notions entertained generally, and even by the captives themselves, respecting Amba Magdala, which Mr. Rassam describes as being "situated on a mountain in the Wollo Galla country," whereas it is in truth an isolated spur of table-land, by which it is commanded from on high.

By occupying Tanta, at the extreme point of the plateau of Warrahemano, where the high land begins to break down to form Amba Magdala, which is distant from it probably not more than a quarter of a mile, the Waagshum would have that fortress completely at command; and as Magdala has no artificial fortifications beyond a few wooden stockades, and the houses and erections on it are principally, if not entirely, of wattles covered with mud, and are all thatched, a few well-directed rockets would soon destroy the whole place. In this I speak on the report of others, and from my acquaintance with several similar fortresses, not from my own personal knowledge of Amba Magdala itself.

It may, however, be not unreasonable to suppose that the garrison, said to consist of only 600 musketeers and 1,000 spearmen, might be induced to capitulate. Indeed, if the fact be, as stated, that during four months of the year the place is without water, which has to be brought from the plain below, it would seem that by cutting off the supply—that is to say, preventing the women from fetching the water—the garrison might be reduced to extremities, and forced to surrender at discretion.

Still it would not be sufficient to leave matters to take this course alone. Negotiations might be entered into with the garrison, with the captors themselves, and especially with the Abuna or Coptic Bishop, who is confined there, but (as I am informed) not impri-

* Published in Dr. Beke's work entitled "The British Captives in Abyssinia:" Longman and Co., 1867.

soned; and means might doubtless be devised for inducing the natives to abjure their allegiance to Theodore, and to espouse the cause of Gobazye.

For this purpose, however, it is essential to secure the partizanship of the Abuna, as it is on his consenting to anoint and crown Gobazye as Emperor, and on his actually performing that ceremony, that the final success of the whole enterprise would depend. As long as no rival of his is anointed and crowned, Theodore possesses a prestige which no reverses can absolutely annihilate. He is, and must continue to be, "Emperor by the election of God"—"[The] chosen of God, King of Kings, Theodore of Ethiopia," as he styles himself in his letter to Her Majesty the Queen of England. But the moment the Abuna takes it on himself to anoint another Emperor the crown falls as it were from Theodore's head on to that of his substitute; and although he may retain or regain the throne, if he has the power to do so, still his exclusive right and prestige are gone. It is to prevent such an occurrence that Theodore keeps the Abuna near his person when they are friends, and places him in confinement when they are enemies.

The present Abuna was formerly a teacher in the school of the Church Missionaries at Cairo, and was consecrated by the Coptic Patriarch at their instance; and he has always been considered as devoted to the English and Protestant cause in Abyssinia. It may, however, be questioned whether his own personal interest is not most regarded by him. Be this as it may, I apprehend there would be no difficulty in the way of securing the co-operation of this prelate, through the Coptic Patriarch and the British Church Missionaries, as well as by making it worth his while. Whether it would not be practicable to effectuate his escape from Amba Magdala in the first instance would be matter for consideration on the spot.

The foregoing suggestions are made on the assumption that the Emperor Theodore will not be at Magdala, but absent in Godjam on his customary campaign against Tadela Gwalu. Should it happen that he is at Magdala, or that he should return thither before the captives have been liberated by the one method or the other, then it is to be considered whether the aid of a small British force might not be necessary.

In this case, however, I will presume to recommend that an army should not be landed in North-Eastern Abyssinia, so as to have to march through a considerable extent of country, even though the district traversed may be under the rule of Waagshum Gobazye, and their inhabitants well disposed towards the invaders. It would be showing the game too plainly to Theodore.

To me it appears—though on strategical operations it becomes me to speak with great diffidence—that a small body of troops, consisting principally, if not entirely, of cavalry, should be landed at Raheita, and should proceed by rapid marches direct on Magdala. The distance between the two points is 240 geographical miles, of which about 200 are through the low country occupied by various Dankali tribes, described in my report of December 17, 1864, already referred to, and the remaining 40 miles are over the high table-land of Abyssinia. The road is marked approximately on the map.

The greater portion of this road would be along the northern side of the River Aswash, and at no great distance from that river, where water would be plentiful; and I apprehend there would be no difficulty in obtaining sufficient supplies.

Raheita is chosen as the place of landing, in preference to Tadjurrah, because the country to be traversed is occupied by tribes of the Modaitos (the Assa-himera, or Red House of the Danakil), with whom the people of Raheita are more intimately connected than are those of Tadjurrah, who are a sub-tribe of the Debeni-k-Wama (the Ado-himera, or White House).

These tribes are not numerous; they have no military discipline, and are armed only with spear and knife. Consequently they could not, if so disposed, offer any serious opposition to a well-armed and well-disciplined European force, however small. Besides, their friendship and co-operation might be easily secured, as in the case of Major Harris's mission to Shoa in 1841, which went from Tadjurrah to Alin Amba, with an escort of about only a dozen soldiers. It is true that, when at a short distance from Tadjurrah, two of the party were assassinated; but this was proved to have been the result of treachery, and partly also from a sufficient guard not having been kept during the night.

The foregoing suggestions are respectfully offered, subject to the disadvantage of my not being acquainted with all that has occurred since I left Abyssinia nearly a twelemonth ago. The change of circumstances may naturally occasion a modification of the details. I cannot, however, but retain the conviction that, with a view to the liberation of the captives and to the safety of their lives in the meanwhile, my plan is in substance preferable either to a formal invasion by a hostile army or the dispatch of a diplomatic mission accompanied by a powerful escort, which would be, in fact, only another form of an invading army.

This plan would possess the further advantage that Her Majesty's Government would not be pledged to an alliance with a potentate who is manifestly unable "to keep open the avenues of approach between the sea-coast and the interior," but would, on the contrary, be left clear to enter into such other arrangements as would tend to promote friendly commercial intercourse with a portion of the globe the importance of which has too long been lost sight of, both as regards the advantages which it offers in itself and yet more so on account of its being the natural highway into the interior of the vast continent of Africa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 101.

Dr. Beke to the Earl of Malmesbury.

My Lord, *Halai, March* 28, 1866.

WHEN directing your Lordship's attention to the Bay of Adulis, as affording the readiest access to the Abyssinian table-land, I ought not to have omitted to remark that the point at which that table-land would thus be reached is at its north-eastern extremity, and that consequently a considerable portion of it would have to be traversed by an invading army before the central and most important provinces of the empire could be reached.

If the occupation of the country, whether permanently or temporarily, were contemplated, this would without doubt be always the best mode of approach, as a secure and inviolable base of operations would be established in the Bay of Adulis itself. But if it were intended to strike terror into the mind of the Emperor Theodore by at once seizing on his strongholds, or, it might be, even liberating the captives at Amba Magdala, whilst he was at a distance and before he could approach for the purpose of removing them or of ordering their execution, then there is another road which is deserving of the serious consideration of the authorities at home.

During my residence in Abyssinia I became acquainted with this road, and was impressed by its natural advantages, which I did not fail to point out in a Memoir on the Commerce of Abyssinia, which I addressed on December 9, 1843, to the Earl of Aberdeen, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and which memoir is referred to in my letter to Earl Russell of May 19, 1865, printed in the papers laid before Parliament (on Lord Chelmsford's motion) on the 23rd of the same month.

After an interval of so many years, my attention has been again specially directed to this road under the following circumstances: towards the end 1864 Mr. W. Desborough Cooley, a well-known geographer (though no traveller), submitted to the Board of Trade a paper on the best means to develop the traffic of Abyssinia. From that Department this paper passed in succession to the Foreign Office and the India Office; and from the latter it was given to Major-General Sir William M. Coghlan to report thereon. By that officer Mr. Cooley's paper was handed over to me, and at his request I drew up a report, which I forwarded to him to use as he might think best.

Inclosed I beg leave to submit to your Lordship a duplicate, in Sir William's own own handwriting, of the Memorandum which he sent in to the India Office on the 17th of December, 1864, together with my original Report.

If I understand Sir William Coghlan rightly, my Report itself was not forwarded from the India Office to the Foreign Office, but merely a general summary of its contents; neither am I aware that it was considered necessary to state that Mr. Cooley's paper had been submitted to me.

But its production could be obtained from the India Office by a motion in either House of Parliament, or otherwise as might be deemed advisable.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

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* This was written during Lord Russell's Administration, when Lord Malmesbury was in opposition. April 12, 1867.—C. B.

Inclosure 2 in No. 101.

Memorandum by Sir W. Coghlan on Mr. Cooley's Paper on "The Best Means to Develop the Traffic of Abyssinia."

THIS subject is so little understood in England, that my first thought on receiving Mr. Cooley's paper was how I might best supplement his observations by reference to those of other writers, who have either studied Abyssinia or have actually travelled or resided in that country.

My own personal acquaintance with Eastern Africa is limited to the sea-coast. I have visited almost every port from Massowah in the Red Sea down to Zanzibar, six degrees south of the equator, including Adulis, the ancient port of Abyssinia, by way of Halai and Tigré; but all that I know of the interior was acquired during my long residence at Aden, by means of official connection with the Consuls and Agents, and with personal acquaintance with travellers and nations of the country, from whom I necessarily learned something of its social, its political, and its commercial condition and capabilities.

It appears to me, however, that in England, or I might say in all Europe, there is only one man who has a very intimate personal knowledge of Abyssinia. The learned Dr. Beke stands quite alone. He is at once a profound scholar, an enterprising traveller, a skilful geographer. His journey to Shoa, his long residence in Abyssinia, his accurate map of the country, and his numerous letters on its commerce and politics, all testify to the ability and the zeal which he has for more than a quarter of a century past applied to questions which have excited only a faint interest in England, and which now owe their importance as much to the accident which has befallen our Consul as to any concern which the authorities and the public here taken in the remote region on which an accomplished author and traveller has expended so much learning and energy.

Having Dr. Beke's works at hand, I naturally referred to them, and from them I was led to a personal communication with Dr. Beke himself; the result of which is a memorandum so complete, that I cannot reconcile myself to mutilate it by extract: I therefore give it entire:—

"Apart from historical questions, that which most concerns is how we can now best establish commercial relations with a country which undoubtedly possesses great commercial capabilities. It appears to me, that this can be brought about only by establishing friendly relations with the King Theodorus; by sending an embassy, which should include the scientific as well as the commercial element; or by a preliminary communication of a purely diplomatic character. The position of our Consul, now a prisoner at Gondar, presents a difficulty towards the immediate carrying out of either of these proposals; but it may be hoped that Mr. Rassam's visit may remove it, and enable Her Majesty's Government, without loss of dignity, to open communications and to confirm a friendship which could not fail gradually to foster the traffic so desirable for both parties. Obviously, however, the result of Mr. Rassam's mission must be known before any such steps can be adopted."

(Signed) W. M. COGHLAN.

Ramsgate, December 17, 1864.

Inclosure 3 No. 101.

Dr. Beke to the Earl of Malmesbury.

My Lord, *Halai, April* 27, 1866.

I HAD the honour to address your Lordship on March 28th and April 2nd (under one envelope), and again on April 9th. These letters were sent down to Mr. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate at Massowah, to be forwarded by the "Victoria," which steamer arrived there on April 16th, and returned next day to Aden. To my exceeding annoyance Mr. Munzinger informs me that, through an oversight on his part, the packet containing the earlier two of my letters to your Lordship was not delivered to the captain of the "Victoria." They will therefore only reach your Lordship's hands at the same time as the present communication.

The delay in the arrival of these letters is, however, not very important, as the necessity for the consideration of the best way of entering Abyssinia has fortunately not occurred, and it is to be hoped will not arise. The reports of Mr. Rassam's proceedings are most favourable, and if only they are to be depended on, we may expect soon to witness the arrival at Massowah of Her Majesty's Consul and the rest of the unfortunate Europeans who have so long been in chains.

But, even supposing the Emperor to have thus promptly responded to Her Majesty's letter, there is a contingency which may yet arise. Mr. Rassam will doubtless have entered into some engagements on behalf of Her Majesty, and the Abyssinian monarch may be suspicious as to the non-fulfilment of these engagements when once Mr. Rassam and the rest of the prisoners are beyond his reach. He may therefore insist on retaining a hostage for the fulfilment of these engagements, and if so, whom so likely as Mr. Rassam himself? Without discussing the rights of the matter, I will merely say that native Abyssinians of intelligence, who know Theodore's character well, assure me that nothing is more probable.

The fact, therefore, shall simply be assumed, and the question then is, what would Her Majesty's Government do in such a case? They might adopt one of three courses, which have already been suggested with a view to the liberation of Consul Cameron and his companions:—

1. Send an Embassy on a more extensive scale.
2. Declare war against Theodore and invade his country.
3. Induce the Egyptian Government in their stead to invade Abyssinia.

The first would now be out of the question; the other two might, and doubtless would, lead to the imprisonment, torture, and cruel death of the unfortunate "hostage."

As, however, something must be done, it remains to be seen whether there might not be a fair prospect of securing his safety by some indirect means. And the following plan has suggested itself to me, which I beg leave to submit for your Lordship's consideration.

The natives of Abyssinia, from one end of the country to the other, are so thoroughly disgusted with Theodore that they would gladly hail the accession to the throne of any one who would dare to place himself on it. Now there are several "rebel" Chiefs, each of whom might be inclined to declare himself Emperor, if he saw the way at all clear.

The grandson of Sáhela Selásye, King of Shoa, whose dominions were completely conquered by Theodore, and himself taken prisoner, escaped last year, and has re-asserted his independence. His dominions lie in the south-east of Abyssinia. Tádela Gwálu, of Godjam, is the representative of a line of illustrious ancestors, and possesses great power and influence in the south-west; Tessu Gobazye, a *nouveau né*, has acquired considerable power in the north-west; and lastly, the Waagshum Gobazye, whose hereditary dominions are in Lasta, has, since the death of Agan Negúsye, acquired possession of Tigré in the north-east. The absolute power of each of these Chiefs may perhaps be regarded as about equal, and any one of them, if backed or even encouraged by a foreign Power, would be able to compete with Theodore, whose power, and yet more his *prestige*, have long been on the wane, and who only keeps together a strong army by leading them from province to province to plunder and destroy.

Of these four pretenders there can be no question that Waagshum Gobazye has the greatest claim to the sympathy and support of an European Power, as being the ruler of the most important division of the Empire, on account of its proximity to the sea-coast.

The arguments adduced in the letter which I addressed in 1848 to the late Viscount Palmerston, when Foreign Secretary, and which is given in my printed "Letters on the Commerce and Politics of Abyssinia," remain unaltered, being as applicable to the state of affairs at the present day as they were at the time when they were written.

The present Ruler of Tigré has, however, peculiar personal advantages, possessed neither by any of his rivals nor by any of his predecessors in the government of that Province. This is shown in the accompanying Memorandum, to which I beg leave to refer. There can be no question that if the Waagshum were to announce publicly the resumption of the throne of his ancestors, all the inhabitants of the Empire would flock to his standard, and he would soon put an end to the tyranny and life of the usurper Theodore, and silence the claims of all other pretenders.

I would therefore respectfully suggest that the British Government should afford to Waagshum Gobazye such material assistance and support as should enable him to declare himself Emperor of Abyssinia and to maintain himself afterwards on the throne. For this purpose it might not be necessary, and with a view to the safety of the assumed "hostage" it would hardly be avoidable, for such support to be afforded openly. A few hundred muskets, with an ample supply of ammunition and a number of Congreve rockets (transportable where Artillery could not be, and better suited to the object in view), and in addition to them a moderate subsidy in money, are all that would be requisite. These might easily be introduced from the head of the Bay of Adulis (Annesley Bay); or if the susceptibilities of the Egyptian Government should have to be considered, they might be "run" from Harnea, in Howakil Bay, which is about the same latitude (15° north) as the head of Annesley Bay, only in the main sea, and altogether away from Massowah. Perhaps a

few European soldiers might at the same time be introduced to fire the rockets and to drill the natives in the proper use of the muskets, but this would depend upon circumstances.

I should be quite ready to undertake the suitable negotiations and arrangements with Waagshum Gobazye. I am not aware that I am known to him personally, but I was at his father's court at Sokota in 1843, on my way home, and was well treated by him during my short stay there.

According to all accounts Gobazye is of considerable talent, brave, and of good character and amiable disposition. He is about thirty years of age.

This recognition and support of Gobazye might be undertaken either by England alone or in conjunction with France.

To continue on terms of any sort with Theodore would be loss of time, and even worse. He cannot last much longer under any circumstances, and it might be hoped his defeat or death would, without more, leave the "British hostage" free to quit the country, and Her Majesty's Government free from all engagements with him.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

P.S. *Massowah, May* 12, 1866.—Intelligence has just been received that the captives have started on their way to the coast, and may be shortly expected either here or at Sowakin. Notwithstanding this good news, I still retain the opinion expressed in my letter, and therefore send it on.

C. B.

Inclosure 4 in No. 101.

Memorandum by Dr. Beke, showing the Right of Waagshun Góbazye to the Throne of Abyssinia.

THE antiquity and former rank, wealth, and power of the Empire of Ethiopia or Abyssinia are matters of history.

Its inhabitants received Christianity in the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine; and intimate relations continued to subsist between the Byzantine Empire and Ethiopia till the rise and advance of Mohammedanism shut the latter out from the Western world.

Without dwelling on the details of the internal history of Abyssinia, it will be sufficient to state that about 1,000 years ago the line of Christian Sovereigns claiming descent from Menilek, the son of Solomon, King of Israel, and the Queen of Sheba, was violently set aside by a female Falásha (Israelitish) usurper, who massacred all the members save one of the Imperial family, and whose descendants occupied the throne for nearly 200 years. About the time of the Norman Conquest of England, this intrusive dynasty was superseded by a Christian Sovereign of the House of Zagye, whose origin was in the Kingdom of Lasta, and which continued to reign till the year 1268, when one of the most remarkable events in the history of any nation is said to have occurred.

The reigning Emperor, Nakwetolaab, at the instance of the famous native Saint, Abuna Tekla Haimanot, voluntarily abdicated the throne of Ethiopia in favour of Yekweno Amlak, who claimed to be descended from the sole survivor of the family of Menilek. In return for this abdication, Nakwetolaab and his descendants were recognized as independent Sovereigns in Waag, the chief province of Lasta, subject only to the suzerainty of the Emperors, and with the agreement that if the line of Yekweno Amlak should ever fail, that of Nakwetolaab should resume the throne. The latter had further the following personal privileges conferred on them; they might enter the inner court of the palace with their drums beating; might come before the Emperor without uncovering the upper part of the body and rolling their robe round their waist; might be seated at meals before the tables are served (all other persons standing); and might occupy a chair of state at the side of the Emperor's throne, according to the Abyssinian saying —

"Negus la Wanbar,
Waagshum la Manbar."

These privileges were retained inviolate by the Waagshums or Princes of Waag, till the time of the present usurper, Theodore, who barbarously mutilated and then hanged Waagshum Gebra Medhin, the father of the present Góbazye, and annulled all his rights and privileges.

For 600 years from the time of Yekweno Amlak, the throne of Ethiopia was occupied by the lineal descendants of that monarch, whose power and authority kept, however, gradually on the wane; till at length, towards the close of the eighteenth century, the once

absolute and independent Emperors of Ethiopia, like the last Merovingian Kings of France, became mere tools in the hands of their *maires du palais*, who bore the title of "Ras," a dignity which for more than half a century was hereditary in the family of Ras Guksa.

The form of placing a puppet Emperor on the throne was continued till Ras Ali, Guksa's grandson, was conquered by his son-in-law, Dedjatj Kassai, of Kwara, who having subjugated all his rivals, and scorning the secondary title of Ras, caused himself to be crowned Emperor by the name of Theodore II. In doing so he pretended to be the monarch of that name who, according to a native prophecy, is to divide the Eastern world with the Emperors of Rome—that is to say, the Eastern Empire; he being crowned at Jerusalem whilst the Emperor of Russia, as the head of the Greek Empire, is crowned at Constantinople, and in whose time all the world is to become Christian.

This vast scheme, which is rather an appropriation than a fulfilment of the native prophecy, is of foreign origin. It would be out of place here to trace it to its source; but it may be stated as a fact that the Abyssinians generally did not readily accept the present usurper as the true "Theodore" of prophecy, who is to come from the East, whereas Kassai's native country, Kwara, is in the west; that it was only in consequence of his wonderful success at first that they submitted to close their eyes to this discrepancy; and that in consequence of his excessive tyranny, cruelty, and oppression—so diametrically opposed to the attributes of the Christian Monarch they were led to expect—they now style him "Pharaoh, King of Egypt," and sigh for the Moses who is to deliver them from the hands of the oppressor.

To look for such a deliverer from among the degenerate descendants of Yekweno Amlak would be useless. Since the death of the Emperor Tekla Haimanot II, now just a century ago, they have ceased to occupy the throne of their illustrious ancestors by succession, having been placed on it and removed from it at the caprice of every powerful Chief who could gain possession of the capital, and desired the title of Ras or Vizier as a cloak to his actual power. So frequent, indeed, were those changes that there were as many as six "Emperors" living at one time, despised and neglected; and the existing members of this family are become so thoroughly lowered and contemptible, and their right to the throne so completely ignored, that not one of them could hope to bring a dozen soldiers to rally round the standard of "the Lion of the Tribe of Judah" were he to unfurl it—an act of madness which would inevitably insure his immediate and violent death.

Under these circumstances the line of Yekweno Amlak may be considered as virtually extinct; and the existing hereditary Prince of Waag, Góbazye, as the descendant and representative of the Emperor Nakwetolaab, has consequently a right to resume the throne abdicated by his ancestor, under the contract which reserved that throne to his descendants in the event which may be regarded as having now occurred.

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

Halai, Abyssinia, April 27, 1866.

Inclosure 5 in No. 101.

Extract from a Lecture on "Abyssinia and the Abyssinians," delivered by Dr. Beke, in the Theatre of the London Institution, on Wednesday, January 16, 1867.

RISING from the alluvial plains which skirt it on the north-west, the mountain system of Abyssinia widens as it extends southwards, till it soon acquires a breadth of 200 or 300 miles, and even more, forming an extensive table-land, of which the seaward edge runs from north to south at a general elevation of about 8,000 feet, and presents therefore towards the sea-coast the appearance of a lofty range of mountains.

This table-land is intersected by numerous streams, which, after a short course over the surface of the plateau, fall abruptly into deep-cut valleys, in which they soon reach a depression of 3,000 or 4,000 feet below the general level of the table-land. The valleys of the principal rivers are of considerable width; that of the Abai, for example, in the south of the peninsula of Godjam, is at least twenty-five miles between the extreme points where it breaks from the table-land on either side. These deep-cut valleys are the peculiar characteristic of Abyssinia, as serving to convert what was originally a plain country into a mountainous one, not by upraising the mountains themselves, but by carving them out of the solid mass through the formation of these valleys. Hence it may be understood how a traveller, who has not taken a comprehensive view of the entire region, and who finds himself on the banks of a river shut up within such a mass of broken country, rising

to the height of 3,000 or 4,000 feet on either side of him, should be led to imagine that in ascending from the river he was ascending a lofty mountain or crossing a mountain chain; whereas, on arriving at the summit, he has in reality merely reached the continuation of the table-land, from which he had previously descended on the opposite side of the river. This should be borne in mind when perusing the works of travellers in Abyssinia or countries of a similar character, many of whom, under an erroneous impression, describe mountains where mountains, in the usual acceptation of the term, do not exist.

The Amba, or hill-fort, of Magdala, the state-prison of the Emperor Theodore, in which the unhappy European captives have so long been, and still are, confined, may be adduced as an instance of the erroneous conceptions to which this mistaken view of the physical character of Abyssinia may give rise.

Mr. Stern, one of the ill-fated prisoners, in a letter to his wife, which I have quoted in my recently published work, "The British Captives in Abyssinia," says:—"As I am reminded of the approach of winter, I will give you a hasty sketch of the place where we and upwards of 200 unhappy natives of all ranks and conditions may have to pass the ensuing inclement season of winter. [And unfortunately they passed not only that winter, but also a second, and I much fear they will have to pass a third.] Just picture to your imagination an isolated locality, rising out of the midst of a jumble of conical hills, deep ravines, and serrated ridges, and you have Amba Magdala. On the summit there are clusters of thatched huts, occupied by about 1,000 troops. Not far from the church, which you recognize by an apex surmounted by a glittering cross, you gaze on a mass of wretched hovels, that stand in mocking contrast round four spacious circular dwellings. You approach a few steps nearer, and you behold a strong thorn fence, guarded by groups of sooty soldiers, close to whom lie, basking in the sun, bands of unfortunates loaded with galling fetters. This is the royal prison." This description, though minute in some particulars, does not enable us to form any definite idea of the natural features of the place.

We will now turn to the description which the well-known missionary, Dr. Krapf, has given of Magdala, as seen by him on his journey from Shoa in March 1842. Having left Tanta, the residence of the Imam Liban, the Mohammedan Chief of Warrahemano, since conquered by the Emperor Theodore, Dr. Krapf reached the bed of a river running to the Bashilo, whence, he says, he "saw the stronghold of Magdala. This is a high and large hill resembling the form of a square, the banks of which are high and almost perpendicular. There is a plain on the top, with water and a field for cultivation, on which the Imam has a garrison and keeps his treasures, and in which he takes refuge when an enemy is too strong for him. No Abyssinian force could easily take this stronghold. There is only one entrance, which is in the east."

From this it will be perceived that Dr. Krapf, being in the bed of the river, described Magdala as "a high and large hill," which, without the explanation I am about to give, would convey an entirely erroneous idea of the true character of the place. I never was at Magdala myself, but I have seen numerous Ambas of precisely similar character; and the following description of that of Dey, which I visited in October 1841, will answer equally well for Magdala.

After leaving Angolálla, the Galla capital of Shoa, I proceeded westward across the level country of Shoa Myeda (the plains of Shoa), till, in the district of Enóri, "the plain gradually narrows between the valley of the River Bérsena and that of the Adabai, and at length ends in a point, across which a stockade is thrown, at the gate of which travellers are stopped till the Governor's permission is obtained for their passage. Upon admission, their road passes round to the right, within this stockade, but outside of an inner one, descending almost perpendicularly down abrupt basaltic rocks, by a narrow path impracticable for beasts of burthen. My luggage had consequently to be unloaded at the outer gate, and carried on men's backs to near the bottom of this pass, where it was reloaded.

"After descending a cross valley, between the two principal ones, which is however far from attaining their depth, the road winds round to the left, and up a separate mass of rock of considerable extent, forming the Amba or hill-fort of Dey, the residence of Aito Bisaiver, the Governor of the province Morat, which name the country bears from the point where the descent from Shoa Myeda begins. On reaching the top of the Amba, one finds oneself on a level of sufficient extent to contain a tolerably large village of the Governor's retainers, reaching on the west side to the church of St. George, where the ground begins to fall."

It will be perceived how completely this description, though of a totally different place, takes in all the points mentioned by both Mr. Stern and Dr. Krapf respecting Magdala: "The elevation of Dey, which is merely a continuation of the plateau of Shoa

Myeda, and is about the same distance as Magdala from the edge of the table-land (forty or fifty miles), I found to be 7,887 feet, being between 600 and 700 feet lower than Angolalla. The fortress of Dey is a very important station, situated as it is at the junction of the Adabai and Berséna; it being thus the key to the high plain country to the west, at the same time that it commands the mountainous country below it in the opposite direction." For it must be remarked that, from the peculiar physical character of Abyssinia, the plain country is above, whilst the mountainous country is below. There are only three roads by which the Amba of Dey is at all accessible; and only one of these is practicable for beasts of burthen, the other two being through mere fissures in the rock, by which only one person can pass at a time.

When I left Dey, the road at first went for some little distance past the church of St. George, most delightfully situated on a level and smooth plot of grass studded with cypresses, and commanding an extensive view over the valleys to the north and south. The baggage horses having to make a long circuit round the Amba, I remained seated for upwards of an hour; when, seeing them below, I descended by a chasm in the rock, still worse than that by Enori, to the large village of Debra Biserat."

I need not continue further the narrative of my journey, which, during the same and part of the following day, was always descending. Sufficient will have been said to show that Amba Magdala, though from the bed of the river below it had to Dr. Krapf the appearance of a high and large hill, is merely a point of the table land of Warrahemano; it being most probably several hundred feet lower than the mass of that table land, in the same way that Dey is lower than the plains of Shoa, of which it is the extremity.

It is hardly necessary that I should urge the importance of bearing this distinction in mind, especially as Abyssinia possesses numerous mountains properly so called.

No. 102.

Lord Stanley to His Majesty Theodore, King of Abyssinia.

Foreign Office, London, April 16, 1867.

I AM commanded by the Queen, my Sovereign, to state to your Majesty that she had expected to learn by this time that the prisoners, respecting whom Her Majesty wrote to you, on the 4th October last, had been all released and had arrived at Massowah, and that the presents which were awaiting their arrival at Massowah were already on their way to Abyssinia. The Queen regrets to find that although you had become acquainted with the contents of her letter, by the copy sent up by Mr. Flad, you had hesitated to comply with Her Majesty's wishes for the release of the prisoners, and instead of sending them at once to Massowah to be exchanged against the presents, had looked still to obtain the presents on the faith of your own assurance that on the receipt of them you would release the captives. Looking to what has already passed, the Queen cannot again write to your Majesty; but she has desired me to write, and to say that her determination, as expressed in Her Majesty's letter, of which you know the contents, is unchanged and unchangeable, and that so far from being willing to allow the presents to go on before the prisoners have reached Massowah, the Queen has sent orders that the presents shall be returned to Europe, unless the British authorities at Massowah are satisfied within three months after the dispatch of this letter from that port, a copy of which is sent by three different messengers, that the prisoners are actually released and on their way to the coast. In that case the return of the presents may be deferred for such time as may suffice for the prisoners to perform the journey to Massowah, on their arrival at which place the presents will be made over to your agents.

The Queen has forbidden her Agents to enter into further correspondence on these matters. Her Majesty requires, for the last time, by her Secretary of State, that the prisoners should be made over to her, and she trusts that your Majesty will be sufficiently well advised to comply with her demand, rather than forfeit the friendship which, notwithstanding all that has happened, the Queen is still disposed to entertain for you.

Having thus fulfilled the commands of the Queen my Sovereign, I bid your Majesty heartily farewell.

Your sincere friend,
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 103.

Lord Stanley to Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 20, 1867.

I HAVE received your several despatches of December 10, 1866, January 15, February 15, and February 28, 1867, and have learnt therefrom, with unfeigned concern, that all the efforts which have hitherto been made by Her Majesty's Government to effect by reasonable means the release of the prisoners, detained in captivity by King Theodore, have been unsuccessful. Up to this time Her Majesty's Government have been willing to believe that King Theodore's intentions were pacific, and were based upon a desire, however unusually indicated according to European notions, of introducing into his country the enlightened intelligence of other Christian nations; but the fact of the King having lost sight of the rule, observed throughout all ages, of considering the person of an Envoy as sacred, and having imprisoned and detained in chains Mr. Rassam and his companions, who were sent by the Queen on a peaceful mission to him, necessarily leads Her Majesty's Government to the conclusion that peaceful relations are not the King's object, and that the idea of entering into friendly relations with him must be abandoned.

Under these circumstances it will be for Her Majesty's Government to consider carefully the course which they shall adopt; but being unwilling, at least in the first instance, to proceed to extremities, I have addressed to King Theodore, by Her Majesty's command, the accompanying letter,* which you will forward to him; and if, at the expiration of three months from the date of despatching it to him, the captives shall not have been set at liberty, and have left Abyssinia, you will either send home, or sell the presents now in your charge, and hold the proceeds at my disposal.

I have only to add that I am in communication with the India and War Offices, in regard to any further steps which circumstances may render necessary.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 104.

Lord Stanley to Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 20, 1867.

WITH reference to my letter of this day's date, forwarding a letter which I have addressed to King Theodore, I have now to state to you that I concur in the suggestion made in your letter of the 4th of March, that the artizans who went out under your supervision, with a view of entering into King Theodore's service, should at once be advised to return to England, as Her Majesty's Government cannot now, under any circumstances, sanction their proceeding to Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 105.

Mr. Murray to Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 20, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you a duplicate and triplicate of Her Majesty's letter to King Theodore, referred to in his Lordship's despatch of to-day, and I am to instruct you to send each of the three copies to Magdala by a separate messenger.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 106.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Merivale.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 20, 1867.

THE Secretary of State for India is already aware, from the communications made to him from the Political Resident at Aden, of the present position of affairs between this

* No. 102.

country and Abyssinia; and I am directed by Lord Stanley to request that you will call his attention to the gravity of the circumstances, and to the necessity of considering what further steps should be taken with a view of procuring the release of the captives.

Besides Colonel Merewether's Reports, of which, for convenience, I transmit to you printed copies,* Lord Stanley has received from Major-General Sir William Coghlan a memorandum, of which a copy is also annexed ;† on the measures which it might be possible to adopt for effecting the object in view, and as the employment or co-operation of Her Majesty's Indian forces would be necessary in carrying out operations, Lord Stanley is anxious to obtain the opinion of Sir Stafford Northcote as to the course to be pursued.

You will perceive that Colonel Merewether is of opinion that force must be resorted to ; and that Sir William Coghlan, who has hitherto deprecated the employment of force, has reluctantly come to the conclusion that it is inevitable. He seems, however, to think that the preliminary steps which would be necessary before troops could be dispatched from India, and which would, of course, reach King Theodore's ears, might have the effect of opening his eyes to the danger of persevering in a wrongful course, and might produce the release of the captives, in which case, perhaps, the employment of troops might be avoided.

The probability of their being required must, however, be so far counted on, in the event of its being decided to employ force, as to insure their services being available at the right season, which appears to be in October.

A copy of this letter will be sent to the Secretary of State for War, with whom I am to request that Sir Stafford Northcote will communicate.

I also transmit copies of two letters which Lord Stanley has addressed to Colonel Merewether in reply to his last communications,‡ and also a copy of the letter therein referred to as addressed by Lord Stanley to King Theodore.

Since the above was written Lord Stanley has received a letter (copy inclosed§) from Dr. Beke, whose information as to routes in Abyssinia may be of value.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 107.

Mr. Murray to Sir E. Lugard.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 20, 1867.

THE Secretary of State for War is doubtless aware, from papers which have been laid before Parliament, that early in the year 1864, King Theodore, of Abyssinia, imprisoned and ill-treated Her Majesty's Consul; and that with a view of effecting Captain Cameron's release, a special mission was sent to that country in charge of Mr. Rassam, the Assistant Political Resident at Aden, who was accompanied by two British officers, and who was the bearer of a letter from the Queen to King Theodore.

This mission, however, has not only been unsuccessful, but its members have also been detained in captivity and in chains.

The time has, therefore, arrived when it is needful for Her Majesty's Government to consider what further steps it may be at once pessible and advisable to take in order to vindicate the honour of the Crown, and to protect Her Majesty's subjects from further harm.

I am accordingly directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you the accompanying printed papers, which contain a history of all that has passed up to the present time, together with a copy of a letter to the India Office, in which the assistance and co-operation of that Department is requested; and I am to state that Lord Stanley would be glad that this subject should engage the early and careful consideration of Sir John Pakington, with a view of deciding upon the course to be adopted.

Since the above was written Lord Stanley has received a letter (copy inclosed§) from Dr. Beke, whose information as to routes in Abyssinia may be of value.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* No. 90, Inclosure in No. 91, Inclosure 1 in No. 98, and Nos. 97 and 98.
† No. 95. ‡ Nos. 103 and 105. § No. 99.

No. 108.

Consul Moore to Lord Stanley.—(*Received April* 28.)

My Lord, *Jerusalem, April* 3, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I received a few days ago, through Colonel Stanton, the letter addressed to the King of Abyssinia by the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, relative to the British captives in that country, obtained by Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte. I forthwith waited on the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, with whom I am on very friendly terms, who promised me to give his immediate attention to the matter. It was agreed that his Eminence should send me word when his arrangements were made, when I would repair to the Patriarchate to be made acquainted therewith; I begged the Patriarch to select an ecclesiastic of suitable rank, and urged, in becoming terms, expedition.

To-day I received the invitation agreed upon, and have just returned from the interview with the Patriarch. His Eminence informed me that he had selected Bishop Sahak, his Vicar-General, to proceed to Abyssinia on this service, and that he would furnish him with a letter to the King, in addition to that of the Constantinople Prelate, which he did not consider to be of much use, with an Abyssinian translation (as it was very doubtful whether a proper translation from the Armenian or Arabic could be made on the spot), and with presents consisting of objects from Jerusalem, such as crucifixes, rosaries, &c., which would be held in the highest veneration by the King. His Eminence added, that the letter was being drawn up, properly illuminated, and the presents selected, and that he hoped all would be ready in time to enable his Envoy to embark for Egypt by the next French steamer on the 14th instant. I applauded the Patriarch's arrangements and thanked him.

I will not fail to report to your Lordship the final arrangements and the departure of the Bishop.

I should add that the Patriarch desired that the name and nature of the mission of his Envoy should not transpire, to prevent endeavours being made to thwart the object in view.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 109.

Lord Stanley to Consul Moore.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 25, 1867.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 3rd instant, reporting the arrangements which have been made by the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem to send an Envoy to Abyssinia with a view to procure the release of the British captives in that country; and I have to instruct you to express to the Patriarch the high sense entertained by Her Majesty's Government of his prompt and friendly action in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 110.

Consul Moore to Lord Stanley.—(*Received April* 29.)

My Lord, *Jerusalem, April* 13, 1867.

REFERRING to my despatch of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to report to your Lordship the departure this day of Archbishop Sahak, accompanied by a priest, on his mission to the King of Abyssinia, viâ Alexandria and Suez.

I beg leave to inclose herewith copies of translations with which I have been furnished by the Armenian Patriarch, of the letters addressed by him to King Theodore. As your Lordship will perceive, his Eminence further strengthens his appeal to the Abyssinian ruler by assurances of protection and assistance to Abyssinian residents and pilgrims visiting Jerusalem, likely to carry great weight with the King. The letters, which are accompanied with Abyssinian translations, are very handsomely illuminated with sacred

subjects. The Patriarch has had the happy idea of heading his letter with a picture of Our Saviour bound in chains. The presents, which I have seen, consist of articles in olive wood from the Mount of Olives, and mother-o'-pearl from Bethlehem, chaplets, a sceptre made of wood from Abraham's oak, &c., and a valuable gold cross, surrounded with diamonds, and containing relics held in high veneration by Orientals. Besides these, the Patriarch has thought fit to send with the Archbishop a complete and splendid suit of vestments, crozier, prayer-book, communion plate, &c., so as to enable him to perform high mass before the King in full canonicals, with accessories coming from the Holy City.

There can be no doubt that the measures which the forethought and solicitude of the Patriarch of Jerusalem have devised are calculated to constitute a powerful appeal to the feelings of the King.

Archhishop Sahak will communicate with Colonel Stanton at Cairo, to whom I have furnished him with the needful introduction, with a request that he would provide him with letters of recommendation to Her Majesty's Consuls at Suez and Jeddah, desiring them to afford the Envoy every facility for the prosecution of his voyage to Massowah. I have also sent to Colonel Stanton copies of this and of my previous despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 110.

Letter of the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem to the King of Abyssinia.

(Translation from the Armenian.)

NOUS, Isaïe, Archevêque et par la grâce de Dieu Patriarche des Arméniens de Jerusalem, occupant de Siège de l'Apôtre St. Jacques, vous offrons nos salutations apostoliques, et nous prions Dieu qu'il vous comble des bénédictions et des graces de la Saint Cité de Jerusalem, de Nazareth, de Bethlehem, du Jourdain, du Saint Tombeau de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ, de Golgotha, du mont de l'Ascension, du Cenacle de Sion, et de tous les Lieux Saints et glorieux, où ont été accomplis les mystères de l'Incarnation du Fils de Dieu, et de l'Eglise Apostolique de St. Jacques, frère de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ. Que le Ciel vieulle exaucer nos prières que nous Lui addressons pour la prospérité de votre royaume, qu'il propage largement tous les biens célestes sur la personne de votre Majesté, sur l'auguste famille et sur tout l'Etat gouverné par votre puissante Souveraineté. Ainsi soit-il !

En vous offrant les bénédictions célestes de ces lieux saints, nous déclarons aussi à votre Majesté très-gracieuse les désirs qu'ont conçus mes prédécesseurs, d'heureuse memoire, d'établir des relations intimes et de pure charité Chrétienne entre eux et votre Majesté mais les difficultés des routes les ont empêchés de l'exécuter. Les mêmes désirs nous animaient aussi, il y a deux ans, depuis que nous avons montés le Siège de l'Apôtre St Jacques, de fair parvenir nos Nonces jusqu'aux pieds de votre trône, et nous nous sommes retenus par les risques des routes. La bonté divine daigna enfin nous accorder l'occasion favorable pour pouvoir porter à la connaissance de votre Majesté très-Chrétienne, au moyen de la présente bulle, les vœux les plus intimes et les souhaits pleins de sincérité et de respects que nous portons à l'égard de votre Majesté. Pour vous donner une preuve plus sensible encore de nos hautes vénérations, nous avons pensé de les faire présenter à votre très-Chrétienne Majesté par l'entremise de mon Vicaire le très-Révérend Archevêque Sahak et le très honoré Père Dimothéos, membre du Conseil Administratif du Siège Apostolique, tous les deux chéris et respectés par nous. Ils sont chargés aussi de remettre à votre Majesté une crois en or garnie de diamants renfermant un morceau de la vraie croix de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ, laquelle nous la prions d'accepter bénignement et de la porter au cou comme une décoration digne d'un Roi Chrétien.

Sire, notre dernier prédécesseur Jean V, d'heureuse mémoire, fut effectivement heureux d'avoir eu l'honneur d'accueillir son Altesse les Ministre de votre Majesté, qui, l'an 1858 de notre Sauveur, a fait un pélérinage au lieux saints. Il a pu bien observer la sympathie que nous avons à l'égard de votre Majesté, et les affections charitables que nous témoignons matériellement aux pieux religieux Ethiopiens qui se trouvent à Jerusalem, et qui, dès les temps immémoriales, sont sous la sauvegarde de notre Siège Apostolique. Nous avons aussi, à notre tour, reconnu la bienveillance et les sentiments pieux de Son Altesse, lequel est, sans aucun doute, inspiré par votre Majesté très-Chrétienne, et que la personne de votre Ministre n'était que le digne représentant des précieuses qualités de votre Majeste.

Veuillez, Sire, accueillir gracieusement les deux humbles serviteurs le très Révérend Archevêque Sahak et le très-honoré Père Dimothéos, et daignez leur accorder votre audience particulière, et en même temps votre haute protection jusqu'au temps que votre Majesté voudra bien leur donner le congé. Que la paix et la Grâce de Dieu soient toujours avec vous! Ainsi soit-il!

Donné au Siège Apostolique de St. Jacques le 30 Mars de l'an 1867 de notre Sauveur.

Inclosure 2 in No. 110.

Letter of the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem to the King of Abyssinia.

(Translation from the Armenian.)

NOUS, Isaïe, serviteur de Jésus Christ et, par la grâce de Dieu, Archevêque et Patriarche des Arméniens de Jérusalem, et gardien des Lieux Saints, offrons avec les divines bénédictions et les grâces de la Sainte Cité, nos salutations apostoliques à votre Majesté Très Chrétienne, Souverain d'Ethiopie. Que la protection céleste et les regards de la Providence divine soient toujours sur la personne de votre Majesté, sur la famille Royale, et sur tout l'Etat gouverné par votre puissante souveraineté!

Nous connaissons, Sire, la haute prudence et l'amour de la justice dont votre Majesté est caracterisée. Nous sommes plus enchantés de voir en votre auguste personne le vrai type de la Reine dont la Sainte Ecriture fait les éloges, qui était passionnée de la sagesse du Roi Solomon. C'est le même sang, sans doute, qui circule dans les veines de votre Majesté, la même équité que celle de Solomon qui vous ranime. Ces précieuses qualités, donc, qui brillent sur votre auguste personne nous ont encouragés de mettre aux pieds de votre sublime trône nos très humbles prières.

Nous sommes assurés qu'elles seront exaucées par votre Majesté très miséricordieuse pour l'amour de Jésus Christ, qui nous a donné en sa personne l'exemple d'humilité et de douceur, et qui nous a prescrit aussi de visiter tous ceux qui se trouvent opprimés et privés de leur liberté, qui est préférable à tous les biens du monde.

Nous sommes animés de ces mêmes sentiments évangéliques pour prier votre Majesté très clémente de faire grâce au Consul Anglais et à ses compagnons, et de leur pardonner toutes les fautes qu'ils ont pu avoir commis. Si nos humbles prières seront exaucées par votre clémence, comme nous aimons à y croire, nous seront infiniment obligés et tout le monde sera charmé, ainsi que nous, de l'indulgence que vous aurez bien voulu accorder aux infortunés. Dans cet acte tout philanthropique votre Majesté ne fera que d'augmenter le nombre des priants pour la prospérité de votre Etat, et pour la conservation de la vie précieuse de votre auguste personne.

Que la paix et les grâces de Dieu soient toujours avec vous! Ainsi soit-il!

Donné au Siège Apostolique de St. Jacques, le 30 Mars de l'an 1867 de notre Sauveur.

No. 111.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 29.)

My Lord, *Cairo, April* 17, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship two despatches and inclosures from Colonel Merewether, that have just reached me under flying seal.

Colonel Merewether's last despatch dated Massowah, 6th April, reports the receipt of intelligence from Mr. Rassam dated Magdala the 19th February. Up to that date no change had occurred in the position of the captives, but the messengers who brought this letter state that, on leaving the foot of the mountain, rumours existed that Mr. Rassam had been set at liberty.

Colonel Merewether places no confidence in this report, but if true, reliable intelligence of the fact must shortly be received.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 111.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 30, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to report for your Lordship's information that I returned here this morning.

2. Mr. Flad left this on the 6th instant, four days after my last departure. M. Munzinger accompanied him to within five days' journey of Kassala, to assist in procuring change of camels. They there met the messengers dispatched by the King in January. M. Munzinger parted with Mr. Flad on the 17th, bringing with him the King's messengers, and arrived here on the 23rd instant. Mr. Flad expected to reach Matemma to-day or to-morrow.

3. A copy of translation of the King's letter is appended. It contains merely an expression of the King's expectation of the coming to his Court of all here, and statement that after he has seen a sign of friendship from Her Majesty he would "send them" (Mr. Rassam, &c.), "in a friendly honourable way." From this it might be inferred that on receipt of Her Majesty's letter, and on Mr. Flad's return to Debra Tabor, the King was disposed to release Mr. Rassam and the others, and send them to the frontier. I regret to say that from the intelligence I have received, and as the correspondence already forwarded to your Lordship will have shown, there is not the least hope of this occurring; on the contrary, the letters written after the departure of the messengers, and which were received by the direct route a month ago, lead to the conclusion that his object is to try and get Mr. Flad, the artizans, presents, and myself into his power; before, he will never change his conduct towards Mr. Rassam, and there is not the slightest indication that he will then even comply with Her Majesty's demands.

4. It is contrary to your Lordship's instructions that the artizans and presents should leave this until intimation has been received from the King that he has released Mr. Rassam and the other British subjects now kept in confinement by him. The messengers will therefore be sent back to-morrow with a letter (copy is annexed) from me of the same tenor as the one sent by hand of Mr. Flad.

5. No further letters since those dated 29th January have been received from Magdala, but Mrs. Flad writes to me from Gaffat direct under date 16th February, as follows:—

"A few days ago I received a letter from my husband in which he informs me that he intends leaving Massowah on the 10th January, he also wishes me to write to you. I hope by this time a letter from me to my husband will have arrived at the coast,* together with letters from Captain Cameron to you and my husband which will have given you an insight into the present state of things.

"Owing to Mr. Rassam being confined to the fortress of Magdala, five days' journey from here, the diplomatic despatches of His Majesty took never more time than they ordinarily would, and besides he does not seem in a hurry to finish this business. Yesterday four weeks His Majesty sent off six messengers viâ Matemma, with an answer to you, so that possibly they may have met my husband. From Mr. Rassam and his companions I have not had any news since the 29th January, the road being blocked up, which is a great distress as well to us as to those in the fortress. They are still in the same condition, the chains on their feet. The King said two days ago, when he heard of my husband's arrival at Matemma, he would send for Mr. Rassam to consult with him about what was to be done. The stores which had been sent viâ Matemma for Mr. Rassam arrived nearly two weeks since, and Mr. Rassam's and the others' servants are waiting His Majesty's permission to take on their masters' property, for which they long very much. Shortly ago when His Majesty was reminded by a sentence in Her Majesty's letter, that an Ambassador's person was regarded as sacred, he said to some Europeans that were with him he had chained Mr. Rassam because he had received intelligence from an European residing at Massowah, that the English Government had hostile intentions towards him. M. Munzinger will give you the particulars of a melancholy event that happened shortly ago. Five Germans, among them two missionaries of the Scotch mission, attempted to escape from the King's camp, but having been betrayed, they were, even before setting off, taken and put in chains. They were very imprudent, but nothing else could be said of them against their character."

6. The particulars alluded to are given in a letter from Mrs. Flad to Mr. Hausman, a missionary in Cairo, dated 15th February, forwarded through through M. Munzinger:—

* Copy was forwarded last month.

"The brothers Staiger and Brandeis have been closely confined since three weeks; Bardel had framed with them a project of escape and then betrayed them to the King. I know no particulars about this design, but so much is certain that the brothers, together with the two hunters Schillee and Essler, and Makerer the Frenchman, had for some time been in communication with Bardel. In the middle of January the King ordered them to go to Debra Tabor (Gaffat) with all their baggage; they were to aid Bardel in the construction of a road to Amara Geddel; this was the pretext, but the intention was to lay a trap for them. The poor brothers were imprudent enough to put themselves in the power of a traitor whom they supposed had joined them, and the good opportunity thus offered they believed to be a hint that the right moment to fly had arrived. They minded my safety and that of the Gaffat brethren. They had had many opportunities before at Korata and here too, but were unwilling to harm others by the step. You can imagine what a terror I had when on the night of the 26th January, about 11 o'clock I was roused from the profoundest sleep by a vigorous knocking at the door. The old woman who sleeps with me in the house asked who was there, 'the King,' was the answer. I had no time to dress myself and that was my good fortune; the King was really at the door, and he sent in a slealaka, with sword, spear, shield, who, without asking permission, looked behind my curtain, and could so persuade himself at once that I had never designed to fly, having my three children around me, sleeping most profoundly. He was then civil enough, and ordered five soldiers to watch outside the door. At the same time he examined all the houses at Gaffat; but, finding nothing, he took the guard away. The brothers Staiger and Brandeis, together with the other three named before, were found in their huts ready for flight. Bardel himself had given the signal for decamping; but, instead of taking the road they had agreed upon, he went to the King, and denounced the project. He had, in reality, revealed it before. Then the King promised Bardel he would reward him. The other five were put in chains, when the King asked them, 'Why did you wish to go away? What have you against me?' They answered, 'We have nothing against you; only we longed again to see our country.' They declared also it was Bardel who had seduced them. Bardel also wrote to his compatriot (Makerer), saying he really had the design to fly; but, having persuaded himself that the thing was not feasible, and not having any more control over the others, he had denounced it to the King, so as to prevent worse. The next morning the King made believe that he intended to send the fugitives to Magdala. They were conducted at noon before our house bareheaded and barefooted. I felt so moved that I went down with my children, and bade them farewell. Anna and Frederick wept aloud. The King, who was walking before them, looked back. When I had returned to my house, he asked me, by Bender and Maier, if I preferred to go to my friends the fugitives, or to join his children at Gaffat. I answered, 'My husband has given me Saalmüller as baldaraba, and had put me also under the King's protection.' The King then ordered me to be at Gaffat, where I am able, at least, to aid the poor men."

7. Mrs. Flad also writes to M. Munzinger on the 16th February:

"You will, by the inclosed to Mr. Hausman, be informed of what has happened here *lately. The King has, or feigns to have, the most extravagant ideas about the behaviour* of European Governments. He appeared to be persuaded that my husband was retained as a hostage in the same manner that he retains us. He appeared to be pleased when, last Monday, the 11th February, my husband's letter reached him. But his temper since that has not at all become gayer. What irritates him yet more is, that a great number of his soldiers have deserted him. Of those who were caught again he ordered seventy-eight to be put in a hut, and burnt alive. It was believed that the King would reconcile himself with the Bishop, and the poor prisoners in the fortress had rejoiced at it, because there was a hope that our situation would then have taken a better turn. But the peace negotiations, if they were sincerely meant, miscarried, because of the wounded pride of his legitimate wife, Dedjaj Obeis' daughter. When, not long ago, the King ordered her to join him again, she answered she would come to him, but not as his concubine, and, if so, she felt much happier in the fortress reading her psalter in peace. The King is always here (Gaffat); the natives believe he is kept here by a spirit. Certain it is the works interest him much. Each week we receive from him direct or indirect advice to prepare for going away; but up to this it has been all for nothing. Mrs. Rosenthal has several times asked permission to join her husband (at Magdala). Mr. Rassam, too, entreated the King on her behalf. But although the King has not refused her directly, he retains her here, with vain words we know not the motive of. We have little hope to see this intricate affair resolved in a good way; but, at all events, there is no impossibility of it."

8. I propose proceeding on the 1st proximo to visit the plateau mentioned in my last despatch as distant about eighteen miles in a direct line from this. It is within Egyptian

territory, and some 4,000 feet above the level of the sea; so may be found useful hereafter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 111.

King Theodore to Mr. Flad.

(Translation.)

In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God.

This letter, which is sent from the King of Kings, Theodorus, may it reach Mr. Flad. How have you spent your time? God be praised I am well.

On the 29th of December your three different messengers you had sent to me from Massowah arrived here. Tell those men who arrived with you, who are the people of my friend the Queen, and Colonel Merewether, How are you? from me. Mr. Rassam, Mr. Cameron, with the rest of the Europeans, are by the power of God all well.

Mr. Rassam sends a letter by his servant. We are waiting for the arrival of all of you. I, a poor man, am waiting for the word (will) of the great Queen of England and Ireland, Victoria my friend, who is a friend of faith and love (friendship), on this account I keep them (Mr. Rassam, &c.) waiting here. If Her Majesty send me a sign of friendship, bring it to me; and after I have seen it, I will send them in a friendly honourable way (manner) to me by the way of Matemma.

Written January, in the year of our Lord, 1859 (Abyssinian year).

(Received March 17, 1867.)

(Signed)

Inclosure 3 in No. 111.

Colonel Merewether to King Theodore.

Most gracious Sovereign, *Massowah, March* 20, 1867.

YOUR Majesty's letter of the 7th January has been forwarded to me by Mr. Flad.

This gentleman left Massowah on the 6th of the month, and should by this time be uear Metummah, on his way to your Majesty's presence. May he arrive at a fortunate moment! He will deliver the letter from her gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, conveying to your Majesty's the assurance of Her Majesty's friendly intentions.

In order that the terms of that letter may be exactly carried out, I trust I may have early intimation of the arrangements your Majesty has been pleased to make for the appointment of suitable officers to accompany Mr. Rassam and the other British subjects to the coast, so that on their arrival Her Majesty's gracious wishes may be fulfilled.

I hope this will find your Majesty in the enjoyment of excellent health, and have the honour to subscribe myself, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 4 in No. 111.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.

My Lord, *Massowah, April* 6, 1867.

I RETURNED to this yesterday evening from visiting the plateau of Agametta. An account of the country traversed is given in a separate despatch.

2. During my absence letters had arrived from Mr. Rassam, dated Magdala, 19th February. The messenger declares he had only been twenty-four days on the road, and when he left the foot of the mountain there was a report, in the small Imperial camp there, that Mr. Rassam had been released, and much rejoicing was expressed thereat. If there is any truth in this statement the messenger must have delayed after quitting the top of the mountain, and not made a final start from the camp below until the 10th March, for he did not arrive at Massowah until the 3rd April, forty-three days after the date of Mr. Rassam's letter. This he denies, but states he did not receive the letter direct from Mr. Rassam, but through the Aboona, and time might thus have been lost.

I do not place much faith in his story, but should the release have really taken place we should hear of it from Magdala or Gaffat within the next fortnight.

3. Mr. Rassam's letter contains little or no news. He confirms the account of the imprisonment of the four Germans and the Frenchman Makerer, detected in an attempt to escape, and with his companions was naturally anxious as to the effect it might have on their position.

A message had reached him from the King on the 16th February to the effect that "half of the articles from Matemma had reached Debra Tabor, and as soon as the rest arrived he would forward them on to Magdala."

Mrs. Flad, in her letter of the 16th February, mentions that these stores had "arrived nearly two months since," writing as if all had come; and the messenger who brought her letters confirmed this, merely adding that two bags of rice had been left at Matemma. It would seem from his mis-statement on this point to Mr. Rassam that the King had no intention of sending on these stores.

I am sorry to say that out of all the messengers despatched from this with letters, papers, &c., for the captives, only one had succeeded in reaching the man who left in October last.

4. Dr. Blanc gives a melancholy account of their position. He says, "If all knew as well as we do what little use there is in trying and writing further conciliatory measures, a very different course would long ago have been followed, and somehow or another a term put to our miserable position. We will never get out unless active measures are used. My opinion on the subject has been varied, and now all of us are of one mind on the matter. The prospect of spending another rainy season in chains is anything but pleasant, and though a few months ago we scorned the idea, we are obliged now to fear it. We are all getting grey; even Prideaux, though he shows it the less on account of the colour of his hair. Rassam's whiskers are almost white. Stern looks like a man of 70. Boils are never very pleasant, but round the ankle (as I have now the advantage of having a few), when compressed by an iron ring, they almost make one mad. Cameron is very much worn out. We are weary, mentally and bodily, of this uncertain state of affairs."

5. I propose leaving for Aden to-morrow evening, in order to catch the mail passing there on the 10th instant. The "Victoria" will return to this on the 20th. The King's messengers were still here. I did not like, therefore, to take the artizans away with me this trip; they will remain till the 20th. The change to Aden will then be necessary to prevent their suffering from the great heat and the life of inactivity they are compelled to lead; and their future disposal can be decided upon afterwards according to your Lordship's instructions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 112.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received May 7.)

My Lord, *Cairo, April 22, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Armenian Archbishop Sahak, the Envoy sent to the King of Abyssinia by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, has arrived at Cairo on his way to Massowah, and proceeds to that port by the first opportunity.

At the Archbishop's request I have furnished his Eminence with letters of recommendation to Her Majesty's Consular Officers at Suez, Jeddah, and Massowah, with a view to facilitating his voyage to Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 113.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received May 11.)

Sir, *India Office, May 10, 1867.*

I AM directed by Sir Stafford Northcote to acquaint you, for the information of Lord Stanley, that having received your letter of the 20th ultimo on the subject of the measures to be taken for the liberation of the British captives in Abyssinia, he has given to it in

Council the full and deliberate consid...ti... which the importance of the questions suggested demands.

On a review of all the circumstances connected with the captivity of these unfortunate gentlemen, whose fate he most deeply compassionates, Sir Stafford Northcote is of opinion that the main question as to whether there shall be any ultimate resort to force to effect their release, is one the responsibility of determining which rests with Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Should Lord Stanley be of opinion that forcible measures ought ultimately to be resorted to for the rescue of the prisoners in the hands of King Theodore (in the event of the failure of all other means of securing their safety), and if Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the force should be provided in India, Sir Stafford Northcote considers that no time should be lost in making preparation for that purpose; and he would be glad of an early decision on this point, so that he may send the proper instructions to the Governments of India, with a view to the organization of the desired military force, so as to enable it, if necessary, to embark at the commencement of the ensuing cold weather.

I am further directed to inform you that the Secretary of State for India in Council wishes it to be clearly understood that whilst he is anxious to afford all possible assistance for the furtherance of the object in view, by placing the forces of India at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government, he must stipulate that the revenues of India are not to be subject to any portion of the expenditure which may be incurred for an object in which that country has no direct interest.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HERMAN MERIVALE.

No. 114.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received May 13.)

My Lord, *Massowa, April 6, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I left this on the morning of the 1st instant at half-past 7 o'clock for the Agametta plateau. The route followed passed Moncooloo, and by the Eylat road for 1½ mile from that place, then turned off abruptly to the left in a south-westerly direction through low hills for 5½ miles, when it rounded the point of a small range, and went due south by the bed of a mountain torrent named Khooloo, to Part, 3 miles, where excellent water was found in plenty by scratching about two feet in the sandy bed. From the moment of entering this torrent the country commenced to show the luxuriant vegetation which was found everywhere afterwards until again nearing the coast. The valleys and hill-sides were covered with rich grass, wild flowers, and in some places of most dense wood, consisting chiefly of Babul (Acacia Arabia) bush, other thorny bushes, and wild fruit trees with whose names I am unacquainted, and to which the native denominations gave no clue. Large numbers of very good-looking cattle were collected at this watering-place belonging to the Tsanatigli tribe. Water is to be found here by digging at all times of the year. This was made the first halting-place. The march took from 7·30 A.M. until 12·15. Though it was the month of April, and the sun powerful, the heat was found by no means excessive.

2. The journey was resumed at 7·15 the following morning, the 2nd instant. The road lay the whole distance [in the bed of the?] Ukbuloo torrent, and though quite practicable for camels, and even artillery, was difficult in some places. The obstructions could either be removed or turned. Running water was found continually. The hills on either side increased in height, and, as well as the narrow valley, were dotted with dense wood and high grass. The general course was south-south-west, but as the torrent had to be followed, the windings were very great, the distance marched 10 miles, time taken 4½ hours, moving slow. The camp was made at a pool of water called Henrote. The breadth of the torrent was very narrow at that part, not above 50 feet. It had varied the whole way up, opening out in some parts to a moderate-sized plain, in others narrowing, as at Henrote.

3. Started at 6·35 A.M. of the 3rd instant, and after proceeding three-quarters of a mile commenced a steep ascent, unsuited to draught artillery, easy enough for mules carrying mountain-guns, but difficult for laden camels, unless having light burdens. Those with the party surmounted it, but some of them did not reach the next encamping ground till the following morning. The highest point the road took was 1,300 feet above Henrote. A higher peak called Fathak was ascended, which afforded a capital bird's-eye view of the surrounding country. This was 1,476 feet above Henrote, and 3,222 above the sea-level. To the north was seen the country traversed by the road to Bogos; to the north-east and east that which had been passed over; Massowah and the sea beyond, dotted with islands of the Dunbar group; to the south-east and south the high mountain of Gudan, Annesley Bay, and the road to Kiaguor by the Agadey watercourse; on the

west the high mountains which bound Abyssinia Proper. Immediately before us to the west, and about five miles distant, were the patches of comparatively level ground styled the Agametta plateau, the point to be reached. Hills densely clothed with verdure were scattered about around in the most fantastic manner. Large boulders of rock, blackened by exposure, were lying on the hill-sides as if some violent explosion had taken place. In a direct line Massowah appeared to be certainly not more than 20 miles bearing north 39° east. Passing this peak the road descended abruptly several hundred feet, but then rose gradually again to the plateau of Agametta, which was found to be 20 feet below Fathak, or 3,202 feet above the sea. From Fathak the road wound a good deal to the plateau through the same rich country, with grass and wild flowers waist-high in most places, or dense bushes with grass underneath. On the plateau were patches of towaree (millet), cultivation belonging to the Tsanatigli tribe. The encamping ground was about two miles short of this cultivation, on the edge of a torrent, in which running water was met. Half-a-mile lower this trickled over bare sheet rock (granite) into a deep, densely-wooded ravine below. When the torrent is flooded by heavy rains, there must be a beautiful cascade here, and judging by the appearance of the rocks, the discharge of water must sometimes be very considerable. The distance from Henrote to the camping ground by the road is not more than five miles, but it took two hours and a-half to traverse. The best site for a permanent residence would be on the plateau itself, where the cultivation is, where it is open to the breeze, and where water could always be obtained by sinking wells. The banyan tree (ficus indica) was found here; also the guava tree. The Babul had almost entirely disappeared, and the fir-trees which were seen were in poor condition.

4. A finer or richer country than this could not be desired. The scenery and general appearance very much resemble the "ghats," on the western coast of India, and the verdure was equal to what is seen in those favoured parts immediately after the monsoon. The reason of this is that the cool season is the rainy one in the portion of the country lying between the Abyssinian highlands and the sea. There is a north-east monsoon; in fact, from October to the end of March there is some rain every day, but never very heavy, nothing approaching the Indian south-west monsoon. The climate is very similar to that of Mattemma. An April sun during the day was warm, but the heat did not make being out in it unpleasant, and in the open plain or on the hills there was always a delicious cool breeze blowing from the sea. At night there was heavy dew consequent on the recent rains, and it was so cold that blankets were necessary sleeping inside a tent. Water is obtainable almost everywhere, and wells could easily be sunk. The ascent from Henrote to Fathak, with subsequent descent, is, as it at present exists, undoubtedly difficult, but the track followed went straight up the hill. A zigzag might be made at no very great cost, up which laden camels, and even carriages, might pass. The country is full of game in the cool months. Recent traces of elephants were seen, but the guides said these animals had passed on to higher grounds to escape from the flies, which are very numerous at this season of the year. Tracks of lions, leopards, wild hog and deer, were noticed daily: and of birds there were abundance of guinea fowl, spur fowl, and quail.

5. The great want in the country is population. After leaving Part not a soul was seen. The cultivation at Agametta, though nearly ripe, was unwatched. The land had been ploughed, and the grain sown in October, and the crop left to mature as it might. The splendid grazing-grounds were undisturbed by cattle. From inquiries made it appears that the whole of this extensive and fertile tract of country between the mountains and the sea, from the Agadey torrent to nearly twenty miles north, giving an area of some 400 square miles, belongs to one tribe, the Tsanatigli Christians, mustering not more than 800 adults. They also hold lands in Abyssinia, where they reside in the summer months, migrating with their cattle, of which they have large herds, to the lowlands nearer the sea, from October to the end of April. As they pass down they cultivate patches here and there, reaping the produce as they return. This dearth of population I conclude to be owing to the absence of any one fixed good government as before mentioned. About Eylat the soil is considered to belong to Abyssinia. While the Egyptian Government holds the country, it is nominally supposed to protect the people. The latter have therefore to pay dues to both.

6. In returning the same route was followed as far as Henrote and for half-a-mile beyond. Then the Ukbuloo torrent was left, a turn being taken to the right, and the road passed over a hill about 250 feet high, descending into another torrent, which four miles further on joined a larger one, and this was continued until the sea was reached at the village of Arkeeko. Three miles down the larger torrent running water was found, and was met with at intervals for the remainder of the way.

7. The nature of the country was the same as on the upward journey, but this was

a much more direct route to the sea, though not to Massowah, shorter in consequence, and with the exception of the hill just below Henrote, which was bad for camels, a better road. Three marches were made going up, only one coming down; the distance by the former 29 miles, by the latter to Arkeeko 22 miles. From Arkeeko we went by boat to Massowah, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles; had we marched by land 7 miles, the distances would have been identical, 29 miles. The camping ground near the plateau was left at 6·30 A.M., and Arkeeko reached at 3·25 P.M., deducting 2 hours 30 minutes halt for breakfast. The actual time in marching was 6 hours 30 minutes. The last eight miles from Galata being a good road, was done more quickly than the first part. The whole was on mules, excepting down the hill from Fathak to Henrote, and down the hill beyond Henrote, which was walked.

8. The heights were taken by readings from two aneroids, by the boiling point of water. A tabular route is annexed; also a rough sketch by Captain Merriman. It should be mentioned that this is no regular road into Abyssinia. It is nothing more than a track by the Tsanatagli tribe in their annual migrations. I availed myself of the services of Captain C. J. Merriman, Royal Engineers, Executive Engineer, to observe the country, and of Surgeon James, civil surgeon, Aden, to inspect the state of the work-people colony at Moncooloo, taking these officers with me on duty.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. H. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 114.

Route from Massowah to Agametta Plateau.

No. of Station.	Station.	General direction.	Time taken in marching.	Distance in Miles.	Height above Sea-level.	Observations.
			H. M.		Feet.	
1	Geeran to ..	..	..	..	..	Place of disembarkation on mainland opposite Island of Massowah.
2	Moncooloo ..	W.	1 0	4	54	Over dry level plain. Water good; supplies procurable here or from Massowah.
3	Part ..	S.W.by S.	3·45	10	639	Road good. Enter low range immediately after passing Moncooloo. For the first mile and a-half on the Eylat road, W. and by S.; then through low hills for $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles; bushes and grass; turn to the left round spur of hill, and go due S. in bed of Ukbuloo torrent to Part, small valley surrounded by hills. Water plentiful; found by digging a few feet below surface of bed; in April only 2 feet—deeper in summer months. Wood, grass, and cattle plentiful: no grain. Hill west of camping ground 981 feet above sea-level.
4	Henrote ..	S.S.W.	4 30	10	1,746	Road throughout, in Ukbuloo torrent, rough from stones, sometimes hidden by grass, and occasionally abrupt sheet rock; filling in would remedy this, or the worst places could be turned. Running water at intervals the whole way. Valley generally narrow, but opening out here and there; high hills on either side covered with grass and bushes. Camp pitched at the water—a pool. Torrent very narrow here, but opens out a quarter of a mile further up. Water plentiful: pool dries up in summer, but water can always be found by digging. Wood and grass plentiful. Supplies none.
5	Agametta ..	S.W.	2 30	5	2,979	For three quarters of a mile still in Ukbuloo torrent. Road then commences steep ascent, continued for one hour (on mules), rising about 1,300 feet, leaving high peak of Fathak, 3,222 feet above sea, on left; descend about 500 feet, and again ascend gradually, crossing small ridges and some rough places to Agametta. First ascent difficult for laden camels and impossible at present for draught artillery, but could be easily improved. Country more open; grass and bushes, with trees. Camp on edge of water-course, 2 miles short of plateau of Agametta. Running water, wood and grass plentiful. Some ripe towarree (millet) on plateau in April, otherwise no supplies. The best encamping ground would be on the open plateau, where there is room for 10,000 men, and water could be obtained always by sinking wells. Height of plateau above sea, 3,202 feet.

Return Route.

No. of Station.	Station.	General direction.	Time taken in marching.	Distance in Miles.	Height above Sea-level.	Observations.
			H. M.			
1	Agametta ..					
2	Henrote ..		2 30	5	..	As before.
3	Galata ..	N.E.byE.	2 45	9	612	For three quarters of a mile in Ukbuloo River, then turn to right (N.E. by E.) over a hill about 250 feet high. Road over hill rough and bushy. Descend into torrent and proceed along it E.N.E. for about 4 miles, enter larger torrent, turning to N.E., 3 miles to Galata. Road fair after descent of hill. Hills close at first but open out soon, covered with grass and bushes as before. Towarree cultivation where smaller torrent joins large one. Running water at Galata, and any quantity to be obtained always by digging round open. Wood and grass plentiful; and abundance of cattle in cold season.
4	Arkeeko ..	E.N.E.	1 45	8	0	Road good; winding rather; still along larger torrent. Marching much quicker. Hills gradually lessening in height and losing the verdure. Running water seen in many places. This will be dry in a month, but it can always be obtained in bed of torrent by digging. Leave hills at 7 miles, and enter level plain to Arkeeko, 1 mile. Village larger than Moncooloo, on sea shore; residence of Mussulman Naik of district: garrison of 700 Egyptian Infantry. Grass and wood obtainable from the hills near. Water plentiful and good supplies procurable.
5	Massowah ..	N. by E.	..	$3\frac{1}{2}$	0	By boat $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Land route 7 miles round curvature of bay to Massowah.
				$25\frac{1}{2}$ or 29		

No. 115.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received May* 22.)

My Lord, *Aden, April* 29, 1867.

THE "Victoria" returned from Massowah this evening, bringing intelligence from Mr. Rassam up to the 16th March. The report of his release, mentioned in my last, has proved, as I expected, to have been the invention of the messenger who brought down the letters of the 19th February.

2. Mr. Rassam writes on the 15th March:—"Your kind and welcome note of the 14th January reached me on the 12th instant, with a large budget of letters for myself and party. The messengers were nearly two months on the road. They assert that they had sometimes to wait a long time in certain villages on account of petty warfares amongst the rebels between Tigré and this. My long letters which I send to you monthly, especially the one which I sent you on the 11th January, will give you the true state of affairs. Our position now is worse than ever with regard to communicating with different places. Since the middle of last month a petty rebel has appeared between Debra Tabor and this place, who has stopped all intercourse between the Royal camp and Magdala, so much so that the last message I received from the Emperor was to the effect that as the road was very unsafe, he was not able to send me the things he had obtained for me from Matemma, but that as he was coming here shortly himself, he would bring them with him. I have now no less than twelve messengers at Gaffat, some of whom have been detained there forty days. Two messengers who left Massowah on the 4th December are also sticking there, as they were foolish enough to come up through Waggera, instead of Lasta. There is certainly something very unfortunate about the movements of the messengers who come up from Massowah; not one has yet returned in proper time, though I have always taken the precaution to send them under the protection of an influential chief. From what I hear I believe Wakshum Gobazye's power is beginning to shake, because some formidable rebels have appeared in what he calls his dominions (Tigré). If this rumour be true, I fear my messengers will have in future more difficulty in passing through the rebellious country than ever. I am so short of hands that I am sending down to Massowah this

time two of Cameron's servants, under the protection of an Abyssinian Chief, in order that they might bring us up some money. I have written to M. Munzinger not to intrust any important communication to them, but merely to send me about 500 or 600 dollars by them, with any newspapers and unimportant letters. All the money I had at Matemma I fear will never reach me, on account of the disturbances on the roads between this and Debra Tabor.

"16*th March*.—Since writing the above the messenger who left Massowah on the 4th December, and who had been so long detained at Gaffat, has arrived, and brought me your note of the 1st September. I am grieved beyond measure to find that all the trouble you have taken on behalf of the Emperor of Abyssinia has proved fruitless. I only wish that His Majesty could be made to understand his interests better. He has just sent and chained the Ras who was in command of this fortress, on the pretence that he had heard that he was corresponding with the rebels of Shoa. He has sent me a kind message to say that he would send me the things which he had obtained for me from Matemma. The messengers whom I sent down on the 11th of January have just returned, and brought me your kind note of the 3rd ultimo. This is the quickest communication I have yet had from the coast; all the messengers have now reached save two, who were plundered by the rebels in Waggera."

3. From the above it will be seen, and it is confirmed from other sources, that the state of the country is getting worse and worse. Even the sole district left to the Emperor, Begemeder, is much disturbed, so that communication between the capital and State fortress is most uncertain and unsafe. The Emperor has been causing supplies to be seized where they could be found, and the people are flying from Begemeder with anything they have left to them. He is so hard pushed for money that he called on the most important and most influential Chiefs who still hold by him for help, and on their refusal threw many of them into prison; only one has obtained his release, and that on payment of 1,500 dollars. The real cause of his having imprisoned the Commander of Magdala was that he had become offended with the brother of the Commandant, a Chief serving with the Imperial army, but dare not arrest him until the Magdala man was secured, for fear the latter should avenge his brother by holding the fortress against him, or handing it over to the rebels. It would seem impossible that this state of affairs can last much longer, and I would beg the favour of early intimation in regard to your Lordship's wishes, and to the line of policy Her Majesty's Government would desire carried out, so that I may be in a position to take advantage of any favourable opportunity that may offer.

4. There is one part of the situation which is not so satisfactory as before, and that is the state of affairs in Tigré. A division has taken place among the rebels there. A powerful rival has risen against the Wakshum, by name Kassu. He was formerly a servant of the Wakshum, but has lately turned against him and set up on his own account. This might cause a little more trouble if operations are decided on, and it was thought advisable to proceed through Tigré. But I am disposed to think, that should a force be sent into Abyssinia, the best way of approaching Begemeder and the Emperor Theodorus will be by landing the troops at Amphilla, and marching through the Azubo Galla country to the neighbourhood of Lake Ashangi, and then entering Abyssinia Proper, through Lasta and Wadela, both of which are in most active opposition to the Emperor, and thus avoiding Tigré and its high table land, where camel forage is reported difficult to be obtained always.

5. The Azubo Gallas are independent, their country is said to be well supplied with grain, grass, water, and camel forage, and the people well-disposed. I am having full inquiries made about this route. Reference to Keith Johnston's map of Upper Nubia and Abyssinia will show that Amphilla and Tajooro are exactly equi-distant from Magdala. The former, however, though further by sea from Aden than the latter, has the advantage of leading at once into a suitable country; whereas the latter in the first 200 miles opens into a country belonging to the most inhospitable, worst dispositioned people possible, where water and supplies are both very scarce.

6. M. Munzinger sent 300 dollars by Mr. Rassam's returning messengers. This was as much as they could conveniently carry, but Mr. Flad should have reached by the time they do, and he is well provided with funds. Nothing further has been heard of or from Mr. Flad. I regret to say that it is the general opinion among the captives that the stores from Matemma, which the King had received at Debra Tabor, would not be sent on by him, but had been appropriated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

P.S.—I ordered Mr. Morris to bring the artizans here for change of air, leaving the

presents, stores, &c., at Massowah and Moncooloo. They arrived by the "Victoria" and will remain here for a while, until I am made acquainted with your Lordship's wishes. Several European adventurers, French, Swiss, and German, have come to Massowah from Egypt. They propose trying to join the Emperor to get service with him. M. Munzinger has very properly pointed out the great risk they will run by going up the country at the present time, and the little chance there is of their reaching the Emperor's head-quarters. I trust they will take his advice and remain on the coast.

W. L. M.

No. 116.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received May 22.)

My Lord, *Aden, May 1, 1867.*

HIS Imperial Majesty's steam-frigate "Minerve" arrived yesterday afternoon from Suez, having called in at Massowah on the way down, and by the kindness of the Commodore, M. de Chaillie, I have been placed in possession of further intelligence from Magdala to the 2nd of April, received by M. Munzinger at Massowah on the 27th.

2. To the surprise and great comfort of the captives the Matemma stores had been sent on by the King, and reached Magdala on the 19th March, immediately after the last letters were written; they were forwarded with a communication from the King to the following effect:—

"In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, from the King of Kings Theodorus, to Aitoo Hormuzd Rassam. (After compliments to all.)

"Your servants have brought some things from Matemma, and as I found them too bulky I divided them into small packages in the presence of Mr. Waldemir and his party. I now send them to you in small parcels, because I want them to reach you fast."

This was more civil than had been expected, but no orders accompanied for any amelioration in the condition of the captives. The stores were divided into small light packages, because they had to be carried by the troops who formed the escort, and delay was to be avoided; they were sent in charge of Ras Engada, the Prime Minister.

3. Mr. Rassam writes: "The rebellion is getting worse and worse every day, and if report can be relied on, the Royal army has dwindled down to less than 5,000 fighting men: desertions of hundreds are said to take place daily. This I cannot believe, because, according to this rule, he will not have a soldier left by the end of next month. There is one thing certain, however,—that he is getting weaker and weaker every day, and now Begemeder has revolted, but the Emperor took the precaution to imprison all that district's valiant Chiefs before they had a chance to join their disaffected brethren. Three of these Chiefs had only a few days ago the highest commands under him; two of whom were the bravest Rases in the Royal army. The third, who is also a Ras, had the command of this fortress, and when Ras Engada brought in the stores from Matemma, he took one Chief in hand-chains with him to Debra Tabor. I was sorry to lose him, as he was exceedingly kind to us; but the Emperor has appointed a successor, who is also a friend and a very good man. Indeed, this man, who is a relative of the Emperor, has always been kind, and if his master would only listen to him our difficulty might soon pass over, and His Majesty would no doubt benefit by his advice. His Majesty has gone to Korata for the purpose of destroying it, as he did Gondar, because some rebels had gone there, and were received by its inhabitants. The poor wretches have no more power to keep the rebels out of the place than they have of opposing the attack of His Majesty. It is said that the whole country is now in such a state of anarchy that it is dangerous for any one to venture three miles from Debra Tabor without a strong escort, on account of the roving deserters and disaffected peasants. I believe these reports are somewhat exaggerated, because Royal messengers are constantly coming and going between the Royal camp and this place. Those who think the whole country has risen against the rule of King Theodorus say that these messengers can only manage to pass unmolested because they disguise themselves thoroughly. I hope, however, that my messengers will always be able to pass, as they are befriended by the different petty Chiefs in the disaffected districts. The road between this and Massowah and Lasta is also, I believe, quite safe for my messengers. Two of my messengers who were coming from Gaffat escorted by a petty Chief of Begemeder were seized by a petty rebel Chief near the River Chieta; they managed to escape after a few hours' detention, but the Chief, who was a vassal of the Emperor, was detained: he is still kept as prisoner with the rebels, in order, I believe, that they may get him to enter into an alliance with them. We are all anxiously awaiting the decision Her Majesty's

Government has come to with regard to our case. Some time ago I had still hopes that our difficulties might be settled amicably; but since the Emperor received Her Majesty's second letter of the 4th October, and has taken no step to repair the evil he has done, I have come to the belief that he will never let us out, unless he obtains everything he wants, to the Crown of England! We must either be left to perish in bondage, or be liberated by coercive measures from without. It is quite evident that His Majesty thinks by having us in his power he is safe; but I hope that he will soon find himself mistaken. I always thought he would never go so far as to refuse the friendship offered to him by England; but the fact is, he distrusts every one so much that even he suspects that we wish to play a trick, and, through the foolish talk of some scamps of Europeans, who would say whatever they thought would please him, the Emperor will prove, at the end, a great loser. I have not the least doubt that, if any person had a hand in creating distrust in the mind of the Abyssinian Monarch, he will rue the day one of these days; for I feel sure that His Majesty will vent his rage upon him when he finds that he has lost the game which he imagined he was going to gain.

"The roads between this place and Matemma are getting more and more disturbed every day, and I fear we shall have great difficulty, after a few days, to obtain anything from that place. I am sending messengers thither in a day or two for the purpose of bringing us money. I am going to write to M. Munzinger not to send anything more to us at Matemma excepting money. I think I shall always be able to get the Chiefs to assist in transporting cash thence.

"I am glad to inform you we are all well, excepting Cameron.

"I wish that this imprisonment would soon be over, because I fear some of us would suffer if we were to be left in our present situation next rainy season. Indeed, we are afraid that, when the Emperor finds that he cannot get the workmen and the presents, he will send us to the common prison, where we shall have a very hard lot in comparison to our present situation."

4. I append copy of an interesting letter from Dr. Blanc in full, as it contains much I think your Lordship would like to read, not that I agree with the whole of it, and would remark on the following points. The force he suggests is even less than I last proposed, with more European and less native element in it. I would not recommend less than 6,000 men to enter Abyssinia with, and of those as few as possible should be Europeans, on account of the extensive carriage requirements they entail. That force should be complete and perfect in everything for a six months' campaign. It should have supplies for that time and material for everything called for from it, should look to the country for nothing but grass, wood, and water, which may be had for the taking. If it had to remain in the country for longer than that, it can be replenished from the seaboard with those things which more familiar acquaintance with the country shows are not procurable. I have no doubt that liberal dealing and just treatment will within that period have drawn the inhabitants towards us, and through the arrangements of our excellent Indian Commissariat much will be procurable on the spot for the force; but at first nothing should be left to chance. The baggage should be made as light as can be; but nothing should be omitted that can conduce to the comfort and well-being of the troops. Hailo is the Emperor's Governor in Hamozeyn, and would, I believe from all I have heard, not prove a difficult person to deal with. But I am strongly of opinion that the best line of operation will be through the Azubo Galla country, where there are no rivers of any consequence, where the people are independent, and where supplies and forage for the baggage animals would be found in abundance, than through Hamozeyn, Adowa, and Lokota, where there are rivers and large ravines, and where, though supplies are plentiful, forage for the baggage cattle is uncertain. The further information I am collecting regarding the route from Amphilla will prove the value of this opinion. Though the rainy season from May to September might not be found adverse to the movement of troops in Abyssinia, Dr. Blanc has forgotten that it is the very worst for approaching that country, owing to the very great heat on the shore of the Red Sea, where the troops would have to disembark and rendezvous, which would, in fact, be the immediate base of operations. October would be the earliest when these could be commenced. It is cool then, proceeding up the sea or encamped on the shore. By October, if the Emperor's power lasts so long, his army will be reduced to a very small number and will be easy to overcome. I do not see how he can fly; all Abyssinia is against him, and the people in the lowlands bearing him no love, would, if they received him at all, only do so to plunder him, and he would be the more easily reached by us. Of the three courses mentioned by Dr. Blanc, I believe the Emperor will adopt the first as his best chance. If hemmed in and confined to the amba, unconditional surrender with guarantee of life should be the only terms allowed. On operations being commenced, a proclamation would be issued, as I suggested

before, stating that Her Majesty's Government had entered on hostilities with the Emperor, forced to it by his breach of faith and disregard of the laws held sacred by all civilized nations. On the due vindication of these, or reparation being obtained from the Emperor, and on the release in safety of the British subjects held in captivity by him, the troops would be withdrawn from the country. He would be warned at the same time that he will be held responsible with his throne and life for any injury that may happen to the captives. Private property would be respected and strictly protected, and all those who aided in the object Her Majesty's Government had in view would be amply rewarded and honoured with the friendship of Her Majesty. I quite agree with the advisability, indeed indispensability, of no threat being issued without the determination of its being carried out to the letter. But at the same time I see a very strong probability of its being of the greatest importance that an exposition of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government should be promptly made, even before the arrival of the troops, in the event of the sudden annihilation of the Imperial power occurring before the favourable season has approached. As long as there is any chance of the Emperor being able to recover himself, or as long as he retains the semblance of power, not one of the rebels will move actually against him. But directly they are assured that we are in earnest and that we are determined to destroy that power, they will no longer fear him, and we shall have at least their good wishes, if not direct assistance. Certainly no opposition, provided we act alone and are in no way associated with any other nation against which the Abyssinians generally have an antipathy: I allude here to the Egyptians. It is said some people advocate the employment of Egyptian troops. This would be suicide; the whole of Abyssinia would bond against them, and would even bear longer with Theodorus to oppose their most hated enemies. Instead of having merely to put the finishing stroke to a falling usurpation, we should have the entire nation arrayed against us.

5. The decay of the present empire of Abyssinia is running on most rapidly, and I would again beg the favour of being early made acquainted with your Lordship's wishes, that I may be prepared to act as circumstances may demand.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 116.

Dr. Blanc to Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, March* 31, 1867.

DO not believe that, on leaving my prison, I am going to apply for some high command, because I am chatting with you on military matters. I know that my qualifications are in the pill and black-draught line. Even it appears that I am unfitted as a civilian; Rassam having frequently asserted that I would never make a political officer. Amen. Admitting that all our party is right, and that the best-informed natives, who join in our opinion, are also correct in their surmises, then there is no other possible solution to our present difficulty but the speedy employ of military force. *Nota bene,* nothing could be worse than an ultimatum without troops. If we take into consideration the present political condition and resources of this country, to effect a short and successful campaign, two regiments of Europeans, two of natives, one of cavalry, one or two batteries of artillery, a company of sappers and miners, with small depôts at Adowa and Sanota, is all that is required. The troops ought not to be encumbered with baggage; as little as possible ought to be carried. Abyssinians, though not up to much fighting, are good hands at long marches. Always beware of treachery; never trust, if obliged to make use of some Chief for the sake of transport; keep your eye on him. Mules in sufficient quantity ought to be obtained in Hamozeyn. Old Hailo would no doubt give up his master easily, if well paid, and be faithful to you, as long as he believes you take the strongest party. Should he, however, be obstinate, a good thrashing would do him no harm, and show the people what they can expect should they not favour our cause. I believe the rainy season would be the most favourable time for a campaign in this country. The rain by itself is not very severe; the sky being cloudy, the weather is always agreeable and cool. There is no sickness during that period; it is before and after that certain localities are unhealthy. It is true thatpaddling through the mud is not pleasant, and being drenched to the skin at least once a day is anything but comfortable. Still, soldiers do not melt through such influences, and, as it does not affect the health, a little discomfort can easily be put up with. In the present reduced state of our friend's army,

it is doubtful whether he will make a stand even here. It is probable that when the British soldier comes near enough to make him shake in earnest, he will endeavour to cut. In the rainy season that is quite impossible; he cannot cross the many rivers he would meet, whatever course he may take, whilst to European troops, provided with pontoons, &c., it would be mere child's play. No rivers, except a few such as the Takazzay, the Bechilo, and the Teddah (the latter would not be in the way, unless in the case of pursuit), are of any extent; and should our good friend try to decamp, he would be caught to a dead certainty. Should "our friend," trusting in his guns, matchlocks, and natural strength of this "amba"—not to speak of the many "kilâts" he may use at the time—remain here, I believe all this courage (some certain, at least, of that of the majority of his followers would vanish at the very sight of British bayonets, and he would give the slip before even the second shell had burst. Therefore, to prevent such a disagreeable termination, the whole amba ought to be surrounded, or, at least, the three gates attacked at a time.

The question is, should the British soldier come, what will the Emperor do? It is generally supposed that he will adopt one of the three following courses:—

1st. Come here, defend the place perhaps, place the Europeans in such a position as to impede the fire of our soldiers; or treat us well, and come to terms.

2ndly. Kill all the Europeans (the great men) his prisoners, Bishop and all, and fly to the lowlands.

3rdly. Take the Europeans with him, and march from district to district, destroying everything in his road.

This last was his plan some years ago, but now it is hardly possible. His army is much reduced in numbers, the peasantry all over the country discontented and rebellious; on the approach of British troops the soldiers would run away *en masse;* only a few hundreds of thoroughly compromised individuals would, from sheer necessity, follow his fortune; the peasantry, seeing him deserted by his troops, would find courage in their intense hatred, surround him, and, you may depend upon it, give him no quarter. However, during the rainy season it is quite out of the question. What he will do is certainly a mystery. At all events he must not be rendered desperate; he must still be treated with the same courtesy and respect as in former days. The past ought not to be charged against him; on the contrary, he should be told there is no personal ill-will against him, and that all will end well if he does not further ill-treat any of the Europeans.

In the meanwhile he and his acolytes must be made fully aware that any further brutalities will not be tolerated, and that should he shed, or cause to be shed, the blood of even a single white man, the hand of vengeance will weigh heavy upon him and on all those directly or indirectly connected with such murder. Certainly it will be a trying time; but it cannot be helped, we must come to it some day, so the sooner the better. Though he only possesses at present the vestiges of his former power, such is still the terror of his name that none will ever dare attack him; he will remain unmolested at Magdala until some unforeseen accident put an end to his career. We gain nothing by his fall; on the contrary, he is only more savage and cruel. He knows well that he would meet with no pity either from the "Wakshum" or the Turks: only in the case of his resorting to extreme measures should such alliance be made; otherwise the lives of all would be surely forfeited.

Wheat is little grown in this country, and barley, the usual food for horses in Abyssinia, could not, I fear, be obtained in sufficient quantity, on account of the present desolate condition of immense tracts of land. Cattle is still abundant, but the question is, will the peasants come forward with their supplies, or retire with their property to distant parts of the country? I believe they will in general adopt this latter course.

The peasants are very ignorant, they consider all white men as Turks; well aware of the penchant of Mussulmans for Abyssinian damsels, the very dread of slavery will make them deaf to all offers of remuneration. It is to be hoped, however, that after a short time they will find out their mistake; and as usual English gold and courtesy will win over their hearts.

My dear Colonel, I beg respectfully to apologise for my presumption, and hope you will kindly excuse the perhaps foolish, but at least well-meant intention. A spy returned from the coast a short time ago, and informed His Majesty that all was quiet; he, therefore having first examined the kit, and finding nothing suitable except the calico and shirts, which he could not decently appropriate, though angry about them, whilst still hopeful that his stratagems will succeed, and that workmen and presents will be sent to him, he was considerate enough not to rob us this time, and forwarded everything to the amba.

Dissatisfaction daily increases amongst the soldiery and peasantry. The sacking of

Kourata, a holy city, though it may slightly refill His Majesty's coffers, will neither add to his fame or influence, rather give another impetus to his rapid fall. The chief of this mountain recently chained another Ras (Oulia), his Wakshum, and Sheik Walash; all three, long time prisoners at Magdala, have been called to the Imperial presence: the reason is not yet known, but it is generally believed for no good.

The Europeans of Gaffat wrote some few days ago, We are not dead, but we are not alive. Obliged to work hard in the day, and to watch at night for their own safety, their position is not to be envied. The five would-be runaway Europeans are not in favour. Some time ago they were deprived of all their clothing, and not allowed either bread and water for forty-eight hours. The poor fellows pay hard for their mismanaged attempt. No news from the rebels.

The fact of the Wakshum's brother in Lasta having abandoned his brother's cause has not been confirmed. I believe it to be an invention of some friend of the Emperor. Jagaque, my servant, is one of the messengers; you can trust him; I have constantly employed him as a messenger between this place and Gaffat; he has always proved honest, intelligent, and active. We are all pretty well; Cameron is rather seedy, he is not careful enough about himself. Samuel begs to send you his respectful compliments, &c.

(Signed) H. BLANC.

No. 117.

Mr. Murray to Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 27, 1867.*

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches of the 28th ultimo and 1st instant, conveying information from the captives in Abyssinia up to the 2nd of April.

Her Majesty's Government trust that the prospect, though still uncertain, of the captives being restored to liberty by the collapse of the authority of King Theodore, which from your accounts would seem to be imminent, may be realized; but, while awaiting further intelligence from you, Lord Stanley can only say that his Lordship finds nothing in the accounts lately received from you to cause him in any way to modify the instructions conveyed to you in his despatches of the 20th ultimo.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 118.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received June 6.)

My Lord, *Civil Service Club, London, June 6, 1867.*

IN consequence of intelligence, dated April 17 last, just received from the captives in Abyssinia, the particulars of which will ere this have reached your Lordship's Department, I deem it to be my duty to recall your attention to the measures for the liberation of those unfortunate persons which I had the honour to suggest in my letter of the 12th of the same month.

In doing so I would respectfully represent that if the suggestions so made were immediately acted on, there would be a fair prospect of the liberation of the captives before the Emperor Theodore retires to the fortress of Magdala, where they are confined. When once he is forced to take refuge there, the natural defences of the place are such as to enable him easily to hold out for an indefinite period against any native force, however strong, that may not be aided by Europeans. This opinion, which has long been entertained and expressed by me, is now (if I mistake not) confirmed by all the captives without a single exception.

I would further beg leave to remark, that though the approaching rainy season would naturally place obstacles in the way of military operations on an extensive scale, especially if any of the principal rivers had to be crossed, there is nothing to hinder the movements of troops, even in considerable numbers. In proof of this I may refer to Mr. Rassam's letters, in which he reported that when he and his companions in captivity were being conducted in chains from Dobra Tabor to Magdala in the month of July last, the Emperor left them to continue their journey in charge of M. Bardel, and went himself on a military expedition.

At the same time it is right to direct attention to the fact, that in the low country lying between the sea-coast and the high table-land of Abyssinia, the rainy season is not the same as on the table-land itself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 119.

Mr. Hammond to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 8, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, in which you call his Lordship's attention to the plan proposed by you on the 12th of April last for obtaining the release of the captives in Abyssinia; and I am to express to you Lord Stanley's thanks for your suggestions, and to inform you that they have been duly considered, but that Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to undertake, in any country, such a direct interference as you contemplate in the affairs of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 120.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Mr. Hammond.—(*Received June* 12.)

Sir, *Admiralty, June* 11, 1867.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, for the information of Lord Stanley, that Commodore Hillyar, in a letter dated the 15th May, states that Colonel Merewether, the Political Resident at Aden, left that port on the previous evening for Massowah, with the ultimatum of Her Majesty's Government as to the prisoners detained by the King of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. G. ROMAINE.

No. 121.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(*Received June* 14.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, June* 13, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Hammond's letter of the 8th instant, in reply to mine of the 6th instant, informing me that my suggestions of the 12th of April last for obtaining the liberation of the captives in Abyssinia have been duly considered, but that Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to undertake such a direct interference as I contemplate in the affairs of Abyssinia.

In reply to Mr. Hammond's letter I would ask permission to say a few words by way of explanation.

The interference in the affairs of Abyssinia which I have ventured to suggest could, of course, now only take place in the event of the Emperor Theodore's non-compliance with your Lordship's ultimatum, the term of which (as is stated in the "Pall Mall Gazette" of the 5th instant) will expire about the middle of August next.

But when that time arrives, it appears to me that, unless Her Majesty's Government shall resolve on abandoning the captives to their fate, a direct interference of some sort in the affairs of Abyssinia must inevitably take place, and it would really seem as if that interference can only assume one of three different shapes.

In the first place, a British army of sufficient force may, single-handed, and at an enormous cost to the Imperial Treasury, invade the country. On this point I need not dilate, as the subject has received the full consideration of Her Majesty's Government. I would only venture to express the hope that, should this course of action be decided on, the Bay of Hánfila (Amphila) may not be chosen as the place of landing, on account of the serious objections there are to that spot, as is sufficiently shown in documents existing in the archives of the Foreign Office.

The second plan is that advocated by Sir Henry L. Bulwer, in a letter published in

the "Pall Mall Gazette" of the 11th instant. His words are: "With a moderate British and Sepoy force, and such assistance as the Viceroy of Egypt told me he would be ready to give, it would be no rash engagement to undertake to hang Theodore in the chains that now torture the limbs of his captives."

On this proposal I may be allowed to remark, that there can be no doubt of the readiness of the Sovereign of Egypt to avail himself of any pretence for invading Abyssinia; and inasmuch as it was through the instrumentality of Sir Henry L. Bulwer himself that the transfer from Turkey to Egypt of Massowah and the Abyssinian seaboard was effectuated, it is quite consistent that that diplomatist should advocate a policy the eventual result of which would be the delivery of the Christians of Abyssinia entirely into the hands of the Mohammedans of Egypt.

What the practical operation of this would be, is plainly shown by the statement of a Mohammedan native of Abyssinia, printed in the number of the "Pall Mall Gazette" which contains Sir H. L. Bulwer's letter:—

In December last a battle took place between the Beni 'Aamr Arabs and the people of the Abyssinian Province of Shiré and adjacent parts of the north-west of Tigré, when the latter were defeated with great slaughter, and "of the whole Tigrean force, numbering many thousands, and attended by the women and children belonging to its members, only 200 horsemen are said to have escaped. The Beni 'Aamr killed the old and useless prisoners; the younger, of both sexes, and children, they took in triumph to Takka, the seat of the Egyptian Governor of those parts, who is related to have told the Arabs, that, as God had given the booty into their hands, they were at liberty to dispose of it. Accordingly, the captives were sent to market in such numbers that Christian slaves are reported to be comparatively cheap in the Red Sea ports and on the Egyptian frontier ever since."

On the impolicy of abandoning to the powerful Sovereign of Egypt the entire coasts of the Red Sea, on the high road to India, Australia, and China, it is unnecessary to dwell on the present occasion.

The third and last mode of interference in Abyssinia is the one suggested by myself, namely, that we should subsidize and assist one of the insurgent native Chiefs, who are enumerated and described by the Mohammedan native of Abyssinia in the "Pall Mall Gazette" almost in the same terms as those in which they have been enumerated and described by myself, both in my communications to your Lordship and also in pages 283–89 of my recently published work, "The British Captives in Abyssinia."

The "Egyptian Correspondent" of the "Pall Mall Gazette," who sent home the report of the Mohammedan Abyssinian, remarks very sensibly that among the insurgents "we ought to be able to find allies against Theodore in the event of its being at length determined to effect by force the release of the captives; for I don't believe," he says, "in the success of the mild expedients hitherto resorted to. They have now been tried more than three years without our being one whit nearer the desired result than when the first letter from the Queen was sent. Fate may assist in bringing about the death of Theodore by any one or more of his many adversaries; but if we are to wait upon fate, it may bring about the death of the prisoners likewise, and leave us with the stigma on our power of having been unable to cope with a resolute Chief of Abyssinia; and it will be small crowing over a dead lion, who kept us at bay while alive, and whom we had no hand in subduing. The effect would not be lost on Egypt, or along the shores of the Red Sea, and might have its influence in India."

As regards the choice of an ally among the native Chiefs, I would beg leave respectfully to repeat my recommendation of Waagshum Góbazye, who is thus described in the "Pall Mall Gazette" by the Mohammedan Abyssinian already referred to:—

"In Tigré, Wakshum Gobezi, a descendant of the Rulers of Lasta, holds his own. He is spoken of as a man of courage and determination, and counts for one of Theodore's most potent adversaries;" which description, as far as it goes, is entirely confirmatory of that already given by myself in my communication to your Lordship of the 12th of April last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

P.S.—In corroboration of my objection to Sir H. L. Bulwer's proposal, I would quote these words of the "Egyptian Correspondent" of the "Pall Mall Gazette:"—

"If we set the Egyptians on Abyssinia we shall merely be immolating its Christian population, and opening the door for influence there not our own, one day perhaps to be used adversely to us."

C. B.

No. 122.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received June* 15.)

My Lord, *Massowah, May* 17, 1867.

I ARRIVED here at 6 this morning. The letters for King Theodorus go on this evening.

2. I found letters from Mr. Rassam and Captain Cameron, dated 18th and 20th April respectively. The former writes:—

"Since the date of my last letter to you, despatched on the 3rd instant, nothing here has occurred worth mentioning. The Emperor has written me a most polite answer regarding my offer to him of sending him some calico and shirts for the use of his servants. He says, that in my present position he ought to look to my wants, and asks me to dress my servants with it. He says he only wants the friendship of my Queen and myself. I have no time just now to send you a copy of the letter, but I will do so by the next opportunity when I send down to Massowah after a few days.

"I suppose by this time Mr. Flad has arrived at Matemmah, as we have heard that he had left Massowah about the middle of last month.

"You will be glad to hear we are all well."

He adds a P.S. in cipher:—

"The King calls himself in his letter to me, a kind (for 'blind,' word not clear) donkey. He is still plundering, and is getting weaker every day."

3. Captain Cameron writing on the 20th, says:—

"We heard from Flad yesterday, but have not got the remotest idea how the King will take his failure. I don't believe there is the slightest chance of his complying with the Queen's wishes.

"The fact is, it is a fearful thing to be in the hands of such a savage. At this moment things are tolerably well. But who can assure us they may be so to-morrow? It is this that makes me write so earnestly as regards the necessity of active measures."

4. Captain Cameron asks for some medicines, which I am sending him by his returning messengers. These men describe the country as being in a fearful state. Bands of marauders in every direction. Mariam, which is only seven miles south of the King's camp at Debra Tabor, was in the hands of the rebels.

5. The King had made a sudden descent on Korata, and destroyed it; but since then he had remained quiet at Debra Tabor. All agree in reporting his army to be getting less and less every day; and it is said now that he has not above 4,000 men left with him. It is greatly to be hoped that when it comes to the very last with him, he will not have sufficient force left to allow of his getting to Magdala.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 123.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received June* 15.)

My Lord, *Aden, May* 24, 1867

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith three copies of a very interesting and good account, by Assistant-Surgeon H. J. Blanc, in medical charge of the M sion, of recent events in Abyssinia; also, of the character of the ruler of that country, King Theodorus. It has been printed at the Aden Government Jail Press, for facility of perusal, and, as yet, has not been out of the hands of trusty Government servants.

2. In the event of Her Majesty's Government deciding on active proceedings against the King, I would venture to suggest that the accompanying paper should be placed at the disposal of the press. It will clearly show to the public the exceeding forbearance with which King Theodorus has been treated by Her Majesty's Government, and also how impossible it is to any longer defer the adoption of the most stringent measures towards one who by his acts has proclaimed himself utterly wanting in true faith and sincere dealing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 123.

The Emperor Theodorus and his Captives.

SO many contradictory accounts are given and believed concerning the Abyssinian captives, the real character of the Ethiopic ruler so little understood, and the series of misfortunes from the beginning to the end which befell Europeans in this country, so grossly misrepresented, that I will endeavour to give a short and impartial summary of the principal events that have occurred since the last few years, and by the simple adducing of facts attempt to conclude as to what course will most probably lead to a happy termination of the present difficulty.

Any one in the least conversant with Abyssinia, is well aware of the career of the Emperor Theodorus, how, as Lij Cassai, a young man of good family, nephew to the celebrated Dejaz Comfou, if not, as he asserts, a descendant of the Ethiopic Kings, followed the very common example of Abyssinian feudatory chiefs, by throwing off his allegiance to his Sovereign.

After obtaining the hand of the daughter of Ras Ali, the real Emperor (the puppet one Johnnse, then a young man, being well contented to possess the beautiful mother of his Ras, Waizero Menen), he began to plunder the friendly Province of Dembea, and by the courage he manifested on all occasions, the abstemious life he led and the favour he showed to all who served his cause, he soon collected around him a band of hardy and reckless followers.

Ras Ali at last awoke to the danger of allowing a young and brave chieftain to wage war on his own account, and to plunder peaceful districts, he ordered him to repair to his Court, the request naturally met with a refusal. Several Dejazmatches were sent to enforce the command, but the young soldier easily conquered the courtiers sent against him, their followers, charmed with the insinuating manners and dazzled by the splendid promises of Cassai, were easily induced to range themselves under his standard; urged, it is said, by his brave and beautiful wife, who even threatened to leave him if he did not struggle for the supreme power, he attacked his father-in-law. The battle of Amba Chara decided the fate of Ras Ali, his army having been completely routed, by the gallant behaviour of Lij Cassai, he fled to the Galla country, where he shortly afterwards died, leaving Cassai as the recognized master of Central Abyssinia. Victory followed victory, all trembled before the fierce assaults and great prestige of the rising man. After a few years, from Shoa to Matemma, from Gojam to Hamazin, all feared and obeyed the commands of the Emperor Theodorus, for under that name he desired to be crowned after he had finally conquered Abyssinia, by subduing the powerful Tigri chief, Dijaz Oubie.

For a few years all went on well, the fear of his very name retained in obedience even the most distant provinces, tribute in gold, horses, mules, grain, &c., almost encumbered the royal camp, and many credited his own assertion, viz., "that the glorious reign of the long promised Theodorus" had in reality begun.

But though a great conqueror and naturally endowed with military genius, the Emperor Theodorus is a bad administrator. He owed his crown and country to his army; when strife gave way to peace, he found himself at the head of a powerful host, the soldiers of the many chiefs he had conquered, and he felt either reluctant or afraid to dismiss them to their homes; he, therefore, seeing all peaceful around him, like many great captains of old, turned his thoughts towards foreign conquests, until the re-establishment of the former Ethiopic Empire, comprising the Soudan and part of the Galla country, became a fixed idea which he longed to realize.

He had, however, some experience of what a small number of well-armed disciplined troops could do against his undisciplined horde; on a former occasion he had endeavoured to obtain possession of the Soudan. At Gedaref, a handful of irregulars proved too much for him and he returned from this expedition if not a better at least a wiser man; consequently, feeling himself with all his boasting unable to cope single-handed with the Turks, he invited the concurrence of England and France, and wrote to the Sovereigns of both these countries calling on them to join him in his crusade against the Mussulman race. In the meanwhile his army consisted of about 150,000 fighting men, but as in most Eastern armies encumbered with numberless followers, his own being computed to be no less than 600,000. If we admit the population of Abyssinia to be about 3,000,000, more than a-fourth of the whole had to be fed, clothed, and paid by the remainder. During some years this terrible oppression was quietly submitted to, at last, however, the peasants, half-starved and almost naked, finding that with all their labours and privations they could not succeed in satisfying the daily increasing demands of their terrible master,

abandoned the plains, and under the conduct of their hereditary chiefs retired to high mountains or deep valleys; some few took to arms and prepared to resist by force the armies of the formidable Theodorus, preferring even the chances of a cruel death to the certainty of misery and starvation.

In Gojam, Wolkait, Shoa, Tigre, the rebellion broke out almost simultaneously; the idea of foreign conquest was postponed, whole rebel districts were laid waste, but protected by their strongholds, the peasantry quietly awaited the departure of the soldiery, when they returned to their desolated homes, and cultivated just enough for their maintenance. With but few exceptions this system succeeded, and they escaped the terrible vengeance of their now infuriated lord. The immense army soon suffered from this mode of warfare year after year, the provinces the soldier could still plunder became less and less, several severe famines broke out, large districts such as Dembea, formerly the granary of the empire, were now depopulated and uncultivated, dissatisfaction showed itself amongst the formerly pampered soldiers, now half starved and badly clad, desertions began to take place, many fled to their native provinces, and joined the ranks of those in arms in defence of their homes, or tilled the soil with their now transformed lance.

The fall of Theodorus was as rapid as his rise; on the battle field he still remained unconquered; Garet, Negousie, and others paid with their lives their attempts to snatch from his hands the sovereign power, but against the passive warfare of the peasantry, and the Fabian-like policy of their chiefs, he could do nothing; he went from province to province, all disappeared at his approach, no enemy, but no food; little by little his army as well as his kingdom dwindled away; at last nothing remained to him but to plunder the few provinces still faithful to him. At the present date his army hardly numbers 10,000 fighting men, and of the whole of his former conquests he retains with difficulty, a portion of Begemeder, the small districts of Dahouto, Dalanta and Eches, with a few ambas, shortly his only refuge.

Admitting for an instant that Theodorus was born with the best dispositions, endowed with the best of tempers, that sobriety, truthfulness, and justice ruled his life, still he passed through the double ordeal of rapid and unexpected elevation, to fall so suddenly, hardly retaining the appearance of his short-lived royalty, as to account for his present suspicious character, cruelty and duplicity. It is, however, more natural to suspect, that whilst poor and a candidate to power, he concealed his many vices and restrained his natural evil propensities. Soon after his coronation at the height of his glory, when all Abyssinia crouched at his feet, he had neither cause nor reason to be false and cruel, still he was both; he loved to ensnare by kind words or deeds those he thought might give him trouble some day, and many of his first and most faithful followers had to lament the hour they had trusted in the most sacred oath of their lord and master.

Even now, low as he is fallen, when he likes he has all the dignity of a Sovereign, the amiability and good breeding of the most accomplished diplomat: his smile is so attractive, his words so sweet and gracious, that those who have seen him thus, and we are amongst them, cannot believe that the affable and accomplished monarch is but a good actor playing a part, a monster of hypocrisy, who is chuckling all the while inwardly at the dexterous manner he is taking in his admiring friends.

A few examples will illustrate better than mere words the true character of the Emperor Theodorus, and efface the impression that, being one of his victims, I am painting him blacker than he really is.

Beru Goscho, the hereditary Governor of Gojam, fell a prisoner into the hands of Theodorus at the battle which decided the conquest of that considerable province. But an important amba remained, and without its possession his victory would be of little avail. Theodorus having no artillery, and the fort being well provisioned, he was well aware that both assault or seige would fail, and that only by cunning he could enter its narrow doors. The fort was in the hands of Beru Goscho's wife; he consequently sent her offers of capitulation, to the effect that should she surrender the fort to his victorious army, she and her husband would be free, promoted to high rank, and left in possession of all their property; after some hesitation Beru Goscho's wife accepted the terms offered on Theodorus taking the most solemn oath that he would fulfil his promise. Trust not in Princes—as soon as the fort opened its gate to the victor, Beru Goscho and his wife were made prisoners, stripped of everything, himself heavily chained, and sent with his wife to a hill fort, where they remained until they were sent here, where both now reside, the husband bound hand and foot and thrust into the common gaol, the wife living a guarded prisoner in some other part of the mountain, and though so near, they are not allowed to communicate, much less to visit and comfort one another.

Oubie, the Governor of Tigré, though worn out by excess and old age, led his army in person against the invading host of Theodorus. Tired and weary the old man rested

for a few minutes under a tree, in this position he was accidentally surrounded and made a prisoner by some of Theodorus' soldiers.

In Abyssinian warfare when the Chief is taken or dead the battle is over, the conquered army either joins the victor or throwing away arms and baggage flies in all directions; such was the case on the present occasion, and almost without fighting, by a lucky stroke of fortune, Theodorus found himself master of Tigré. The son of Oubie, shut up in the stronghold of Semien, refused to listen to the terms offered by Theodorus, well knowing by this time the value of his word. But Theodorus was not a man to be frustrated in his wishes. He treated the old man Oubie exceedingly well, and at last married his daughter, making her his lawful wife and consort. He then sent word to his brothers-in-law, telling them, We are now of one family, your sister is my wife, you my beloved brothers; what have you to fear? The unhappy young man surrendered the fort, and repaired to the Imperial camp. A short time afterwards Theodorus repudiated his new wife, and loaded his brothers-in-law with heavy fetters, which death alone will remove.

One of the bravest men in Theodorus' army was the "Waksum," a descendant of one of the oldest Lasta families; he fought for his King on many a battle field, and by his valour more than once turned the tide of victory. At last, the suspicious Theodorus began to be afraid of his brave Chief. To try his fidelity he sent him with a small force against another "Waksum," his uncle, who had rebelled. The "Waksum," to show his King that his loyalty was above family ties, accepted the unwelcome task, scattered the rebels, and brought to the Emperor's feet his uncle a fettered prisoner. He was instantly executed, and the "Waksum" himself shortly afterwards was made to learn that even the sacrifice of his own family could not satisfy the suspicious tyrant: he was deprived of his command, chained, and sent a prisoner to this amba.

At the second battle in Tigré against Aga Negousie many of the Chiefs, after the fall of their leader, took refuge in the sacred churches of Axum. Even Theodorus dared not drag them from their sanctuary; he therefore swore that he would grant a free pardon to all who would come to him on condition that they would serve him in future. Almost all accepted. They had no sooner reached the camp than many were handed over to the executioner, whilst the remainder loaded with chains were sent prisoners to some hill fort.

I could adduce hundreds of instances to illustrate the utter worthlessness of his most sacred oaths, if a few were not sufficient to show how vain it is to believe anything he says. In his cunning he always endeavours to cover his treachery by some paltry excuse. He plundered Dembea, because the inhabitants were too friendly towards the Europeans, Gondar, because one of our messengers had been betrayed by the inhabitants of that city. He likes to shelve the odium of his cruelties on the Europeans or priest, whenever it is possible. He destroyed Zagi, a large and populous city, because, he said, a priest had been rude to him. No person is sacred in his eye, however faithful he may have proved. A few months ago he cast into chains his adopted father Cantiba Hailo, who, by protecting him at the beginning of his career, was greatly instrumental in his rise. Tesemma Engedda, the hereditary Chief of Gahinte, last year, with the peasantry of his district, utterly destroyed a large invading body of rebels. He was first cajoled and made a grandee, but soon after made to feel the evil of too well serving his master, he now lingers in chains, and is occasionally tortured to extort money from him. A few days ago the Chief of the Amba, one of the oldest and most faithful servants, has been chained and all his property confiscated. His brother Ras Walde Mariam, also one of his first and most trusty followers, is, with almost all the Begemeder Chiefs, in chains. In the meanwhile the peasantry are daily plundered. Theodorus by chaining the Chiefs secures the object he desires—money from the great men; and the peasants, however anxious to fight they may be, are left helpless, deprived as they are of all their leaders.

I have already stated that, having subdued Abyssinia, he turned his thoughts towards annexing the Galla country and Upper Egypt. He overran a part of the Galla country with his immense army, and forced them to acknowledge him as their Suzerain; they agreed to pay him tribute, and many of the still-unconquered Galla chiefs, listening to his honied words, gave up their guerilla warfare, so detrimental to his army, and joined his standard. They had soon to repent their too generous confidence. Fara Kassim, a brave warrior, and considered, amongst a race of horsemen, as one of the most skilful, a chief of a large district in the neighbourhood of Magdallah, availed himself of the amity to join the army of Theodorus. "To prove that you are sincere," said the Abyssinian Monarch, "go and plunder your own district." He obeyed; chains were his reward.

After the submission of the Gallas, Theodorus required hostages; several of the principal chiefs volunteered and accepted to remain at his newly-acquired amba of

Magdalla. The Queen sent him her eldest son, the heir to the throne, as a proof of her good-will. At first they were all well treated, the young Prince being made Governor of the amba. This period of favour did not last long. Theodorus exacted so much that the Galla declined to comply with his requests; the Prince and his chiefs were put in chains; and when the heir to the throne of Shoa escaped with his followers, as he was kindly received by the Galla Queen, the Prince, his companions, and Fara Kassim—altogether thirty-two Galla chiefs—were put to death, and their still-breathing bodies hurled over the precipice.

Almost all travellers agree that African Princes are despotic to the extreme, consider as nothing the lives of their subjects—their property as their own; moreover, that deceit and treachery are well-known features of the African character. They delight in bullying the weak, and cringe willingly before the strong. It may be that Theodorus is not worse than many of his predecessors and countrymen; only that his extraordinary fortune has brought out to the utmost the bad qualities of his nature. Still, Theodorus, however unscrupulous he may be, accomplished as he is in hypocrisy and deceit, is no fool; there is more cunning and plotting in him than will be found in all Abyssinia put together. He knows well the cowardly race he has to deal with, and that he can commit crimes to satiation, without fear of punishment; soldiers, as well as peasants, when too harshly treated, simply run away.

Theodorus has had for many years Europeans around him; amongst them, Bell and Plowden. The first was his great and good adviser, and up to the time of his death there are but few stains on Theodorus' name. He has had long conversations on European affairs with the Europeans in his service—all men of good education; and he is well informed regarding the resources and power of Western nations. Indeed, the very way he injured and illtreated foreigners clearly indicates that he was afraid at first to go too far; for it was only when he believed himself beyond the reach of punishment that he proclaimed, by words and deeds, his intense hatred of the white man.

The Egyptian Government, to save the Soudan from being plundered, restrained by some reason or other from declaring war against its boasting neighbour, endeavoured to allay the wrath of the all-powerful Emperor, and to that effect first sent to him, with suitable presents, David, the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria. Theodorus, always jealous of the power of the Church, took advantage of the presence of this dignitary to show his army whom they had to fear and obey. One day, on some frivolous presence or the other, he caused a hedge to be built around the Patriarch's residence, and for several days the eldest son of the Coptic Church kept his holy father in close confinement. It is true that, believing he had gone too far, he apologized, and allowed the terrified old man to leave the country. As usual, Theodorus was considered the injured man—he was right, the Patriarch wrong. So, at least, Said Pacha must have thought; as, soon after the return of David, he sent Abdul Raham Beg with enormous and costly presents—a sop for the infuriated lion. However, the Egyptian Ambassador fared somewhat worse than his predecessor. After having been detained more than three years—the greater part of the time as a semi-prisoner—he was allowed to leave, but was plundered *en route* by the Shum of Tehelgo, contrary to the orders and entirely without the concurrence of Theodorus. Strong remonstrances having been made by Egypt on account of the long detention of their Ambassador—perhaps doubtful concerning the plunder, if his story would be believed—he accused the unfortunate Beg of many a serious crime. Fearful that his word would not stand against the crafty accusations of his kind host, Abdul Raham Beg poisoned himself at Berber. For the second time Theodorus was allowed to illtreat foreigners without any notice being taken of his brutality. On the next occasion, the dread of retaliation being less, he went a step further.

This time his victim was M. Lejean, a member of the French Diplomatic Service. Tired of Abyssinia, and having received letters requiring his presence in Europe, M. Lejean requested an interview with the Emperor, in order to obtain his permission to leave the country; an evasive answer was returned to his request. M. Lejean sent again, as, His Majesty being *en route* to Gojam, each day would increase the difficulty of his return. Such impertinence could not be tolerated, and Theodorus' army had the glory to see, in full uniform, a "représentant de la grande nation," chained and imprisoned. After twenty-four hours he was released, and allowed to remain at Gaffat, the European workmen of the King being securities for his good behaviour, and for his residing in the country until the return of a M. Bardel, also a Frenchman, sent some months previously on a mission to the Emperor of the French. On the arrival of M. Bardel with a letter from the French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, M. Lejean, after a kind of mock trial, was allowed twenty-four hours to leave the country.

Here, again, no notice was taken of the insult. A French official was chained,

imprisoned, detained for many months, and lastly, literally kicked out of the country; and with the sole exception of a protest from the gentleman himself, Theodorus could proudly boast of the insults he had offered to a great Power without her daring to resent the same.

The Patriarch he imprisoned for a few days; the Egyptian Ambassador for several years, and plundered him of everything he had; the French Consul he imprisoned, chained and kicked out of the country. Any semi-barbarian would no doubt have thought the same as Theodorus did, that through fear or impossibility, whatever ill treatment he might inflict on strangers, no punishment could possible overtake him. That such must have been his impression is manifest by the gradual increasing brutalities of his conduct towards those Europeans, the next victims of this sainted hero.

The unjust, cruel, and savage treatment inflicted by the Emperor of Abyssinia on Stern, Cameron, Rosenthal, and their respective followers, is without precedence, and its horrors unparalleled in history. It is indeed a wonder how these unfortunate and innocent men could bear against such a long imprisonment, coupled with heavy chains. For a long time almost bound to the ground by additional fetters, nearly starved to death, frequently deprived of every article of clothing, and without friends or sympathy, strangers in a dark and distant land, how the cry of their sufferings could find no echo, and why the inhuman being who for so many years revelled in their sufferings, was petted, absolved, almost pitied, is a mystery and an enigma the mind must accept, but is incapable to solve.

By this time Theodorus took no trouble to hide the contempt in which he held all Europeans and their Governments; he knew that an answer to his letter to the Queen of England had arrived at Massowah in July, 1864. "Let them wait my good pleasure," said he; and it is probable that he would never have taken any notice of Her Majesty's letter or of the mission sent to him, if the political condition of his country had not induced him to adopt another line of conduct. When the mission arrived at Massowah in July, 1864, Theodorus was still at the head of a powerful army, and master of the greater part of the country. His campaign in Shoa was most disastrous. On his return from that expedition, Mr. Rassam's third letter reached him: it probably struck him that he might make capital out of us, he therefore granted the long-expected permission to enter his country. The cordial and hospitable reception he gave us, his gracious demeanour and polished manners quite won our hearts, and almost forgetting the suffering of our countrymen, we were almost inclined to consider him as the injured individual. But the mask of hypocrisy was to fall at last. The captives had been released, presents ordered, a letter of apology to our gracious Queen, written the day of departure fixed, all was forgotten and forgiven; but before they leave, his friends must come to him once more to gladden his heart.

On the 13th April, 1866, the former captives left Korata *en route* to Tanka, a village at the extremity of the Tama Lake, where the whole party was to rendezvous. The Mission started at the same time by boat for Zagi to bid adieu to their good friends; on our arrival we were received at the beach with due honours, and proceeded to the Royal enclosure. The large audience hall was crowded, all the officers of the army being present in their gala dress, we thought that the good King wished on the last visit of his friends to surprise them by the grandeur of the reception. Indeed he did surprise us! As we entered the hall, the chief Ras Engeddah kissed the ground; again a kiss was a signal used by an arch-traitor, in an instant we were seized, searched, our swords, caps, belts, thrown on the ground, our uniforms torn, and three of Her Majesty's officers dragged along the double line of Abyssinian grandees, degraded and reviled.

Whilst the Mission was thus treated in the very house of their host, the former prisoners were arrested at a village a few miles from Korata, chained and brought to Zagi.

The farce of a public reconciliation took place a few days afterwards, Mr. Flad started on his mission. The Emperor previously taking a solemn oath that until his return he would treat us as his friends. In the meanwhile we remained for some time at Zagi, prisoners without chains.

Our subsequent history is well known. His Majesty left Zagi at the beginning of June; arrived at Gaffat, he gave us horses so that we should be near our friends; on the 25th of that month, either on some false report (or what is more probable a mere invention of his), that the Turks were building railways in the Soudan, without his permission, in order to invade his country, he removed us from Gaffat to a black tent in his enclosure. On the 5th of July, Mr. Rosenthal and myself were arrested at Gaffat (where we both resided at the time, on account of cholera and typhus having broken out amongst the Europeans), by His Majesty himself, and taken to Debra Tabor, where, after a series of accusations had been made by His Majesty against Messrs. Stern and Rassam, and after

we had been duly informed that the Europeans of Abyssinia were entitled to half the world, the whole party was sent to a dark house and guards placed in the room with lighted candles. Two days afterwards, with the exception of a few who entered His Majesty's service, we were all sent to Magdallah, where we arrived on the 12th of July; on the 16th we were chained, and though it has been said that since then our heavy fetters have been changed to lighter ones, that statement like so many others, is incorrect, except as concerns Mr. Rassam, who enjoys that favour; as for provisions, we should certainly have died of starvation last rainy season had not the Europeans of Gaffat generously supplied us with all the money they could spare. Mr. Flad succeeded far beyond our most sanguine expectations, presents and workmen arrived at Massowah fortunately for us and them, accompanied by a dignified letter from our gracious Queen. Even at the eleventh hour the most liberal offers were still made to him; the past was forgotten on condition that he should behave better in future; we were to be exchanged for useful mechanics, and friendship re-established between the two nations. As we all expected, Theodorus refused. In bland terms he humbly begs for the presents and artizans to be sent to him: "Oh! if they would only trust me, I would let fifty such as Rassam go." In the meanwhile he leaves his friends in chains; the only trouble he takes about them is to have them carefully watched, so that they should not leave without bidding him good-bye. I hope that by the time this letter reaches the coast the outrageous and unscrupulous policy of the Abyssinian Emperor has been at last found out, that pretending friendship with our Government whilst Her Majesty's servants and other Europeans are in chains and left to starve, is a farce so gross and so absurd as not to leave room for the usual misrepresentation, always brought forward to exculpate his worst actions.

In the present state of the country, what could Theodorus possibly do either with the presents or the workmen; the first, unless he sent half the remainder of his army to carry them, would never reach his camp: and what works could be erected by means of the latter? when at present the Europeans at Gaffat are by Imperial command told not to sleep at nights, but watch, as they are not a single day safe from being made prisoners by peasants or runaway soldiers.

What he wants is this: more Europeans in his hands. Should such an unfortunate event occur, should truth not yet be known, should that wonderful infatuation to trust in a man without honour or sincerity still prevail, and these unfortunate men allowed to enter the country, then some new and more unreasonable request will be made; not only will no one be allowed to leave, but the comers will soon be made to join our ranks; and who knows, he has not yet tasted the blood of the white man, let him only in one of his fits of ungovernable rage sacrifice one to his fury, the fate of all the others would be immediately sealed.

Let England, who glories in her civilization, who hates falsehood and cruelty, bring her light to dispel the darkness of their land. England always proved that her citizens, like those of Rome in former days may exclaim "Civis Romanus sum." Will she leave her children to be slaves in the hands of a heartless tyrant? No, the noble efforts made already in our favour by our gracious Queen, those of an enlightened Government, and the sympathy of the nation, are as many pledges that we are not forgotten, and that one day we will be rescued, returned to our homes and families.

It must not be misunderstood, to obtain that object, the wishes of all, only one thing remains, Force.

I cannot better conclude than by stating the opinion of an Abyssinian gentleman, Samuel, sent by the King as our Balderaba. Since the beginning he has been mixed up with this affair; he knows Theodorus better than any man, and the many good services he has rendered us since imprisonment is a guarantee of his sincerity. "Is England asleep? Should your countrymen be foolish enough to send the presents and workmen it would do you no good! None of you will ever leave the country unless your soldiers come. But if not soon, it will be too late to save you!"

(Signed) H. BLANC, M.D.,
Staff Assistant Surgeon, Her Majesty's Bombay Army,
Abyssinian Mission.

Magdalla, March 30, 1867.

No. 124.

Mr. Murray to Sir E. Lugard.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 24, 1867.

WITH reference to my letter of the 20th of April last respecting the Abyssinian difficulty, I am directed by Lord Stanley to request that you will suggest, for Secretary Sir J. Pakington's consideration, whether, pending a final decision on the course to be pursued by Her Majesty's Government, it may not be desirable to make preliminary inquiries as to the precise steps to be taken in the event of its being found ultimately necessary to resort to force.

At present there is no intention of doing so. The Armenian Patriarch at Jerusalem has sent a mission to Abyssinia for the purpose of trying to effect the release of the captives; and Lord Stanley is awaiting the result of the letter which I informed you he had addressed to King Theodore, and which was despatched from Massowah on the 17th of May. Nevertheless, as the time for action in Abyssinia seems to be limited to the period between the 1st of November and the 1st of June, it might be well for Her Majesty's Government to be furnished in time with all information calculated to assist them in their decision, in case warlike measures should hereafter be deemed inevitable.

It seems to Lord Stanley that it would be well that the following information should be procured:—

1. What amount of force is considered needful; what should it consist of, and by whom should it be commanded?

2. Assuming Bombay to be the base of operation, how long, after receiving from England orders to prepare the force, would it take to insure its being ready for service?

3. What arrangement would be made for its transport?

4. At what point would it be proposed to land it; bearing in mind that it is essential, if possible, to avoid landing on Egyptian territory.

5. What Commissariat arrangements would be requisite?

6. What reserve would be necessary to insure success, and how is it proposed to keep this supplied?

7. Whether any and what preliminary steps would have to be taken, and what time would be required for the purpose, in order to obtain answers to these questions?

No doubt this information must be procured from Bombay, but Sir J. Pakington will probably concur with Lord Stanley in opinion that the request for it should rather be made by the War Office than by the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 125.

Major de Dohsé to Lord Stanley.—(Received June 28.)

Your Excellency, 29, *Mornington Road, New Cross, February* 27, 1867.

IT is not the least presumption, but a strong feeling of compassion as well as a presentiment of a certain success, which induces me to repeatedly address your Excellency on behalf of the poor British captives in Abyssinia.

It has always been my humble opinion that Earl Russell did not treat that Emperor Theodore with that respect and attention due to his exalted position, which brought on the latter's wrath and rage. A man like the Emperor Theodore, risen from almost nothing by his own self, more ignorant than enlightened, flattered by courtiers and advised by them, especially by foreigners, is more ambitious and proud than other Royal personages in civilized countries; also the sending of some gentlemen with presents, which they had to deliver to the Emperor under the condition of releasing the captives, must have made a bad impression upon him, being already too much informed of the customs at the European Courts.

As regards sending 10,000 men to Abyssinia, it would, upon my opinion, be a total failure, being not only connected with great expenses, but also with the greatest difficulties. The Commander-in-chief of that corps would have a hard task in finding out his basis of operations in a country entirely unknown to him. It would not be advisable for him to advance into the heart of the country, as it could happen to be cut off in the rear from the Red Sea, his only refuge in case of a retreat by the Emperor's troops. Such proceedings would, I think, lead to the greatest disasters, and the captives for ever be sacrificed.

There is another and better way, namely, the way of reconciliation; and if your Excellency will deign accept my former offer, or propose me for that appointment I applied for, I hope to God that I shall meet with a brilliant result if the undertaking is left to my own consideration.

Being Her Majesty's subject and formerly a superior officer in Her Majesty's army, I should be most happy to sacrifice myself for this noble and generous Government, directed at present by a most enlightened and wise Prime Minister, supported by his noble son, equally great as he, upon which every Englishman looks with admiration and pride.

I, in conclusion, refer respecting my good services and character to the Government, War Office, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cambridge, and especially to General Sir Henry Storks and Colonel W. G. Cameron, my former superior officers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) Major DE DOHSE.

No. 126.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 1.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, June* 29, 1867.

WITH reference to the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 13th instant in reply to Mr. Hammond's letter of the 8th instant, I now take the liberty of offering a few additional remarks. I am induced to do so by the bellicose tone assumed by many of the organs of public opinion since the Abyssinian question was mooted in the House of Lords on the 21st instant, from which it may be inferred that hostile measures against the Emperor Theodore will ere long ensue.

Should such be the case, I trust my suggestion as to securing the assistance of Waagshum Gobazye, the actual ruler of north-eastern Abyssinia, will not be disregarded.

At the same time, I would beg leave to represent to your Lordship that it would hardly be fair to the British nation if the whole cost of any warlike operations that may be decided on were borne by the Imperial Treasury; inasmuch as the Government of India is not less responsible than the Home Government for the breach between England and Abyssinia, if indeed it might not be contended that the mischief originated with the Indian authorities.

In order to explain my meaning, I would ask permission to refer to the facts bearing on the subject which are brought together in my recently published work, "The British Captives in Abyssinia."

From what is stated in page 78 of that work, it appears that in October 1862, Consul Cameron, in contemplation of his having to leave Abyssinia for the purpose of accompanying to England the projected Embassy from the Emperor Theodore, wrote to Earl Russell in these terms:—"As it is desirable on every account that we should not be without a correspondence in Abyssinia for a considerable time, I am preparing a letter on the subject to the Resident at Aden, a copy of which will be herewith inclosed."

The said letter to the Resident at Aden is not given in the papers laid before Parliament. But (as is explained in page 79 of my work) it was written at the instance of Samuel Georgis or Hussein, my servant on my journey to Shoa in 1840, who became (so to say) a party to Major Harris's Mission to the King of that country in 1841, and who has now acquired greater notoriety as "Samuel, the Emperor's steward," and it was to the effect that the Government of India should forthwith despatch to the Court of the Emperor Theodore a Political Mission similar to that sent from Bombay to King Sahela Selásye.

With this letter for the Resident at Aden and his other despatches, as likewise with one from the Emperor of Abyssinia to the Queen of England, Consul Cameron left the camp in Godjam for the coast in the beginning of November, 1862, and (as is stated in page 92 of my work) "in the month of June 1863, Captain Cameron found his way back to Gondar from his lengthened excursion in the north. His position was a most pitiable one. He had brought with him no answer from the Queen of England to the Emperor's letter of October 31, 1862; but from the greater proximity of India, and apparently a greater alacrity there than at home in answering letters, he had already received a decided negative to the proposal made for a Mission to be sent from Bombay."

There were doubtless other causes tending to irritate the Emperor against Consul Cameron arising from the altered policy of Her Majesty's Government with respect to Abyssinia and the Abyssinians. But, without alluding further to those matters here, it will be sufficient to repeat (as is stated by me in page 97) that the Emperor "could only regard the refusal of the Government of Bombay to treat him as they had formerly treated the King of Shoa, now become his vassal, as an additional proof of this change of feeling and conduct towards him."

Not only is it true that when Consul Cameron met the Emperor Theodore in July 1863, he brought with him no reply from the Queen of England, but it may be regarded as certain that had it not been for the subsequent imprisonment of that officer the Emperor's letter would to this day have remained unnoticed. And even supposing

that letter to have been replied to without delay, Her Majesty's answer at that time would assuredly have been written in precisely the same spirit as that which had already been given by the Governor of Bombay to the Emperor's proposal; so that it may be conjectured that the reason why no such answer was sent, is, that it was deemed unnecessary for the Queen to write solely for the purpose of repeating what had already been said in Her Majesty's name by her Representative at Bombay.

It would, therefore, seem that, under all the circumstances, it would be anything but fair to the British ratepayers at home to throw upon them the whole of the heavy expenses of the proceedings against the Emperor of Abyssinia, and that, on the contrary, justice requires that the Indian Treasury should bear its proportion of those expenses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 127.

Sir E. Lugard to Mr. Murray.—(*Received July* 2.)

Sir, *War Office, July* 2, 1867.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for War to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, relative to the measures to be taken for obtaining the release of the British captives in Abyssinia.

In reply I am to transmit to you, for the information of Lord Stanley, the accompanying copy of a letter which Sir John Pakington has caused to be addressed to the Secretary of State for India in Council, containing an expression of the views entertained by Sir J. Pakington on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD LUGARD.

Inclosure in No. 127.

Sir E. Lugard to Mr. Merivale.

Sir, *War Office, July* 2, 1867.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for War to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a letter from the Foreign Office relative to the measures to be taken for obtaining the release of the British captives in Abyssinia, and I am to request that you will move the Secretary of State for India in Council to enable Sir J. Pakington to answer Lord Stanley's inquiries.

Sir J. Pakington is decidedly of opinion that the force, in the event of its being determined to send one, should be provided from India, and that the whole expedition should be organized at and proceed from Bombay; and he considers, so far as he is able to judge, that Major-General Sir W. Coghlan is an officer well suited for commanding the force and conducting the expedition, and also that the Rev. Percy Badger should be attached to the expedition as Political Agent and Interpreter.

With reference to paragraph 7 of Mr. Murray's letter, it appears to Sir John Pakington that it would be advisable as a preliminary step that Major-General Sir W. Coghlan should proceed to Massowah as soon as practicable, accompanied by Mr. Badger, and be met there by a selected medical officer, a Commissariat officer, and an officer of the Quarter-master-General's Department from Bombay to inspect the locality and settle what arrangements would be necessary for the landing, reception, feeding, &c., of the force in the event of its being necessary to send one.

Sir W. Coghlan and Mr. Badger might, moreover, be empowered to negotiate with the tribes, and use such means as they deem fit to ascertain whether the release of the captives could not be effected without having recourse to arms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD LUGARD.

No. 128.

Mr. Hearsey to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 4.)

My Lord, *London, July* 2, 1867.

MAY I beg your Lordship to forgive my apparent presumption in pointing out to such a skilful Diplomatist as yourself a method by which I think the Abyssinian captives might be rescued with scarcely any real danger to themselves.

1. Advantage might be taken of the visit of His Highness the Pasha of Egypt to this country, and a Secret Treaty negotiated with him.

2. Let a British Resident be sent to Suakin (a port not far from Massowah) with extensive civil and military powers.

3. Let, under his direction, certain regiments be raised at and about that place in the name of the Pasha of Egypt, but let those regiments be officered in a great measure in the same manner as regiments of the Turkish Contingent were during the Crimean war. These regiments to be nominally in the service of the Pasha, like the various Contingents in India are under their native Princes, but to be paid and disciplined by the British Government.

4. Let some good vessel, such as the "Coromandel," with an officer of good local experience, such as Lieutenant Carew, late Indian Navy, now commanding the "Dalhousie," be dispatched to make surveys of the coast, create discontent amongst the subjects of the Emperor Theodore, and to make reconnaissances as to favourable spots on which to make a descent or create a diversion; also to take arms, clothing, ammunition, stores, &c., to Suakin.

5. Let good English non-commissioned officers be dispatched to Suakin from Aden, to assist in drilling and disciplining a Contingent.

6. Some few men who formerly served in our Turkish Contingent (Turks or Egyptians) might be obtained, and these, drafted into these regiments, would greatly aid in disciplining the Contingent.

7. Let some individual be dispatched from Suakin, in disguise, to make all the necessary inquiries possible, and, if practicable, sketch out the route to Magdala. If no fitter person could be found to undertake this risk, I myself would be willing to do so, on the sole condition that if I perished in my enerprise the British Government would suitably provide for my wife and children. If I am successful, I shall then be able to prove that Brigadier-General Rainier's confidential Report of the 1st of April, 1865, was wilfully false and incorrect, and that he had been prejudiced against me by my commanding officer, who was desirous of and succeeded in obtaining my removal for the advancement of his nephew, (who was my immediate junior in Her Majesty's 107th Regiment), and that I had been cheated out of my commission by my zealous obedience to the illegal orders of my military superiors. If I fail, and lose my life in the attempt, I shall only be one more victim sacrificed in a good cause, viz., for the honour of my country and the rescue of my countrymen from the chains of a cruel savage.

8. During the cold season, without any previous declaration of war (you are dealing with a savage), let two or three regiments of Native Infantry, with a battery and a-half of Artillery,* and detachments of Irregular Cavalry, be sent to Suakin. Advantage could be taken of the relief of regiments from England, and a European regiment added if thought really necessary.

9. Thus, without any suspicion on the part of Theodore, a blow struck from an Egyptian province might be effected, and if the command of the expedition was put under the command of an Indian officer, such as Colin, Troupe, Tombs, Beatson, Chamberlain, or any of that class of men, and not under the leadership of Horse Guards pets, such as Cameron, I think that the prisoners might be rescued at comparatively little cost to the British Government and only small danger to the prisoners themselves.

10. The provinces so wrested from the savage Theodore might be sold, or, in other words, an equivalent might be given to us for them by the Pasha of Egypt.

11. Begging your Lordship to call to mind that my grandfather, in 1804, penetrated with Dr. Morecraft into Chinese Tartary (in the disguise of religious mendicants), then a country totally unknown, and in which travelling was equally difficult and dangerous as it would now be in Abyssinia, I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW W. HEARSEY,
Eldest surviving son of the late Sir J. B. Hearsey, K.C.B., and late an Officer of Her Majesty's 107th Regiment.

Address:
Care of Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co.,
45, Pall Mall.

No. 129.

Colonel Haly to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 4.)

My Lord, 12, *St. Stephen's Road, Hammersmith, July* 3, 1867.

AS it would appear that it is in contemplation to take steps for the release of the prisoners so long in such sore custody in Abyssinia, I venture to do myself the honour to

* 3 Siege guns, 2 24-pounders, 1 68-pounder howitzer: 3 field guns, Armstrong's; 3 mountain train, ditto: 3 siege guns, 3 field guns, 3 mountain-train guns.

offer, with all due deference, the following remarks, suggestions, &c., trusting that my great experience of such characters as this demi-savage of the wilds of Africa, and with jungle and irregular warfare, as in part certified by the inclosed testimonials, will plead my excuse for the liberty I am taking.

Further, I have the less hesitation in doing so, from feeling convinced that if an expedition is undertaken unadvisedly, or in the general routine in such matters, and more particularly should part of the force employed be taken from the, unhappily at present, disorganized native army of India; if it prove not a failure, will at least be a most disastrous one; and it is only necessary to remember the Bhootan Expedition to show why this should be anticipated. So far from any improvement having since taken place, day by day only shows still more the miserable working of the suicidal system under which a fine army was broken up, and a heterogeneous mass constituted in its stead, in which all confidence in themselves and reliance on their officers has been totally destroyed.

Nor is the system of discipline, training, &c., of Her Majesty's European regiments of the line much better calculated to meet the emergency or insure the success of such an enterprize; and it must be well known to your Lordship that at no time has the British soldier shone less than in jungle and irregular warfare.

I would therefore suggest (and the accompanying paper* will show that it is no new idea of mine, but one long ago proposed, and which I was permitted to carry out by the Indian Government), that a special force should be organized of picked men, whose constitutions have proved to be more fitted for work and exposure in a tropical climate, and to whom experience has given that training so necessary for an undertaking of so hazardous a nature as carrying war into an unknown and difficult country, and unhealthy climate to strangers, as there is reason to fear that Abyssinia may prove to be.

The European portion of such a force, of which there should be sufficient to form a safe reserve, would be the more difficult to deal with, the constitution of the British army not admitting of utilizing it as might be done were its members entertained for general service in it, as was the case with the European force of the East India Company, which better system enabled the State to make use of the services of their men individually, as they were found most fitted; whereas a British soldier once enlisted for any particular branch or regiment, cannot be transferred except with his own consent.

The injurious working of this system during war time has more than once been unpleasantly obvious in the untrained boys that have had to be sent out to take the place of the men killed and placed *hors de combat* during a campaign; and this was never more unfortunately evident than during the Crimean war.

That the late Recruiting Commissions should have overlooked a matter of such vital importance to the well-being of the army is indeed strange, and only to be accounted for by the weight of preconceived ideas and associations, ever sure to prejudice those trained to any system in which even the greatest evils may exist.

It may appear that I have here digressed from the original intention of this letter, but scarcely so when taking into consideration its connection with my present advocacy of a special picked force for service in Abyssinia, and which I propose should be a selection of men whose acclimatized constitutions have proved them to be fitted for work in a tropical climate, and whose experience has given that training so essential at all times to make a good and efficient soldier; more particularly called for when taking the field and carrying war into an unknown country, the climate of which there is reason for supposing is but ill adapted for the material employed.

This latter supposition, however, suggests what would appear to be in part an easy remedy, viz., the employment of a large Local Native Contingent, and which would no doubt likewise be of cheap attainment as saving the expense of transport, always a large item in such expeditions. It would likewise appear to be the more political as well as the readiest mode of meeting the difficulty, as many of the adjoining tribes would no doubt be easily induced to join, more particularly the people of Suakin, who, besides being a fine soldierly race, are said to be unfriendly to King Theodore, whom they look upon as an usurper.

Such local and acclimatized material would speedily be formed into an efficient force, if well officered by those selected for their knowledge in the field and their management of native troops. That a body so formed would not only be the most useful during the campaign, but afterwards as a check on the present or any other unscrupulous ruler of Abyssinia, can scarcely be a question.

Of the native element from India I have already expressed my opinion, but still a selection might be made from the armies both of Madras and Bombay, which, if well and fully officered, might do good service; but there is always at hand, at least for the present,

* At pages 31, 35, and 36, of "Remarks on Cholera," by Colonel G. T. Haly; forwarded by book post.

the still undisorganized corps of the sappers and miners of India, more particularly that of the Madras Presidency, who have ever proved themselves good and true soldiers on all occasions, with constitutions of a peculiarly hardy nature, rendering them capable of by far more endurance under fatigue and privations than most troops, as well as less liable to suffer from the effects of disease or climate.

In conclusion, I trust to be excused for offering an opinion on the diplomacy to be adopted; but my experience, which is not small in such cases and with such individuals as this demi-savage Emperor, induces the belief that a determined and even threatening policy is far more apt to produce salutary effects than any other, and that if King Theodore were to be distinctly informed that he would be held personally responsible in all ways for the life and safety of Her Britannic Majesty's subjects, and more particularly for those now so unjustly and cruelly treated and incarcerated, that it would be more likely to bring him to reason than aught else.

I shall only further add that if my services can be of any avail, they need only to be commanded either for diplomatic or military employment, and that I would more particularly willingly undertake the command, organization, &c., of the native local contingent I propose.

With many apologies for the liberty I have taken, I am, &c.

(Signed) G. T. HALY, *Colonel,*
Madras Army, and late Her Majesty's 108*th Foot.*

P.S.—I can confidently refer your Lordship to Sir Hope Grant in reference to my fitness for the employment I seek.

G. T. H.

No. 130.

Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 4, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 131.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 6.)

My Lord, *Aden, June* 15, 1867.

HER Majesty's ship "Dalhousie" returned from Massowah on the morning of the 12th instant, bringing letters from Mr. Rassam up to the 3rd May. They were all well up to that date, but naturally in a state of very deep anxiety with regard to the future, the temper of the King having become more uncertain; and what looked most unpropitious, he had suddenly vented his displeasure on the European workmen living at Gaffat, whom he had hitherto invariably treated well.

2. Mr. Rassam writes:—

"Unless you come up and take us out, I fear there will be no chance of our ever leaving this country. Our friend the Emperor has no greater enemy in the world than himself.

"For the last four years he has done nothing but destroy the foundation of the mansion he had so nobly reared. He has been going from bad to worse since the death of Bell; and now there is scarcely a spot in the whole of Abyssinia where peace and safety prevail. The poor peasantry are now between two fires. If they escape from the rebels, they are plundered by the person who ought to protect them. If this unhappy state of affairs lasts a year or two longer, the wretched cultivators of the soil and the traders must inevitably be annihilated by the sword or famine.

"Probably you will not be surprised to hear that the last stroke of His Majesty's conciliatory policy was to imprison all his European artizans, for what cause it is quite impossible for me to tell, as none of the Gaffat people have had the pluck to write about their misfortunes; and the news which Mrs. Rosenthal gives to her husband is so vague that it is quite impossible for any one to make anything out of it, save that on the 16th ultimo the Emperor ordered them to pack up their things, and the next day all their

property was 'counted,' and they were taken up to Debra Tabor as prisoners. That on Tuesday the 16th (the same day they were told to pack up their things), a letter reached the Emperor from Flad, reporting his arrival at Matemma. That on Sunday the 21st ultimo, everything was returned to them save the arms, mules, and costly ornaments which had been presented to them formerly by their Royal Master.

"One of the Emperor's messengers who left Debra Tabor on the 22nd ultimo, reported that the reason the European artizans have fallen into disgrace, is because they had neglected the work intrusted to them by the Emperor. It appears His Majesty had told them to cast a mortar, which he wished them to finish by a certain time; and because they did not do so, as he had told them, he broke up their establishment at Gaffat, and took them to Debra Tabor.

"Mr. Waldemier, one of the artizans, and the Emperor's favourite, sent a message to say (as he was afraid to write), 'that the Emperor had accused them of having had a knowledge of his enemies'' intention to fight him, and had kept the fact a secret. I believe these enemies are the wretched Turks, as it has been rumoured that they had been building quarters for troops at Kedary and Matemma. It has also been reported that the European artizans had been giving assistance to the Moslems. All these reports are neither more nor less than a sketch of imagination, and there is no more truth in them than the charges brought against me at Debra Tabor on the 25th June last. However, there is one thing certain, that the poor European artizans are now in disgrace, and every one expects that we shall soon have them here in chains. By-the-bye, it is also reported that the Emperor had told his European servants that he would leave them alone until the arrival of Flad, as he had some charges against them which could only be substantiated by that gentleman.

"It is also reported that Flad has written him a letter from Matemma, and there was something in it which exasperated His Majesty. This last rumour I certainly do not believe; because what could Flad have written to make the Emperor distrust his own servants? Had that been the case, whatever Flad could have said must have been about the mission on which he was sent; and instead of His Majesty getting angry with his own artizans, he would certainly have vented his rage on me; whereas, instead of that, he is still very friendly, and since his imprisonment of the workmen he has sent me a polite message to say that he would have written to me but that an emergent business which called him away from Debra Tabor prevented him from doing so. On the 21st ultimo he left Debra Tabor for the Lake, and it is surmised that he had made that move for the purpose of driving away some rebels who are said to be waiting for Mr. Flad in order that they might carry him off with all the things he has brought with him. Flad ought to be by this time with the Emperor. It is feared that if he brings in with him all the money and the things he brought for us from Massowah, they will be confiscated. If we lose the 3,000 dollars we shall be badly off, but I have no fear at all of such mishap. If all the Europeans at Debra Tabor will be sent there as prisoners, I shall have a difficult task to maintain them all, which I shall be obliged to do, seeing that they will all be in a state of destitution. But if 3,000 dollars reach me in safety, we shall have then a good supply for the winter. Kindly tell M. Munzinger to send up 100 dollars by each messenger he despatches from Massowah,* because even we get the 3,000 dollars sent by Flad, a few hundred dollars more will not be amiss in a country where money is scarce and presents appreciated by all.

"I only hope that Her Majesty's Government may settle the account here 'promptly,' and if it could be before the winter, it would be better, as there's no knowing what a day may bring forth. The Lasta road is becoming safer for our messengers every day—thanks to the assistance of the Chiefs of the different districts which have thrown off allegiance to our friend. I am looking anxiously for the arrival of Mr. Flad, as everything depends upon what he tells the King about the intentions of Her Majesty's Government. The general opinion is, that if once our friend, His Majesty, knows that he is not going to get anything, and that the British Government is lukewarm towards him, either in giving him nothing, or allowing him to ill-treat British subjects with impunity, he would most assuredly retaliate. Our only safety now is, that active measures should be taken; but if Her Majesty's Government do not intend to do more than has been done hitherto (that is to say, besides conciliatory tactics), I hope that we shall be told so, in order that we may make up our minds to perpetual imprisonment, or to the hurrying down to the grave by a more ignominious death.

"The temper of our friend is getting worse and worse every day. May the Lord save us! If we are left in our present position the whole of this month, we may be allowed to spend the ensuing rainy season in the same quarters; but if our property be seized, and we are sent to the common jail in hand-chains, we shall have a most miserable winter."

3. Captain Cameron writes much to the same effect, but in a postscript adds that the Gaffat workmen are prisoners without chains at Debra Tabor. Also that Bardel writes to him that he, Scrimper, and Zender are not in the mess yet, but expect to be soon. The imprisonment of these people, Captain Cameron says, makes a great difference in their position at Magdala. "They not only acted as intermediators with the King, but furnished us with many little things, such as vegetables, and so on; also a good deal of money."

4. Dr. Blanc writes one most interesting letter, which I think your Lordship would wish to read. I append a copy thereof. In another, dated the 3rd of May, speaking of proposed more active measures, he says:—

"I fear, however, it will be too late. Do not believe that we cry before we are hurt. We have too good reason to fear the worst, and that shortly. May God protect us in these hard times! Let us put our trust in Him who can save, when to all human calculation no hope is left."

Again, on the 4th, one day later than Mr. Rassam's letter, he writes:—

"There is no denying the fact—our position is getting more critical every day; it will indeed be a miracle if we remain much longer unmolested. Samuel is very gloomy about the future. He believes that before a month or six weeks it will be all over with us; and that should nothing be done before the end of the rainy season, it will be too late. I myself believe that a crisis is imminent. Our friend is quite desperate—hardly knows where to go. It is rumoured that Ras Engeddah is coming to take command of the Mountain, and that the King himself will come during the rainy season. A few days ago he gave orders to have all the prisoners at Debra Tabor burnt, but postponed the execution until after Easter. Should he put his threat into execution, he will also kill the prisoners on this amba, including the Bishop, and perhaps ourselves.

"He knows that he is lost and cares little for what he does. He likes to revenge himself, though by so doing he ruins himself. Flad must be near him by this time, so that at any moment we may expect a smash; and when your messengers arrive, if he finds he has no hopes, it will be a bad look-out. It is a question of vital importance to us that no delay should take place. Believe me, I am not afraid, but only fully impressed with the danger of our situation and of the necessity of prompt action. Then, even the danger will not be over—far from it: still, if properly managed, I believe we will weather the storm. He is so low that he may listen to reason when he finds himself compelled to do so. He will be afraid, and though in the first burst of his rage he may kill all the Europeans at Debra Tabor, that moment passed, we are safe here, and perhaps treated better than we expect. Action is, for us, life;—delay, death."

5. This is an urgent, touching appeal, my Lord, and coming, as it does, from a man in whose courage I could trust, it is most distressing to feel that at this season of the year, no response can possibly be made in the shape of active interference by display of force. It is not the rainy season in Abyssinia that is the greatest obstacle; though, apart from direct moisture, there would be greater difficulties in moving a body of troops through the country than the unfortunate captives think of: but it is the extreme heat at the commencement, on the shore of the Red Sea, which would cause great risk of the disorganization of a force, before it could be got ready to move from the sea-shore.

6. The only thing that can now be done is to watch the course of events, and should the King in any way alter the mode of treatment of the captives for the worst, to at once inform him, in plain and clear times, that he will be held responsible, with his throne and his life, for the safety of every European in his power. I shall not hesitate to act in such a manner, should the necessity arise, but the announcement would have more effect on him, and on all in Abyssinia, if it came from Her Majesty's Government; and I would most earnestly urge the advisability of its being so given out. At the very same time that it was made and sent to him, intimation should be also given to all Chiefs and others in the country that those who protect and assist European subjects in Abyssinia will be honoured and rewarded, while those who act otherwise will be treated in the same manner as the King.

7. Now that the King has turned against the Europeans at Gaffat, the position is most critical, certainly; but I still cling to the hope that either this tyrant's career may be brought to a close before he can reach Magdala or cause the death of the poor Europeans at Debra Tabor, or that the sense of self-interest will make him careful how he injures.

8. I had the honour of receiving your Lordship's instructions conveyed through Mr. Murray, dated 27th ultimo, and was thankful to find no alteration would be made consequent on the intelligence previously forwarded by me. I would now beg leave to point out that the time, three months, allowed to the King will expire on the

* This has been ordered.—W. L. M.

17th August; I would therefore suggest that the Government of India and, through it, of Bombay, may be moved to send here, by that date, proper officers to collect carriage and make all the necessary arrangements for the force, which, I conclude, will be dispatched from India to act in October, should King Theodorus be still alive and the captives unreleased. I need hardly say that I shall be ready to afford these officers every assistance. The earlier they come here the better, as cattle will have to be collected from a distance, even from Egypt, and this takes time.

9. The "Dalhousie" on her way down from Massowah, dropped M. Munzinger at Amphilla, on the 10th instant, and that gentleman was to start from the coast two days after to survey the country between Amphilla and Lake Ashangi, and if possible, on to Lake Haik. I supplied him with everything required, and am confident, if the thing can be done, M: Munzinger, will carry it out, while at the same time I have implicit trust in his discretion, that he will not needlessly run into any undue danger.

10. I received a letter from Mr. Flad, but it was of old date, 1st April, announcing his arrival at Matemma on the 29th March, and that he was waiting a reply to the letter to the King asking for an escort.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

P.S.—Appended also is copy of a meteorological register, forwarded by Mr. Rassam, and kept at Magdala, during the months of January, February, March, and April of this year. This is interesting, and at the same time it is very satisfactory to notice that the position of the prisoners possesses great advantages as far as climate is concerned.

W. L. M.

Inclosure 1 in No. 131.

Dr. Blanc to Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, April* 30, 1867.

WE received yours of the 28th February only on the 25th of this month. I felt rather disappointed when we found that the messenger had been nearly two months on the road, as he brought us no further intelligence than what had reached through Flad's messenger; we all expected something decisive, but were doomed to something more than disappointment. We hoped, at least the majority of us, that all idea of negotiating any more had been given up as useless, a mere waste of time most fatal to our interests. I give you, my dear Colonel, all credit. I know from what you wrote on your arrival at Massowah, what your intentions were concerning Flad, and am persuaded that it is only under great pressure that you allowed him to return to Abyssinia. When once His Majesty declined to accept the terms offered by our Queen, no further negotiations ought to have been proposed, as every one ought to be well aware that with a man of Theodore's temper, the moment that he will feel certain that his "betal" is of no avail, no one can tell to what extremities he may proceed, that is to say, if at the same time he considers himself safe from retaliation.

On the 16th of this month, His Majesty received a letter from Flad, announcing his arrival at Matemma. On the 17th His Majesty proceeded to Gaffat; called the Europeans before him (with the exceptions of Messrs. Scrimper and Zender), ordered all their property to be seized, and removed them prisoners to Debra Tabor. When he came to Gaffat His Majesty remained in the factory below the hill on which Gaffat is built. On the arrival of the Europeans he told them that he had received a letter from Flad containing many things, and that until confirmed by Flad he could not trust them, and must therefore keep them near him; he said that he had also heard that preparations for the reception of troops had been made at , and that if he was to be killed, they would die first; but, added he, do not be afraid (the usual expression when he means mischief), you are my children, &c. &c. Some of the Europeans, especially Mr. Maurice Hall, remonstrated strongly with His Majesty, asking him why, after serving him so many years faithfully, they were subjected to such an unjust treatment. "Kill us at once," said Hall, "but do not degrade us in this way; if, in the letter you have received, there is anything you can charge against us, then cause it to be read out before all your people. Death is better than unjust suspicion." His Majesty, in an angry tone, ordered him to be quiet, sent them to Debra Tabor under escort, and had tents pitched for them in the plain at the foot of the hill on which the royal residence is built. The soldiers in the meanwhile were removing all the property from Gaffat. Mrs. Bourgeaud, the wife of the French gun-maker, gave 50 dollars to one of her favourite servants to take care of; as he was

leaving the house he was seized by Agafari Meshisha, the chief executioner, and dragged before His Majesty, who ordered his hands and feet to be cut off on the spot. The following day soldiers were again sent to Gaffat, to bring over the women and children, including Mrs. Flad and Rosenthal, whose property had not been confiscated, only searched and counted. Gaffat is now entirely deserted, the workshops demolished, and not a servant allowed to remain to take care of the houses. For four days the Europeans and their families were deprived of all their property, to be returned, with the exception of the mules, horses, arms, and presents he had formerly made to them; they were removed to the hill, and allowed to pitch their tents near the royal residence; tools were sent to them and they were ordered to work; they were allowed the privilege of an audience. That day His Majesty said, "I am leaving to fight my enemies: when Flad comes, if all is right you will return to Gaffat; if not, know that you are my enemies." Such is the statement made by the messengers who arrived at Gaffat on the morning of the 17th, witnessed the plunder and left only on the 22nd. After the departure of His Majesty, on the 29th, a servant of mine returned from Gaffat, having left on the 24th; he substantiates almost every detail, and brought a letter from Mrs. Rosenthal to her husband, and a message from Mr. Waldemier to Rassam and myself. Waldemier says, "We were seized because His Majesty believes that preparations are made to wage war against him; our position is so precarious I dare not write." Mrs. Rosenthal refers more to herself than to the community at large, still it confirms in many respect the statement of our messenger; she makes no mention either of the arrest and interrogation of the gentlemen, but as regards the ladies she agrees with what we had previously heard. As Mr. Rosenthal kindly allowed me to make use of the letter, I give you the following extracts; she says:—

"On Tuesday, 16th April, we received orders to pack up our things and to be ready to start, but where to, nobody knew. On Wednesday, about 12 o'clock, soldiers arrived to watch the Europeans' houses, but I am thankful to say the guard did not enter our house. In the morning (18th) all the property was confiscated, and we were brought up here to Debra Tabor. All the silver, gold and money were taken from the Gaffat people, a few ornaments only were returned to the ladies; they had not a dollar left, nor arms of any description. On Tuesday the 16th, a letter arrived from Mr. Flad, announcing his arrival at Matemma, bringing the things he had bought for His Majesty, and requesting His Majesty to give him an escort; he also said that he had met the messengers on the road and forwarded them on to Colonel Merewether at Massowah. On Sunday morning the King left, but before departing gave back to the Gaffat people their money and property. Mrs. Flad and myself got back our riding mules. He told us that the place in which they were located was not safe on account of the rebels; he consequently sent us into an inclosure on the hill itself, near the common jail, a filthy dirty place, where we have been obliged to pitch our tents."

Here is the fact. Whatever may be the explanation, there is no doubt but that before long they will be our companions in chains. From a few expressions that some time ago fell from His Majesty's lips, also from the tone of his last letter to us, the opinion is that His Majesty now begins to fear that his "belat" will not succeed, and that the workmen will not be sent to him. This is the most reasonable explanation; otherwise he is cunning enough to have waited a little longer before throwing off the mask, well aware that if he plunders and imprisons these workmen now in his service he cannot expect others to come into the country. Except as Europeans in his power, he cares but little for them. His request for workmen was simply to get more white men into his hands. What has now happened places the matter beyond a doubt, and these poor fellows will have to pay for his disappointment. He has, without pity, plundered and imprisoned men who have never given him the slightest offence,—on the contrary, who have been always most subservient to all his wishes. He will now, forgetful of the past, endeavour to obtain from them all the money he can. Torture of all kind they may expect; these are trifles in his eyes when he has an object to attain. He gives back one day and takes more the next. When once he begins to injure he never stops. He will wait now for the arrival of Flad, and when he finds that not a thing will be sent to him he will vent his rage on the Gaffat people, on Flad, and on us. Every one expects it; at least I have had already several warnings from soldiers I have formerly attended.

The prospect before us is anything but cheering. It is true that our friend is such a curious character that often he acts the very opposite one expects. Let us hope, therefore, for the best, not being too sanguine, as when it is for the bad the surmises are pretty generally realized. A rainy season in chains is anything but pleasant; but when one thinks of the many privations and cruelties he can inflict, the prospect of being chained by the hand, cast into the common jail among a crowd of dirty natives, bullied by the guards, deprived of money, clothing, servants, &c.; the very thought makes us shudder.

Certainly, if we remain in our present position after Flad's arrival (unless he believes that his letter not having yet reached its destination, he may still gain his point) we will certainly be astonished; bad as it is, we are in paradise compared to the perfect hell of the common jail.

What puzzles us is to know what people at home expect. Do they not know that every day our lives are in danger from privations, miseries, starvation, torture, or a more speedy exit? Have we not been nearly ten months in chains and more than a year prisoners? Have not the former captives almost completed their fourth year; and still the fatal illusion seems to persist that we will "somehow" and "some day" get out by fair means? Many times I have written it, since many a month I have been repeating almost the same words: "We will never get out unless force is used." Time must have proved that this opinion was correct; why wait longer?

Samuel, when he heard the news from Gaffat, told me, "I feared it would be so; now, indeed, I tremble for you. I see, with deep regret, the blindness of your country men." Why wait? The crisis must fall on us some day; why postpone it? Why subject so many Europeans with their wives and families to all the horrors of Abyssinian prison life? When once we were chained, was not that sufficient? Will England continually give way to a treacherous savage? Why engage workmen? Why send him presents?—a reward, I suppose, for his treatment of Her Majesty's servants; his friends, as he calls them; his guests, at least, whom he publicly degraded, afterwards imprisoned and chained. Why not have brought, months ago, the false host to a sense of his duty, and the bully to tremble before retribution and justice?

Abyssinians laugh at us. Speak to any of them of the power and greatness of England; they sneeringly answer, "Why, then, do you pay us tribute? Is it not now on the road? Has not Flad gone to fetch it?" We may seem ungrateful, after all, and mistake the real motive of all these delays. I believe I have guessed it. "They will all be killed should troops land" is, probably, the common song when warlike measures are proposed, and the tune of those ignorant writers on the subject who may mean well but, nevertheless, are the cause of much of our misery. Well, let him kill us; we can but die once. In their ignorance, Abyssinians may feel contempt of our power, but we shall certainly not give them the chance to sneer at English courage. We fear not death, but the very thought of his cruelties fills us with awe; to evade them we will run any risk. ong ago we made up our minds on the matter. All our friends are fully aware of our entire willingness to take our chance. We have begged and prayed for that moment which will either restore us to our country or end our miserable fate.

After this there ought to be no more valid reason for delay, unless it be the difficulties in the way; they are not insurmountable: the expenses—— I would be ashamed even of such a thought. If only the garrison of Aden was to march at once into the country, and formed a camp at Adowa until the arrival of a larger force, I would personally be without the slightest fear as to the future. All bullies are cowards, therefore he is a coward. When no more able to imprison, tease and torture with impunity, when he sees unerring vengeance approach, though he might still boast before his people, he would in his heart tremble and quake. Our lives would be saved, and our liberties seeured. He is no exception to the Abyssinian race—tyrants on the weak, whilst they cringe before the strong. Not knowing in the morning where the evening will find us, it is impossible to say, more so now than ever, if this will be the last time I am able to give you my opinion on the subject.

His Majesty, tired of plundering Begemder, where the peasants themselves were beginning to offer resistance, proceeded, during this month, to the neighbouring Province of Fogara, partly disaffected, but has not reaped the rich harvest he expected. The peasants, warned by what had just happened in Begemder, removed some time ago the greater part of their property to Lasta.

At Oodo, a village not far from Debra Tabor, a fight took place between the military and peasants. These having heard of the proposed attack, were in readiness; they fell suddenly on the soldiers, killed a good many, and took several away prisoners. The brave army is fond of plunder, but not of fighting, dislikes resistance, so that now His Majesty is obliged to go himself with his men, otherwise they avail themselves of their temporary liberty to run away, preferring escape to the chance of being killed by some "ill-mannered" peasant.

Our servant Hailo, who went lately to the camp with a letter from Rassam about the calico and shirts, does not appear to have much enjoyed his trip. Flogging and beating was going on at such a rate that no one remains near the infuriated master. When he calls some of his servants they always, before resorting to the presence, recommend their souls to God. Several of the personal attendants of His Majesty are in chains, and

what is more extraordinary, he has asked money from them, 100 dollars each, from poor wretches who have never seen a penny of his money since they have been in his service. His temper is not of the best at night. It is said he seldoms sleeps, but walks about half-naked, muttering prayers and curses.

Soon after he had received Rassam's letter, a fire was seen at a short distance; pretending that rebels must be on the spot, he at once ordered his horse and arms, and started with only a few followers, intending to surprise the enemy. Arrived at the spot he found nothing, and returned apparently crest-fallen. However, to soothe his feelings, he ordered several of his Chiefs whom he had met on the road, to be beaten, and afterwards chained. However, even Bob's tricks take no more with his people. Our servant was told that these fires were lighted by his order, to show to his people how brave he is still, and how anxious he is to meet the enemy.

When our servant obtained permission to leave, he was sincerely congratulated by all the attendants, just as if he had escaped from the greatest danger, or recovered from the most serious illness. According to his account, there are but few horses and mules left; all the spearmen are gone; there remains only about 3,000 gunmen, 2,000 more having been left at Debra Tabor to guard the prisoners, harem, &c. Previously the army consisted of men taken from the several provinces, all forming distinct corps. The few left belong to no particular country, only the refuse of all Abyssinia, men who have left their country for their country's good. Few of them will ever run away, for the very good reason that they don't know where to go. It is therefore probable, that unless attacked (a very doubtful case), he will for a long time possess an army of about 5,000 or 6,000 men, who will assist him in plundering, on the understanding that they will share in the spoils. They are, however, the worst soldiers, will never face an enemy, and will abandon him *en masse* the moment plundering means fighting, and devotion hunger.

The letter Hailo brought from His Majesty is written in the humble style he generally adopts when he means mischief. He declines the calico, but wants his eyes to be open, *i.e.*, the workmen.

We have heard nothing certain about the former Chief of this amba, nor of the Chiefs who were sent away at the same time, also prisoners on the amba. We only know that they are still in fetters.

The old Canteba Hailo has been dreadfully tortured, and is to be daily tied with ropes until further orders, simply because there was some mistake about compliments, which he did not send when the other prisoners sent them to His Majesty. His grandson, a fine boy of about eight years of age, has been so severely tortured that he has lost his right arm.

No news from the rebels. They seem all quiet in their own Governments. Tissat Gabazi was, it is said, looking out for Flad, but now that Bob is supposed to be going in that direction, the biggest coward of the two—and I believe it is Tissat—will decamp and leave the road open to the other. On the 4th of April—it is a pity it was not on the 1st—a nice trick was played on our friend Bob: quite in the neighbourhood, between Debra Tabor and Dahoute, there is a small but rather strong amba called Koït, garrisoned by 300 men; it is of the greatest importance, almost essential to the free communication between this amba and Dahoute, the granary of Magdala. On the day on question, one of Bob's runaway chiefs, accompanied by a few soldiers and peasants, the latter carrying bags apparently filled with grain, presented themselves at the gate of the fort. They said they came from the King to provision the amba. The tale was naturally believed; the Commander of the fortress, knowing the officer to belong to Bob's army, ordered the gate to be opened. No sooner had the rebel chief, his soldiers, and the would-be peasants passed the door than they suddenly fell on the astonished garrison and made them all prisoners. The soldiers joined the new self-made Commandant, the former one was allowed to leave unmolested accompanied by his family, but empty handed. Fearing, however, that should Bob come in this direction they would be between two fires, Bob and this amba, they removed all the muskets (100), stores, provisions, &c., set fire to the place and damaged it to such an extent as to render it useless for the future. About a fortnight ago Samuel was one day called before the Council and informed that no sick person in future would be allowed to come near the hakim, as they were afraid that the influence thus created amongst the petty chiefs was too strong. I was, to tell the truth, not very sorry, as I am pestered all day long, and if I do not keep servants on my own private account I would be at the same time doctor, dispenser, sweeper, hamal, &c., so I thought I would save a little money by discharging several of my servants kept solely for dispensing purposes, when, unfortunately, a counter order came. It appears that all my patients had gone in a body to the Council, and, as in many respects Abyssinia is a democracy, the chiefs were obliged to give in and I was

requested to go on as before. We had also a little excitement up here since we last wrote. On Saturday the 6th, two prisoners, one who had killed his mother by accident some three years ago and who had never been tried, together with Lij Barié, the son of a great Shum of Tigré, managed to open their chains, dressed themselves in women's clothing (in this country only a long shirt), and taking advantage of the market day, when all the servants go down to the Salumgee (the market-place), they succeeded in evading the guard and got on unmolested as far as our place. The young murderer having contrived to get out both rings walked faster than his companion and passed the gates before any search was made after him. As nothing as been heard of him since, it is probable that by this time he has reached Shoa, his native country. Lij Barié was less fortunate; he could only open one ring and was therefore obliged to fix the chain on the other leg by means of a piece of cloth. A young warrior, seeing at a distance a good-looking young girl, approached to try on her his powers of fascination; whilst looking to see if the ankles corresponded in elegance to the brightness of the eyes, he was somewhat surprised by seeing a leg completely bandaged: a few yards further, a puff of wind throwing up the shirt, exposed to his horror-struck gaze the unmistakeable rings peeping here and there through the folds of the bandage. He called on some soldiers at a distance, and, with their help, he re-captured the prisoner. I need not say how brutally he was treated, kicked, beaten until his life was almost despaired of. The woman who gave him her shirt was literally cut to pieces, having received more than 200 lashes on her bare back. All the jail prisoners were for some days more strictly guarded; it never affected us, and, by this time, even in the other prison, matters go on as before. I must now finish this long letter.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) H. J. BLANC, M.D.

Inclosure 2 in No. 131.

Meteorological Register kept at Magdala from January to April 1867.

JANUARY 1867.

c., clouds; r., rain; z., calm; c.s., clear sky; ×, hurricane; and underlined with red for route.

Day of Month.	Sunrise.		Noon.		Sunset.		Remarks.
	T.	W.	T.	W.	T.	W.	
	°		°		°		
1	48	z. c.s.	72	z. c.	58	z. c.	Mild afternoon.
2	48	z. c.	70	z. c.	55	s. c.	A little rain in afternoon.
3	50	z. c.	61	z. c.	58	s. c.	Rained a little last night.
4	51	z. c.	67	z. c.	59	s. c.	Ditto, ditto.
5	51	z. c.s.	69	z. c.s.	60	s. c.	Cool afternoon.
6	48	z. c.s.	67	s. c.	60	s. c.	Ditto.
7*	48	z. c.	67	s. c.	59	z. c.	Ditto.
8*	49	z. c.	67	z. c.	60	s. c.	Rained a little in afternoon.
9	54	z. c.	66	z. c.	56	s. c.	Ditto.
10	51	z. c.	65	s. c.	55	s. c.	Ditto.
11	47	z. c.	65	s. c.	55	s. c.	Rained a little last night and this afternoon.
12	47	z. c.s.	72	z. c.	57	s. c.	Cool afternoon.
13	47	z. c.	65	z. c.	57	z. c.	Ditto.
14	51	z. c.	63	z. c.	56	z. c.	Rained a little in morning; cool afternoon; ×.
15	50	z. c.	65	z. c.	60	z. c.	Rained heavily last night, and a few drops this afternoon.
16	49	z. c.	66	z. c.	62	z. c.	Mild afternoon.
17	48	z. c.s.	70	s. c.s.	61	s. c.	Cool afternoon.
18	46	z. c.s.	71	z. c.	63	z. c.s.	Mild afternoon; ×.
19	50	z. c.s.	76	z. c.	62	z. c.	Ditto.
20	49	z. c.	74	s. c.	61	z. c.	Ditto.
21	52	z. c.	67	s. c.	54	z. r.	Hail storm in afternoon.
22	50	z. c.	61	z. c.	54	z. c.	Fog in morning.
23	51	z. r.	64	z. c.	55	z. c.	Rained last night, and had a small shower this morning.
24	51	z. c.	62	z. c.	56	z. c.	Ditto, ditto.
25	48	z. c.	57	z. c.	54	z. c.	Very cold day; regular hurricane last night with plenty of rain.
26	50	z. c.	59	z. c.	54	z. c.	Very cold day.
27	49	z. c.	63	z. c.	59	s. c.s.	Mild afternoon.
28	50	z. c.s.	73	z. c.	60	s. c.s.	Ditto.
29	50	z. c.s.	73	z. c.	60	s. c.s.	Ditto.
30	47	z. c.s.	73	z. c.	59	z. c.	Ditto.
31	48	z. c.s.	74	z. c.	62	z. c.	Ditto; ×.

* Received letter from Emperor.

FEBRUARY 1867.

Day of Month.	Sunrise.		Noon.		Sunset.		Remarks.
	T.	W.	T.	W.	T.	W.	
	°		°		°		
1	45	z. c.s.	74	z. c.s.	59	s. c.s.	Mild afternoon.
2	45	s. c.s.	71	z. c.s.	56	s. c.s.	Cold afternoon.
3	41	s. c.s.	67	s. c.s.	55	s. c.s.	Very cold night, and strong southerly wind all day.
4	44	s. c.s.	79	z. c.s.	59	s. c.s.	Ditto, ditto.
5	45	s. c.s.	73	z. c.s.	59	s. c.s.	Mild afternoon.
6	47	z. c.s.	76	s. c.s.	59	s. c.s.	Cold afternoon.
7	47	z. c.s.	76	s. c.s.	59	s. c.s.	Ditto.
8	47	z. c.s.	79	z. c.s.	60	s. c.s.	Ditto.
9	47	z. c.s.	75	z. c.s.	61	s. c.s.	Mild afternoon.
10	47	z. c.s.	75	z. c.s.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
11	47	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	64	s. c.s.	Ditto.
12	47	z. c.s.	78	z. c.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
13	51	z. c.	76	s. c.	60	s. c.s.	Ditto.
14	48	z. c.s.	79	z. c.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
15	48	z. c.s.	79	z. c.s.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
16	49	z. c.s.	79	z. c.s.	62	s. c.s.	A warm day.
17	50	z. c.s.	81	z. c.s.	6	s. c.s.	Ditto.
18	50	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
19	50	z. c.s.	84	z. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Ditto.†
20	48	z. c.s.	83	s. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
21	51	z. c.s.	83	s. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
22	52	z. c.s.	82	z. c.s.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
23	51	z. c.s.	81	z. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Ditto.
24	51	z. c.s.	78	z. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Ditto.
25	50	z. c.s.	80	s. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Cold afternoon.
26	51	z. c.s.	80	z. c.	61	z. c.	Mild afternoon.
27	51	z. c.s.	80	z. c.	61	s. c.	Cold afternoon.
28	51	z. c.s.	80	z. c.	63	s. c.	Mild afternoon.

MARCH 1867.

Day of Month.	Sunrise.		Noon.		Sunset.		Remarks.
	T.	W.	T.	W.	T.	W	
	°		°		°		
1	53	z. c.s.	81	z. c.s.	64	s. c.s.	Mild af rnoon.
2	52	z. c.s.	81	z. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
3	50	z. c.	79	z. c.	63	s. c.	Ditto.
4	52	z. c.s.	78	z. c	62	z. c.	Rained a little last night.
5	52	z. c.	75	z. c.	60	z. r.	Rained a little last night, and we had a small shower this afternoon.
6	52	z. c.s.	72	z. c	57	s. c.s.	Hail shower this afternoon.
7	52	z. c.s.	72	z c	61	s. c.	Mild afternoon.
8	52	z. c.s.	75	z. c.	61	s. c.	Ditto.
9	49	z. c.s.	68	z. c.	54	s. r.	Rained a little in afternoon.
10	48	z. r.	64	s. c.	51	s. c.	Rained last night and also this morning, with fog.
11	49	z. c.	65	z. c.	51	s. c.	Cold afternoon.
12	48	z. c.	69	z. c.	51	s. c.	Ditto.‡
13	48	z. c.	72	z. c.	56	s. c.	Rained heavily this evening.‡
14	51	z. c.	72	z. c.	63	s. c.	Mild afternoon.
15	51	z. c.	72	z. c.	64	z. c.	Ditto.‡
16	52	z. c.	72	z. c.	62	z. c.	Had a small shower last night.
17	51	z. c.	67	z. c.	60	z. c.	Mild afternoon.
18	50	z. c.	69	s. c.	55	s. c.	Cold afternoon.†
19	48	z. c.	71	z. c.	58	s. c.	Mild afternoon.
20*	49	z. c.	70	z. c.	59	z. c.	Heavy rain last night.
21	50	z. c.	70	z. c.	62	s. c.	Mild afternoon.
22	53	z. c.	79	z. c.	61	s. c.	Ditto.
23	49	z. c.	80	z. c.s.	62	s. c.	Ditto.
24	53	z. c.	81	z. c.	61	s. c.	Ditto.
25	51	z. c.	80	z. c.	61	z. c.	Ditto.
26	51	z. c	78	z. c.	61	s. c.	Ditto.
27	52	z. c.	72	z. c.	59	s. c.	Cold afternoon.
28	51	z. c.	70	z. c.	60	s. c.	Mild afternoon.
29	53	z. c.	71	s. c.	62	z. c.	Ditto.
30	53	z. c.	73	z. c.	65	s. c.	Ditto.
31	49	z. c.	74	z. c.	65	s. c.	Ditto.

* Received letter from Emperor.

† Messengers to coast.

‡ Messengers from the coast.

APRIL 1867.

Day of Month.	Sunrise.		Noon.		Sunset.		Remarks.
	T.	W.	T.	W.	T.	W.	
	°		°		°		
1	47	z. c.	78	z. c.	67	z. c.	Mild afternoon.
2	49	z. c.	78	z. c.	65	z. c.	Ditto.
3	49	z. c.	78	z. c.	65	z. c.	Ditto.
4	49	z. c.s.	80	s. c.	63	s. c.	Ditto.
5	49	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	65	s. c.	Ditto.
6	50	z. c.s.	78	z. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
7	53	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
8	50	z. c.s.	81	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
9	53	z. c.s.	81	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
10	51	z. c.s.	82	s. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
11	52	z. c.s.	80	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
12	53	z. c.s.	80	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
13	53	z. c.s.	78	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
14	50	z. c.s.	78	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
15*	49	z. c.s.	81	s. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
16	51	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	68	s. c.s.	Ditto.
17	52	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Ditto.‡
18	52	z. s.c.	79	s. c.s.	64	s. c.s.	Ditto.†
19	52	z. c.s.	78	s. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Ditto.
29	53	z. c.s.	81	s. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
21	54	z. c.s.	82	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
22	55	z. c.s.	82	z. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
23	55	z. c.	77	z. c.	65	s. c.	Ditto. Rained a little last night and this evening.
24	53	z. c.s.	75	z. c.	65	z. c.	Rained heavily this afternoon.
25	53	z. c.s.	74	z. c.s.	64	z. c.s.	Mild afternoon.‡
26	53	z. c.s.	75	z. c.s.	63	z. c.s.	Ditto.
27	53	z. c.s.	78	z. c.s.	65	z. c.s.	Ditto.
28	53	z. c.s.	77	z. c.s.	65	z. c.s.	Ditto.
29	53	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
30	56	z. c.s.	81	s. c.	63	z. c.	Ditto.

No. 132.

Mr. Lespard to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 4.)

Right Honourable Sir, *Bangor House, Buckenham Road, Brighton, July 2, 1867.*

AS the release of the Abyssinian captives appears to be a most difficult matter, I take the liberty of suggesting a plan that I think would be likely to succeed. Every civilized Government or nation must sympathize; hence could not a joint demand be made, or at least a request, from every European Power? I cannot help thinking this would effect more than all the presents you could send. I shall think no Power would object, and if it should succeed, no individual would be more pleased than your obedient servant,

(Signed) W. LESPARD.

No. 133.

Mr. Davis to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 6.)

My Lord, 25, *Via dei Pandolfini, Florence, July 2, 1867.*

YESTERDAY I wrote to the India Office, begging for a settlement of my claim, relative to the Abyssinian coal discovery, and I now take the liberty of addressing your Lordship on the subject of the British captives in Abyssinia, to which I feel confident your Lordship will give the consideration it merits.

In an interview I had with Earl Russell at the Foreign Office in 1863, I informed his Lordship of intrigues which had been set on foot at Gondar, with a view to frustrate British influence. I stated that the servants of the British Consul at Massowah were in the pay of the hostile party, and that the despatches which the Consul received from the Foreign Office, before coming into his hands, were invariably first taken to that party, opened, copied, translated into Amhari, and, when the contents were prejudicial to the Government of

* Received letters from Emperor.

† Messengers to coast. ‡ Messengers from coast.

Theodore, that despatch was forwarded to the King. Copies of these documents are now in a public office of a European Government.

Now, it appears that the Consul favoured the rebel who attempted to supplant Theodore on the Abyssinian throne, and promised to aid him with arms and ammunition. The Consul wrote to the Foreign Office on the subject, and it seems that the Earl of Clarendon, under whose auspices I excavated the ruins of Carthage, seconded the views of the British Representative at Massowah. His Lordship's reply, promising supplies of arms, underwent the regular manipulation, and by that channel reached the eyes of the Abyssinian King. His Majesty swore vengeance, and what other vengeance than that which he has taken was within the reach of Theodore?

All this I explained to Earl Russell, and at the same time suggested a plan for remedying the evil, and this before any British subject was seized by the Abyssinian Government.

I failed to make the impression I desired on his Lordship's mind, and no notice was taken of what I said.

On my return from Abyssinia I had occasion to correspond with the India Office on the Coal discovery, and in one of my letters (which your Lordship can see, page 26, in the pamphlet which I forward by this post) I suggested a simple and certain way of liberating the captives, and at the same time re-establish a good understanding between Her Majesty's Government and King Theodore. But, though Sir Charles Wood replied to my letter, he carefully avoided saying a word about the Abyssinian captives.

Private friends have repeatedly urged me to appeal to the public press, but I have invariably declined doing so on account of the esteem and respect I have for Lord Clarendon, whose share in this transaction might be misconstrued by many; and, besides, I hoped all along that Her Majesty's Government would adopt some successful plan for effecting the object in view.

I now understand that it is proposed to send an armed force to Abyssinia, and if this information is correct I beg to offer my services to Her Majesty's Government, feeling perfectly certain that I shall be able to secure a peaceful victory by a simple demonstration of force. My travels in different parts of Africa, my having been connected with African expeditions composed, sometimes, of 30,000 men, my knowledge of African character and habits, as is evident from my published works, and my being accompanied by Professor Sapeto, who has lived fourteen years in the very country to which the expedition is directed, and to whom Theodore, himself, is indebted for his own life;—all these considerations induce me to offer my services, and to speak with the utmost confidence of the result I anticipate. I have no hesitation whatever in saying that we shall succeed in releasing the prisoners (if still alive), some of whom are my personal friends, and of stipulating an advantageous Treaty with the Ruler of Abyssinia.

Trusting that Her Majesty's Government will accept my services, I have, &c.

(Signed) N. DAVIS.

No. 134.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Hearsey.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 8, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, suggesting a mode of obtaining the release of the British captives in Abyssinia, and I am to thank you for this communication.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 135.

Mr. Murray to Colonel Haly.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 8, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, offering your services and making suggestions with reference to procuring the release of the British captives in Abyssinia. I am to thank you for this communication, but, I am to add, that suggestions with regard to military operations should rather be addressed to the Secretary of State for War than to this office.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 136.

Mr. Petherick to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 8.)

My Lord, *The Tookul, Henley-on-Thames, July* 7, 1867.

IN conformity with the wishes of your Lordship expressed to me by letter on the 5th instant, that it would be more convenient if I would put my suggestions, with respect to the relief of the captives in Abyssinia, in writing, I beg to submit the following brief statement of the most inexpensive, and to my mind, according to the present position of our relations with Theodore, the safest means to coerce him to release the prisoners in his possession.

Your Lordship is aware of the absence of salt in Abyssinia, and that it has to be imported from the coast. Of the importance of salt as an article of consumption I need not dwell; but perhaps it may not be so well known that in Abyssinia proper, and many of its dependencies and neighbouring territories, it is so valuable as to form an universal object for barter, and is equivalent in value to coin.

The plan that I have the honour to suggest for the consideration of your Lordship is, that Her Majesty's Government, in concord with his Highness the Viceroy of Egypt, should establish and entertain a small but efficient naval and military force at Massowah, so disposable as to establish a blockade for the prevention of all communication between Abyssinia and the coast on the one hand, and with the Egyptian dependencies of the Soudan on the other.

It would be a matter for consideration whether the blockade should be so stringent as to annul all possible intercourse between the above named points, and comprise the seizure of merchandize and individuals as counter hostages to guarantee the safety of the prisoners, or whether it should be confined to prevent the transit of salt into Abyssinia.

It seems to be beyond a doubt that Theodore of late has met with many reverses, and it is to be concluded in proportion that he is losing power, the several native Chieftains must acquire it.

Therefore, as soon as the avowed object of the blockade shall have become apparent, and that it will last until the conditions thereof shall have been complied with, in my humble opinion the effect will be that not only the energy of the Chieftains but that of entire populations will be directed to consummate the safety and release of the captives.

The limits of a letter necessarily restrict me to brevity, and it was with a view to a more elaborate communication of my ideas that I ventured to solicit an interview with your Lordship.

I can only add that in the event of the foregoing being deemed worthy of your Lordship's consideration I shall be happy to contribute any further information in my power in connection with the subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN PETHERICK.

No. 137.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 8.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, July* 8, 1867.

THE following is a copy of a letter from the Rev. H. A. Stern, just received by his wife, and I thought it important that your Lordship should see it.

I am, &c.

(Signed) C. H. PURDAY.

Inclosure in No. 137.

The Rev. H. Stern to Mrs. Stern.

My dear Charlotte, *Magdala, May* 2, 1867.

I JUST add a line to my letter of yesterday, as it is doubtful whether the opportunity for writing will not, before many days have elapsed, become exceedingly difficult, if not utterly impossible. The return of Mr. Flad, the disappointment of the King in not obtaining the requested accession to his white victims, and the consciousness that neither intrigue nor cunning will avail him to extort fresh concessions from the British Government or the generosity of British Christians: all, I believe, combine to bring, ere long, our melancholy and doleful history to a crisis. Every day, nay every hour, we expect to be transferred to the common prison, and to get hand-chains again. Only a week ago upwards of 200 prisoners, among whom are persons of high rank, were ordered to be executed. This indiscriminate massacre, which has probably been prompted by the want of guards, indicates no improvement in the tyrant's temper. We fear that wilful, wicked misrepresentations, and cruel, unpardonable selfishnsss, united in concealing the true state of our position, and the well-known designs of the King.

God, in his infinite mercy may interpose and deliver us; and if not, our separation will only be for a short period, and our union in glory for ever and ever. God bless you, my love, and the darling children; and that we may both receive strength according to our need, is the prayer of your ever affectionate husband.

(Signed) HENRY A. STERN.

No. 138.

Captain Snow to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 8.)

My Lord, 11, *Grove Place, Brompton Road, July* 8, 1867.

THE accompanying extracts (which please return) will explain who I am.

I have just arrived from a five years' residence and travel in America.

Captain Cameron, the representative of the English flag in Abyssinia is, I find, still held a captive. He was my room-mate at Manchester during the meeting of the British Association in 1861.

I have long conceived a plan for the deliverance, in a friendly manner, of him and his companions.

The plan will not incur much expense, comparatively.

I believe it will be more effectual than making war, or any further negotiations with a barbarous Monarch.

When Dr. Wolff went in search of the Bokhara captives, I volunteered to accompany him.

I volunteered, and went in search of the unfortunate Franklin expedition.

I did the same in reference to Captain Gardiner's untimely end by starvation among the Fuegians.

I propose the same now as regards my friend Captain Cameron.

If your Lordship will grant me an interview, I can soon explain my plans.

My time in England being, however, limited, as my wife is at home at her residence on the Hudson, New York, I would request the favour of an early answer, and am, &c.

(Signed) W. PARKER SNOW.

No. 139.

Mr. Murray to Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 10, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches of the 11th, 17th, and 24th May, and 6th ultimo, containing further accounts from the captives in Abyssinia; and I am to transmit to you, for your information, copies of letters to and from the War Office in regard to the course to be adopted by Her Majesty's Government in this matter.*

I am &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 140.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Davis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 10, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, offering your services to endeavour to obtain the release of the British captives in Abyssinia; and I am to thank you for this offer, but to inform you that his Lordship does not think it likely that Her Majesty's Government can make your services available.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 141.

Mr. Statham to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 11.)

The Memorial of John Lee Statham, F.R.G.S., L.D.S., R.C.S., &c.,

Humbly sheweth,

THAT your memorialist believes that an imperative message from Her Majesty, demanding the release of the Abyssinian captives, may be of service. And your memorialist prays that he may be allowed to convey such missive to the Emperor Theodorus of Abyssinia; and your memorialist will ever pray, &c.

(Signed) L. J. STATHAM.

P.S.—Memorialist had the honour of commanding a company of volunteers for six months in the field, and afterwards for nine months was in command of Fort Grey during the last Kaffir war.

No. 142.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Lespard.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 11, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, and to thank you for the suggestions therein made regarding the means to be used for procuring the release of the British captives in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 143.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Petherick.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 11, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant relative to the best means of procuring the release of the British captives in

* Nos. 124 and 127.

Abyssinia, and I am to thank you, for the suggestions made by you which shall be duly considered.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 144.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 11, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, relative to the British captives in Abyssinia, and I am to thank you for this communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 145.

Mr. Murray to Captain Snow.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 11, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, requesting his Lordship to grant you an interview in order that you may explain to him a plan for liberating the British captives in Abyssinia, and I am to request you to have the goodness to put your suggestions in writing.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 146.

Captain Snow to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 13.)

My Lord, 11, *Grove Place, Brompton Road, July* 12, 1867.

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 12th instant, and herewith reply.

In speaking of a plan for the deliverance of our countrymen detained in a painful captivity by the Abyssinian Monarch, I ought, more strictly, to have said a variety of plans according to circumstances, without being confined to any specific plan. But the leading feature in my ideas is as follows:—

You are aware, my Lord, that all "medicine men," "wizards," "demented persons," "cunning men," "skilful craftsmen," &c., are, in a measure, held sacred in the East. I have found it so among all the many wild tribes visited by me in various parts of the globe; and a reference to any of my works, or to official reports, will show that I have invariably succeeded among even the most savage races of mankind. I simply study them, and then adapt myself to their ways (without entirely losing my own self-respect), until I win their goodwill and carry my point.

It may appear absurd to relate how—sometimes as an acrobat, then a medicine man, next a grave reader of the stars, or a laughing merry-andrew, but always kind and gentle, as well as firm—I have got on. Playing with the children, admiring the women—no matter how ugly, and humouring the men (who are often but big babies), I have passed scatheless through wild people who, before and afterwards (most remarkably in two cases, Australia and Tierra del Fuego), murdered the white men visiting them. A bold, fierce dash, with no shadow of timidity, is, however, necessary, and they respect it.

But to sum up all on this point, let me simply say that a man must be a student of human nature in all its variety, and, with a shrewd, penetrating mind, work upon it as he finds best at the time. To this there must be an eye which never quails; and though I profess no adherence to any particular dogma of spiritualism or mesmerism, yet I add that magnetic power can be tried and, as I well know, tried successfully.

To you, my Lord, and to thinking minds of experience, these remarks will not, on consideration, appear rhapsodical or visionary. I have no visionary ideas at all in me.

Real matter of fact is ever before my eyes. But I do believe that in a good and righteous cause (and what can be more good and righteous than the trying to save others, especially in connection with the honour of our beloved flag?), God deigns to manifest his countenance and support to whomsoever may have faith in him, not omitting manly self-reliance, and courageous trust in a strong mind, with a supple arm.

Thus, then, coupled with what I propose:—

I would suggest that I be sent out armed with full authority (secret) to demand support from British officials wherever found; that I take upon myself such character as I may find best suited to ingratiate myself with the monarch and his people; and, as I do not speak the language, a faithful interpreter be found to act as a sort of connection to me—a partly dumb man.

I would enter Abyssinia from the east, as an Arab. and not appear, unless afterwards necessary, as a European.

My after plans would be guided by circumstances, but the main object should be to make myself serviceable to the Ruler of the people and his courtiers; then strive (of course it would be at the risk of my head or my freedom) to effect the escape of our friends, if I failed in securing the Emperor's good graces and so obtaining their release. In other words, I am willing to go and try to be of use to this Monarch, so that, while myself perhaps an hostage, my boon for the release of the poor captives might be granted.

Ward, Chief Mandarin in China, and Burgevine; Generalissimo of the army, were both originally humble American sailors.

Of course there are numerous other details which might be mentioned; but, my Lord, I am but just breathing from a two years' laborious task in writing an historical work, and I feel myself almost unable to sit down again for any time to the pen.

If, my Lord, this offer is accepted, I am bound to say that I should need some provision for my poor wife during my absence. Moreover, as I am actuated by no other motive save that of humanity and the honour of our native flag, I must beg that no misunderstanding of my position in the matter be made. If the Government accepts my services in this attempt, I feel hopeful that the nobility of soul which characterizes those in power in England, as occasionally contrasted with much of a different kind I find abroad, will comprehend me aright, and make me feel that trust and respect is given me.

As for my return, I have that same faith, religiously, and an incomprehensible something else mentally, which inspires me onward with the belief of success, and which, years before we knew the fact, told me (see how truly prophetic I was, by examining the Arctic Blue Books, March 1850) where Franklin's companions were, and how they could be saved, and also which made me successful in Tierra del Fuego and elsewhere.

And now, my Lord, having briefly imparted my ideas, I will merely add that, should the Government accept me, I would suggest that I be sent out as a special messenger, with such instructions as you may deem best, and with no more publicity than actually required.

As to securing perfect obedience to such instructions, I can say nothing more than that it would be absolutely necessary for me to be in as frequent communication with your Lordship as possible.

As I am now busy in reading over my work for the press, I trust your Lordship will kindly favour me with as speedy a reply as possible, that I may arrange my movements while here.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. PARKER SNOW.

No. 147.

Captain Russell to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 13.)

My Lord, 24, *Marsham Street, Westminster, July* 12, 1867.

I THIS morning did myself the honour to call on your Lordship, and I now lose no time in complying with the directions I received at the Foreign Office, to furnish your Lordship with a statement in writing of my views and propositions. I must inform your Lordship that I am now at this moment exceeding my leave, having made arrangements to sail for Calcutta about the 22nd instant. I have seen long and active service with the Irregular Cavalry in India, and during the mutiny was constantly engaged, and frequently made sudden dashes upon forts and walled places, invariably with success. I have taken a great interest in the Abyssinian captives, and am ready, should my proposal be accepted,

to devote myself to the task of rescuing them, about which I entertain little doubt. But I must impress on your Lordship that my success in such an attempt will entirely depend on the way in which it is arranged and carried out. In the first place, to send an officer (as I understand is proposed) to Massowah to make arrangements for the commissariat and prepare for the arrival of troops, would, in my opinion, prove the most insane and disastrous step that could be taken, and the most at variance with the strategy necessary to, and inseparable from, such a service. It would, I feel assured, be the cause of every one of the captives being instantly put to death, glutted as the Emperor Theodorus is at this moment with the blood of numbers of the few adherents he has left. The only sure way would be by making the most sudden dash practicable, and this could only be effected by cavalry and horse artillery. I do not think infantry would render much aid, as it would be from first to last a question of speed. I do not think that English cavalry would be so effective as Indian horse, because both native men and native horses would better endure the campaign in such a country as Abyssinia. If infantry are sent they should consist of Beloochs. I should propose that a force of three regiments of Seikh or Pashan Cavalry be at once ordered to Aden, supported by three troops of Bombay Horse Artillery. With this force landed at Massowah I will engage to penetrate the country, surround and make a dash at Magdala; and if, as I understand, an officer is already at Massowah making commissariat arrangements, the sooner active measures are taken the better.

Native troops require far less commissariat incumbrances than European troops. They are well officered, and would be more quickly and better handled. I should also be glad that the naval aid should be under the command of such an officer as Captain Cecil Westbrook of Her Majesty's ship "Victoria," B. M., who has been long on the Aden station under the immediate orders of Captain Merewether, and who has acquired a perfect knowledge of the Abyssinian coast and country, and is a good Oriental linguist. My proposal, if accepted, could be accelerated by telegraphing to Bombay for the necessary troops to be forwarded to Aden while the commissariat arrangements might be proceeded with.

In the event of its being decided to trust to me the command of this expedition my leave would have to be extended at once, as my time for sailing for Calcutta is fixed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. J. RUSSELL, *Captain,*
Her Majesty's Bengal Army.

No. 148.

Mr. Hearsey to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 15.)

My Lord, *July* 12, 1867.

BEING aware that private correspondence often gives fuller intelligence than official, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that in a private letter from Lieutenant Carew, commanding the "Dalhousie" (who has been sent to Massowah by Colonel Merewether for some political reason respecting the Abyssinian prisoners), that officer states "that it is the belief of all there (Aden and Massowah) that the Emperor Theodore will give us the trouble of landing a force on the shores of Abyssinia, and that when he sees we are really in earnest he will give up the prisoners, and not murder them as is generally supposed, as he in reality dreads the power of England."

Seeing in yesterday's paper that the Honourable the Member for Aberdeen was going to ask some questions on this subject on Monday next, I thought that this reliable private information might be of use to your Lordship.

. . . . About fifty miles south of Massowah is a place called, I believe, Staveley bay; a range of hills of upwards of 9,000 feet in altitude run down to within 10 or 15 miles of the coast at the bottom of this bay. Very little difficulty or expense would be incurred to have this bay explored and soundings taken as to whether ships of large size could sail up it, and a small expedition sent into this range of hills to explore as to whether any use could be made of them as a cantonment for a military expedition, for the climate of Massowah and the adjacent coasts is terrible. Lieutenant Carew, concerning this, states, "Aden, in comparison to this place, is cool, and India, after my stay here, will be a perfect paradise."

But if these hills were found practicable (water and provisions, &c., obtainable) one of the greatest of the difficulties, in case that an expedition is deemed necessary, will be overcome, and our troops could be located in a comparatively cool climate.

If I receive any further information on this subject from Lieutenant Carew (as I hear

of him every mail) I will, if agreeable to your Lordship, forward to you any intelligence I may hear or receive.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. W. HEARSEY.

No. 149.

Sir S. Baker to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 15.)

My Lord, *Athenæum Club, July 13, 1867.*

HAVING been requested to offer a written statement of the difficulties that would attend an attack upon Abyssinia to effect the liberation of the captives, I have the honour of laying before your Lordship an outline of the principal features of the frontier, followed by certain suggestions that would reduce those difficulties to a minimum.

The east and west coasts of the Red Sea are claimed by Turkey and Egypt. They are arid and desert, generally devoid of fresh water, with a burning temperature, from March to the end of September, of 105° to 120° Fahrenheit in the shade.

The two principal ports on the west coast are, Souakim, north latitude 19°, and Massowah, north latitude 15° 35′. Both afford good harbours. Souakim is the most central station, from which radiate the regular caravan-routes to Cassala, the capital of the Taka province, from sixteen to twenty days' journey for a heavily-laden camel; and the same distance to the town of Berber, on the Nile, in latitude 18° north.

Souakim is under an Egyptian Governor, who can collect any number of camels from the Arab tribes, with the necessary water-skins for the Desert journey; thus it is the direct route to Cassala for all military operations from Egypt. The troops are delivered in four days from Suez, with their supplies prepared in Cairo; thus in four days and a-half they can be supported from head-quarters with stores and reinforcements, transported by railroad to Suez, and from thence by steamers to Souakim.

The water at Souakim is brackish (similar to that of Aden), therefore a large supply of Nile water should be brought in tanks from Suez, at which place the fresh-water Canal delivers an inexhaustible store.

As the Egyptian authorities are in the habit of transporting troops direct to Cassala by Souakim, that route is free from all difficulty.

Throughout the Desert route fodder for the camels is afforded by numerous mimosas; thus a supply of corn is unnecessary. Water is found every second or third day.

Cassala, the capital of Taka province, is on the extreme limit of the Egyptian frontier, bordering the Basé (enemies of Abyssinia), through which country a route is practicable into the heart of Abyssinia. The town of Cassala is fortified, as the principal arsenal and garrison of Eastern Upper Egypt. From 6,000 to 8,000 troops are usually quartered in the district. The surrounding country is inhabited by numerous tribes of warlike Arabs subject to the Egyptian Government.

Cassala is situated upon the river Gash or Mareb, which although dry during the hot months, affords an unlimited supply of good water from wells dug in its sandy bed. During the dry season, from 15th November until 1st June, the climate is healthy, but at all other seasons the country is extremely dangerous.

The rainy season commences early in June, and continues until the middle of September. A peculiar fly appears with the first rains, that destroys all domestic animals, and would utterly vanquish an army by annihilating the beasts of transport. The Arabs migrate with their flocks and herds at the commencement of the rains, and congregate in the desert about Gozerajup, ninety-six miles north of Cassala, which at that season abounds in pasturage and is extremely healthy, and free from the fatal fly.

The great Nubian desert ceases at Gozerajup, which is the extreme southern limit of sterility; from that point the country is under the influence of the periodical rains; the soil is extremely rich as we approach the south, but in the wet season it becomes utterly impassable, the mud being several feet in depth.

At the cessation of the rains, on about September 15, the country is a dense mass of high grass and rank vegetation; the torrents are serious obstacles, and no military operations can take place until November; at that time the grass becomes parched, and the praries are cleared by fire.

From November 1 until June 1 the entire country is most favourable to military movements; no tents are required, as there is no rain for seven months; the ground is perfectly dry and so free from dew from December until May that the guns do not rust

when resting at night upon the ground; the men simply require a light blanket to protect them from the chill of the night breeze.

Throughout this country any number of camels can be procured for transport; cattle, sheep, and goats are plentiful; corn, "dhurra" (*sorghum vulgare*), is abundant, at the low price of 15 piastres per rachel (3*s*. 1*d*. for 500 lbs.). Thus, throughout the southern frontier of Upper Egypt there are abundant supplies, and a favourable climate for an army from November until June, after which a residence in the fertile countries would be fatal to man and beast; accordingly, they must fall back with the Arabs to the healthy deserts.

Accepting Cassala as the base of operations, the communication would be as follows:—

Letter post to Souakim, five days, equal to ten days post to Cairo.

Supplies and reinforcements, twenty (or twenty-five) days from Cairo.

Khartoum, the capital of the Soudan provinces, is situated at the junction of the Blue and White Niles. The population is about 30,000, and it generally contains a garrison of about 8,000 troops, while 5,000 or 6,000 additional regulars and irregulars are scattered throughout the province.

From July until October, the Blue Nile is navigable for large vessels to the 11° north latitude at Fazoklo.

There are five steamers at Khartoum, and numerous vessels that would in a few days transport an army of 3,000 men to a position within about five days march of Gellabat (Metemma) the principal market town of the west of Abyssinia; thus Khartoum would be a base, from which ammunition, &c. could be supplied either direct to the camp at Gellabat, or to a point still farther south of Fazoklo, that would cut off the retreat of Theodorus.

The difficulties and the advantages of climate enumerated in the description of Cassala are equally applicable to the position of Gellabat and the Blue Nile, with one important exception; should operations be necessary during the rains, there is no healthy retreat for the troops, such as the desert of Gozerajup, but they must push into the high and healthy lands of Abyssinia for the wet season.

It will therefore be apparent, that great advantages are afforded for an invasion of Abyssinia from the entire line of the Egyptian frontier; *i.e.* seven clear months of dry weather, with a healty climate, and two distinct bases for operations, Khartoum and Cassala; both of which are free from interruption, and are in direct communication with Cairo. Thus, the entire forces can be engaged in offensive movements, as no protection is required to preserve the line of communication in the rear; while the entire frontier is rich in supplies, beasts of burthen, and friendly Arabs. On the one hand, there is water communication between Suez and Souakim; on the other, a navigable river (Blue Nile) and a line of steamers between Khartoum and Fazoklo.

Massowah has been suggested as a favourable base of operation. I cannot see the slightest advantage in this position to counterbalance the numerous and serious obstacles presented to an invasion from that point. Upwards of 300 miles from the capital, this entire distance must be traversed through an enemy's country. An immense force will be necessary to keep open the communication with the rear; there will be no means of transport; neither supplies, as the natives will drive off their flocks and herds to the interior upon the approach of our troops; and the King Theodorus will be daily apprised by spies of their advance. His first movement will baffle the expedition: with his rear open, he will retreat with the captives to mountainous fastnesses in the distant Galla country, as a fox will steal from a covert.

An invasion of Abyssinia may be effected in three methods:

1. By an alliance with Egypt.
2. By independent British forces.
3. By the employment of 4,000 Indian troops, in conjunction with a paid Egyptian contingent, commanded by a British officer. The Viceroy to hand over 6,000 troops to British service.

In all cases the attack must take place from the Egyptian frontier. Souakim to form the *point de départ* for troops acting from the East.

1. "Alliance with Egypt."—This would secure the object of the expedition without delay. Troops would be sent from Khartoum to Fazoklo and Gellabat, and at once cut off the retreat of Theodorus to the Galla, while a division from Cassala would cross into Tigré, and place the King between two fires. At the same time a British division would occupy

a position in advance of Massowah, and send an ultimatum, allowing a specified time for the safe delivery of the captives at head-quarters, or, in default, the combined forces would invade the country, and close in upon the army of Theodorus from three points. In case of an alliance with Egypt, a British Commissioner should accompany the Egyptian forces to treat with the King Theodorus—to guarantee the retreat of the Egyptian troops should the captives be liberated—but to order their advance into Abyssinia should harm befal them. The threat of letting loose the Turks, as they are called, upon Abyssinia would compel Theodorus to terms, as the entire country would unite in revolution against him should he incur the risk of an Egyptian invasion for the sake of the prisoners.

The reward for the co-operation of Egypt should be that portion of Abyssinia hitherto contested between the great chain of mountains that forms a natural boundary, and the Atbara River on the west.

2. "Independent British forces" would succeed in conquering Abyssinia by an advance as proposed through Souakim, and the occupation of a position inland from Massowah, but I do not think they would succeed in liberating the captives, as, the rear being open, Theodorus would retreat with them to the interior. They would also have many difficulties to contend with, as the Egyptians would not afford them that active assistance in procuring supplies and means of transport that they would if themselves allied in action.

3. "The employment of 4,000 Indian troops in conjunction with 6,000 men of an Egyptian contingent in British pay" would render the expedition entirely independent, and would avoid all ulterior complications with Egypt.

Orders would at once be sent to Khartoum to prepare boats and stores, and to expedite 6,000 men, in two divisions, to arrive in the last week of October—2,000 at Gellabat and 4,000 to the east of Fazoklo, in the rear of Magdela, the head-quarters of Theodorus and the captives. The troops at Gellabat would be supported by thousands of the Dabaina, Shookeryiah, and Kunana Arabs, with unlimited means of transport in camels and supplies of all kinds; while the Indian forces at Cassala would be equally supported by the Haddendowa, Hallonga, Bishareen, and Hamran Arabs—the latter being the most magnificent swordsmen of the border tribes.

The Indian force would consist of 4,000 men landed at Souakim, and marched to Cassala as a base for future operations. Should reinforcements be necessary, they could at once be forwarded from Aden, three days' steaming from Souakim.

A division of 2,000 men (Indian troops) would be disembarked on the coast opposite Massowah, and would afford a demonstration upon the eastern frontier.

Abyssinia would thus be commanded at three points. Theodorus would be taken in the rear by the division at Fazoklo, and his retreat cut off; while an advance of the 4,000 Indian troops from Cassala into Tigré would form a nucleus for the rebels already in arms against the King, to rally around. Arrived in Tigré, the division from Cassala could march to the west upon Magdela; as the 2,000 division on the coast of Massowah, would hold the rear and keep open the communication.

Theodorus would at once be surrounded; the Egyptian division from Fazoklo would march direct upon Magdela, from which there would be no retreat. Abyssinia would be in the possession of the British forces before the expiration of the dry season.

A British Commissioner would accompany the Egyptian contingent to direct the operations and to treat for the liberation of the captives prior to the general advance of the three divisions.

Abyssinia would be compelled to pay the cost of the expedition, and would be occupied by a portion of the British forces as a material guarantee until the final settlement of our claims.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SAM. W. BAKER.

No. 150.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 16.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, July* 15, 1867.

I WAS duly favoured with Mr. Murray's letter of the 4th instant, acknowledging the receipt of the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 29th ultimo, referring to a previous one of the 13th ultimo.

I now feel it to be my duty to direct your Lordship's attention to a letter in the "Pall Mall Gazette" of the 11th instant, from "a correspondent," who, from the manner in which he expresses himself, may be imagined to have had access to official sources of

information respecting the contemplated expedition against Abyssinia. If this be the case, I can only hope that the opinions entertained by him are not those of the authorities having the direction of such an expedition, inasmuch as some of those opinions are manifestly founded on erroneous or quite insufficient data.

The writer states, that the nearest and best road from Massowah to Gondar or Magdala is by Dobarwa, Axum, and Shiré, and that on this road two ranges of mountains and two considerable rivers have to be crossed.

A reference to the map of Abyssinia, forming inclosure No. 2 in the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 12th of April last, will show that the road thus recommended, which in my said letter is spoken of as "the middle road," is neither the nearest nor the best to Magdala, whatever it may be to Gondar; on which latter place, however, it would be useless to march, because it is no longer the capital of the Emperor Theodore, he having destroyed and abandoned it, and it being now (if I mistake not) in the occupation of Tessu Gobazye, one of the insurgent Chiefs. The crossing of two range of mountains and two considerable rivers—the Mareb and Tákkazye—would not merely be a work of supererogation, but (to repeat the words of my said letter) "the selection of that road for the march of an invading army would be attended with a considerable loss of time, might occasion the illness or death of a large number of men, and might even place in jeopardy the success of a campaign."

In the second place, the correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette" says, that mules and camels are the animals best adapted to the country." On this point I would beg leave to quote a passage from Major Harris' work, "The Highlands of Ethiopia." Speaking of the arrival on the frontiers of Shoa of the Mission from the British Government to King Sahela Selásye, that officer says (vol. ii, page 325, 2nd edit.):—"As well from the severity of the climate as from the steepness of the rugged mountains of Abyssinia, the camel becomes useless as a beast of burthen; and none being ever taken beyond the frontier, many of the Walasma's retinue now gazed on the ungainly quadrupeds for the first time." Consequently (as he states in page 352) the presents for the King and the baggage of the Mission were "consigned to the shoulders of 600 grumbling Moslem porters."

In like manner the baggage of Mr. Rassam and his party, as long as they travelled through the frontier districts between Massowah and Matemma, was carried on camels; but when they started from Matemma for the Emperor's camp, "they had no less than 1,200 porters."

My own three years' personal experience of travelling in Abyssinia is, that whilst camels are used in the low and desert countries, and bullocks in parts of Tigré near the coast, the general means of transport on the table-land, that is to say, throughout Abyssinia, properly so called, are mules, asses, horses and men. When I went to Shoa in 1840, my baggage (like that of Major Harris' mission in the year following) was conveyed by camels across the deserts of the Danákil between Tajurrah and the frontier of Shoa; but in all my subsequent peregrinations through most of the provinces of the empire, I used mules and horses, with occasional porters for light weights; and on leaving the country in 1843, I took my mules down to 'Mkuller, opposite Massowah.

On my recent visit to Abyssinia, my baggage was carried by camels from 'Mkuller to the fort of Mount Shumfaite, in the valley of the Hadás, when it was taken up to the table-land on bullocks sent down for that purpose by the inhabitants of Halai; and on my return to Massowah, the same people brought it down all the way to Arkiko on bullocks and asses (with also a few porters), without employing camels at all.

As the success of any warlike expedition into Abyssinia will depend on the preparations and arrangements made for it, far more than on the general efficiency and conduct of the army itself, I am sure that your Lordship will not be displeased by the observations which I have thus taken the liberty of making.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 151.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Statham.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, offering to proceed to Abyssinia to effect the liberation of the British captives

detained in that country; and I am to thank you for this offer of service, of which, however, Her Majesty's Government will not avail themselves.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 152.

Mr. Murray to Sir S. Baker.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, offering suggestions as to the best means to be adopted for securing the liberation of the captives in Abyssinia; and I am to express to you his Lordship's best thanks for the valuable information therein contained.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 153.

Mr. Murray to Sir E. Lugard.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1867.

WITH reference to my letter of the 24th ultimo, and to your reply of the 2nd instant, respecting Abyssinia, I am directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you a copy of a letter which his Lordship has received from Sir Samuel Baker,* treating upon the question of the plan to be adopted by Her Majesty's Government for endeavouring to effect the liberation of the captives.

Any suggestions from such a well-known explorer of the regions bounding on Abyssinia must necessarily be deserving of consideration.

A copy of this letter will be sent to the India Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 154.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Merivale.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1867.

LORD STANLEY has been informed by the Secretary of State for War that Sir Stafford Northcote has been requested to take steps with a view of ascertaining through Indian officers what measures it may be advisable to adopt in order to secure the liberation of the British captives in Abyssinia; and I am directed by his Lordship to transmit to you, for the information of the Secretary of State for India in Council, a copy of a letter, with its inclosure from Sir Samuel Baker, which has this day been addressed to the War Office.†

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 155.

Mr. Murray to Captain Snow.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 18, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant, and to thank you for your offer to proceed to Abyssinia, in order to endeavour to liberate the British captives detained in that country. Her Majesty's Government will not avail themselves of your offer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* No. 149. † No. 153.

No. 156.

Mr. Murray to Captain Russell.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 18, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant, offering to proceed to Abysssinia, to procure the liberation of the British captives, and making suggestions as to military operations in that country. I am to thank you for this communication, and to inform you that any proposals on the subject of military operations should be addressed to the Secretary of State for War.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 157.

Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 20, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, and to thank you for your useful and practical observations on the best means of transport, and on the routes in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 158.

Major Leveson to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 21.)

My Lord, *The Ship Hotel, Charing Cross, July* 18, 1867.

IN April 1865, I volunteered my services for the purpose of negotiating the release of Captain Cameron and his companions, but other arrangements having been made, my offer was declined.

More than two years have now elapsed and the captives are still in chains, all negotiations having been simply treated with contempt. This result might have been prognosticated, as an Armenian or Levantine was the very last person to have been sent, those races being distrusted and looked down upon by other nationalities in the East on account of the general character they bear for deceit and duplicity.

At last, wearied out with the fruitless attempts that have hitherto been made to negotiate, the nation at large seems to have determined that either the captives shall be set free, by force if necessary, or that Theodorus the King shall be punished.

The chances are that when hostile measures are commenced the lives of all the captives will be at once sacrificed, as the King, who is said to be at the head of about 40,000 men at Debra Tabor, would most likely immolate them out of mere bravado.

Nearly four months must elapse before any troops can take the field so as to act with efficiency; and before any threatening or hostile measures are carried into effect, I ask permission of your Lordship to be allowed to attempt by mediation to rescue a brother officer and his companions in trouble.

I want no aid, and but very little means; all the risk is my own, and I will cheerfully run it.

Should I succeed, a great expense of life, treasure, and perhaps even prestige, will be spared the country; should I fail, a single life is the only penalty that can be exacted, and that will be paid without a regret: "Le jeu vaut bien la chandelle."

This is the worst view of the case; but I hope and believe that, with tact, the release of the captives might be arranged before any troops were landed at Massowah.

Under the present circumstances, now that a part of his territory is in open revolt under different leaders, King Theodorus may find it to his interest to keep on friendly terms with this country. He was once very partial to Englishmen, as Plowden and Bell were his most trusted friends and intimate companions for a long series of years; and I know the former gentleman had a very high opinion of him, as, some years ago, he invited me to join him in Abyssinia for the purpose of hunting large game with the King; and had I not been suffering from the effects of severe wounds, I should have wandered over

the country simply for sport. I do not anticipate much danger to myself were I to go now.

A fair Oriental linguist, I have often travelled alone in Africa, having made several expeditions quite as dangerous as the one I now wish to undertake. I am accustomed to a tropical climate, having returned three times from the west coast of Equatorial Africa, besides having made long exploring trips into the interior from the east coast.

I would make my way viâ Massowah or Tajjurah to the camp at Debra Tabor, and present myself to the King as the friend of Plowden, and, like him, ready to serve his interests. I would endeavour to persuade him to send back Cameron and the other captives, offering to remain myself in their stead.

If your Lordship should see fit to entrust me with this mission, it shall be carried out if possible.

If, on the other hand, it should be determined to commence hostilities, I would still volunteer my services, as great assistance could be rendered to an invading force by creating diversions in different parts of the country. Several provinces are said to be in insurrection under different leaders at the present time, and were a contingent of their followers armed and organized they would spare our regular troops much harassing work.

The Arab tribes of Beni Um'mr are now said to be holding their own against the troops of Theodorus in the Province of Shire, whilst Menilik in Shoa, Tadla Ywalw in Gojam, Waksham Gobezi in Tigré, and Tussoo Gobezi in Samien, are in open revolt.

Should the troops of his Highness the Viceroy of Egypt take any part in the campaign, I would again venture to suggest that my services might be useful, as I commanded some of them during the Russian War, when on the Staff of the Ottoman army. Since then I have served as Colonial Secretary and Lieutenant-Governor of Lagos, where I was superseded on account of a severe wound received in an engagement with the natives, and have taken part in the campaigns of Italy, Denmark, America and Austria.

I beg to forward a couple of my works upon Exploring Expeditions in different parts of the world, to show that I am accustomed to similar adventures and hard work; and I have left with Mr. Wyld of the Foreign Office a book full of certificates and testimonials given to me by different commanders under whom I have served, any of whom will bear testimony in my favour.

Should your Lordship see fit to entertain my proposal, I am ready to start at three hours' notice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. LEVESON, *Major*,
Late Colonial Secretary, Lagos, West Coast of Africa.

No. 159.

Mr. Murray to Major Leveson.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 26, 1867.*

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant, offering your services to proceed to Abyssinia to effect the release of the British captives there, and containing remarks on the present state of that country; and I am to thank you for your communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 160.

Sir J. Fergusson to Mr. Murray.—(Received July 27.)

Sir, *India Office, July 27, 1867.*

WITH reference to your letter to the War Office of the 25th June, a copy of which was forwarded to this Department by the War Office, requesting that information might be procured from India with a view to possible operations in Abyssinia, I am directed by Sir Stafford Northcote to state, for the information of Lord Stanley, that he has instructed the Government of Bombay by telegraph, to obtain all necessary information, and to despatch competent officers to the Red Sea with a view to the most thorough inquiry being made in communication with Colonel Merewether.

Sir Stafford Northcote has further, by telegraph, directed that he may be informed, as soon as possible, how long a time all the necessary preparations will require, in order that any operations in Abyssinia, which may be determined upon, may be conducted within the limits of the ensuing cold season.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES FERGUSSON.

CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

A B Y S S I N I A.

1846—1868.

Presented to the House of Commons, in pursuance of their Addresses of the 2nd and 5th December, 1867*; with further Papers presented by Command of Her Majesty.* 1868.

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Return to the following Addresses of the Honourable the House of Commons :—

Addresses dated December 2, 1867,
for—

"A Copy or Extracts of all Correspondence of the Foreign Office with the Abyssinian Consulate, between the years 1855 and 1860."

"A Copy of Despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Clarendon of the 12th day of May, 1866,* containing Mr. Rassam's Letters of March and April, 1866, respecting Abyssinia."

Address dated December 5, 1867,
for—

"A Copy of the following Correspondence respecting Abyssinia:—

"1. Letter of King Theodore to the Queen, received in 1858;†

"2. Reply to the same;‡

"3. Letter from the Queen to King Theodore, forwarded through Mr. Rassam."§

With other Correspondence relating to Abyssinia, presented by Her Majesty's Command: 1846-1868.

1846.

No. 1.

Mr. Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received December* 2.)

(Extract.) *Massowah, October* 15, 1846.

HAVING spent nearly four years in the interior of Abyssinia, on my return I was pressed by the principal Chief in this part of the country, Ras Ali, to undertake the conveyance of a few presents to Her Majesty, the fame of whose greatness had reached his ears. For some time I refused, conscious that I should be embarrassed by want of funds; when I reflected that Her Majesty's Government having already sent a Mission on an extensive scale to the King of Shoa, might not be indisposed to turn its attention to a portion of Ethiopia equally interesting and important, and more central. This determined me to accept the task, and, accompanied by an Envoy whom the Ras added for the sake of form, I reached Massowah in safety.

It is not for me to offer any suggestions, but should it be thought advisable to accept the presents and answer the letter of the Ras, or the contrary, I should feel grateful to your Lordship for communicating the same through Captain Haines at Aden with all dispatch.

* See No. 593, p. 455.

† See No. 284, p. 183.

‡ No answer was returned by Her Majesty to this Letter. See Despatch to Consul Plowden of April 8, 1858, No. 285, p. 184.

§ Dated May 26, 1864. See Inclosure in No. 451, p. 309.

Not to waste your Lordship's time I shall merely add, as my duty, that if these presents are now refused, and I am consequently obliged to return them to their donor, it will be perhaps hereafter a source of regret, particularly as a large portion of the country is under the influence of the Chief Oobeay, who, having already quarrelled with a French Mission, and aware of the former friendship of the English with Sabagardis, is by no means favourably disposed towards Europeans generally ; and should the advances of the Ras be now rejected, the access to this magnificent and almost unknown region will probably be rendered difficult for years, if not closed, to the man of science or the zealous missionary.

Your Lordship will be pleased to excuse the informal nature of the document in consideration of the circumstances.

Coming from the quarter they do, I need hardly state that the presents are of no pecuniary value.

1847.

No. 1 A.

Mr .C. A. Murray to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received June 29.)

(Extract.) *Alexandria, June* 18, 1847.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Mr. Walter Plowden has just arrived here from Abyssinia, having been shipwrecked in the Red Sea.

He narrowly escaped with his life, and all the presents destined by the Chief, Ras Ali, for Her Majesty were either lost or spoilt. The Abyssinian Envoy sent by the Ras to accompany him was so frightened by this, his first voyage, that he absolutely refused to attempt a second, and Mr. Plowden was accordingly obliged to leave him in Cairo.

No. 1 B.

Memorandum delivered by Mr. Plowden to Viscount Palmerston, August 13, 1847.

IT is not to be supposed that the Ras, in sending these presents* to Her Britannic Majesty, could have in view any more definite result than a certain interchange of courtesy, and the consequent facilities and protection that would be afforded by him to English travellers. The feudal military system of government in Abyssinia, rendering their ideas of the value of commerce both limited and careless, and though sufficiently acute to understand the nature of Treaties, it would be difficult to induce them to see the necessity of adhering to them when they should appear to militate against their interests in the slightest degree.

Seeing, however, that, as a nation, they are intelligent, and that the Ras, individually (the most powerful of their Chiefs), is of a reflective and humane disposition, and always amenable to reason from those he may consider his friends, it is possible that the acceptance of this civility from him, with a corresponding reply from Her Majesty, may lead to results which, though he could neither suggest nor foresee, he may be induced to appreciate.

In shortly regarding the value of a commercial relation with his country to be based not on Treaties, but on the stronger tie of mutual interests, I would particularly mention two points:— 1st. That on the only route at present conducting with ease to his territory, viz., by the port of Massowah, there is no water carriage for commodities; yet the overland trade, consisting of valuable articles, such as gold, ivory, musk, coffee, gum, &c., might, if properly encouraged in the interior and on the sea-coast, absorb a considerable amount of our manufactures. 2ndly. That there already exists, under the great checks that this commerce labours under, a demand for those manufactures.

For the interior, were the Ras convinced of the benefit that would accrue to his revenues by a proper consideration of his mercantile community (who are both enterprising and talented), a better regulation of his system of imposts, aided by our co-operation and protection on the coast, would quadruple the existing trade within a very short period.

On the friendly intercourse that would thus be estalished, a vast improvement in the social and political position of Abyssinia would immediately ensue, simply by the instruction they would receive in those arts which should enable them to employ the resources and productions of their own noble and neglected country; and the new wants and luxuries introduced amongst them would speedily incite a spirit to and a necessity for labour, that would divert their attention from that lust of war and ambition, sprung from idleness, that now devastates the land; and call into existence a class of labourers and artificers that would counterbalance the military, and force their Chiefs into a system of government better adapted for the security of their new pursuits. As acquainted intimately with the character of the Abyssinians, I would venture to remark that, in replying to the Ras, the more stress that is laid on our superiority in arts and science, and the less that is said of our powers in war, the better; as, though he might have the sense to see that we should never wish to avail ourselves of our strength, yet the great body of his Councillors have the undefined jealousy on that point of most savage

* See No. 1.

nations, which renders them irritable, and might defeat in a moment, or retard, our views.

With the military strength that the Abyssinians possess, the small belt of nomadic tribes that separates the Christian country from the coast would be no obstacle to the freeest commercial intercourse.

It would not, perhaps, be irrelevant to remark that being personal lvknown to all the chief merchants of that country, they particularly requested me to point out their value for, and their wish as far as possible to place themselves under, British protection.

The feeling both of the Chiefs and the merchants at present, or at least lately, was strongly in favour of the English nation, as there exists a pretty general knowledge amongst them that France and Great Britain are the two preponderating influences. Whether a French Mission that has been lately sent to the Chief of Tigré, being I think the fourth in that quarter, may succeed in changing this idea, I know not. On hearing of it, I communicated with that Chief through an old English resident, Mr. Coffin, reminding him of the ancient friendship of his family with our nation, and requesting him not to commit himself until he heard further from me.

Should Her Majesty's Government require me to enter more into detail on the various topics connected with that part of Africa, I shall feel proud of the prospect of making myself useful; and trust, in the meantime, that these cursory remarks may not be considered unwarranted.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Annex.

Report of a Present sent by Ras Ali, Chief of Northern Abyssinia, to Her Britannic Majesty.

THIS present was entrusted by Ras Ali to Mr. Plowden, in the wish (as expressed by him in a letter now lost) to establish a friendly connection with the English and to show his respect to Her Majesty.

The present consisted of the following articles of trifling value:—

One shield of buffalo hide, ornamented with silver.

Two lances.

One silver coronet, worn in battle by renowned warriors, called "kalitcha," gilt.

One silver armlet, called "beetöa," gilt.

Three fine cloths of Abyssinian manufacture, worn by Chiefs.

One mule's saddle, of the kind used by those of the highest rank.

One accompanying brass ornament for mule's neck, ditto.

One saddle-cloth for saddle, ditto.

Bridle.

One horse-saddle with equipments complete.

Five white drinking-horns.

Two large black ditto.

Two sheepskins, sown and ornamented as worn in place of wool, long hair.

One Abyssinian sabre, called "shotel."

The favourite matchlock of Ras Ali, sent with a request that it might be put in order.

Mr. Plowden having unfortunately been shipwrecked in the Red Sea, near a spot called the Valley of Pharoah, the greater part of these presents have either been lost or irretrievably damaged. The wreck having been abandoned, and there being no boat in which any property could be saved, did not, however go to pieces, and it was ascertained that another craft had possessed herself of many articles that were in her. By the exertions of the Governor and English Consular Agent at Suez, Mr. Plowden was enabled to recover a portion of these, although unfortunately in a state unfit for presentation to Her Majesty. A list is subjoined:—

Shield, lost, a portion of the silver ornaments recovered.

Lances, lost.

Silver "kalitcha," recovered, slightly damaged.

Silver "betöa," ditto, ditto.

Cloths, two, ditto, ditto.

Mule's saddle, recovered, totally spoilt.

Brass neck ornament, recovered, blackened.
Mule's saddle-cloth, recovered, damaged.
Horse saddle, recovered, totally spoilt.
Drinking-horns, five recovered, cases lost.
Sheepskins, one recovered, much tarnished.
Sabre, recovered, totally spoilt.
Matchlock, recovered.

Mr. Plowden left the Ras in the latter end of June 1846; addressed his first communication to Her Majesty's Government from Massowah, under date 15th October, 1846; and arrived in England with the above-mentioned fragments on the 5th August, 1847.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 2.

Mr. Addington to Mr. Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 18, 1847.

I AM directed by Viscount Palmerston to acknowledge the receipt of the Memorandum and paper thereto annexed respecting Abyssinia, with which you furnished his Lordship on the 13th instant, and I am to request that in case you should possess any further information on the commercial resources of Abyssinia and the adjoining countries, as well as on the mode by which commercial intercourse may be established and maintained with those countries, you will have the goodness to communicate such information to Lord Palmerston in as condensed a form as the subject treated of may admit. Lord Palmerston would wish more especially to know what articles of British growth and manufacture would be most likely to find a ready market in Abyssinia and the countries adjacent to it; what articles of interchange those countries possess; whether the security of conveyance to and from the Red Sea is in your opinion such as to give a fair chance of maintaining a permanent commercial intercourse with Abyssinia, and whether any port besides Massowah is suited for the purposes of commerce.

I am, &c.

(Signed) H. U. ADDINGTON.

No. 3.

Mr. Plowden to Mr. Addington.—(*Received August* 21.)

Sir, *August* 20, 1847.

IN reply to your communication of the 18th August* I have the honour herewith to submit a short Memorandum, touching on the topics on which information is requested by Viscount Palmerston, and containing such facts as I am able to furnish, which may, however, be deficient, as I did not originally travel with the view of investigating those subjects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Memorandum on Trade of Abyssinia.

THE trade of Abyssinia, and of all the adjacent countries occupied by the Gallas, that is, from 15° north latitude to the Equator, and from the course of the White Nile to the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean, now flows in four directions. The most inland route is along the course of the White Nile to Khartoom, principally a slave traffic, and is joined at that place by a branch from Gondar, the capital of Christian Abyssinia. Another from the interior, south-easterly, to Mellinda, on the east coast. Another running east to Zeyla or Tajoura, through the Christian country of Shoa: and, a fourth, north-easterly to the Red Sea, to the ports of Massowah and Souakim.

* No. 2.

The consideration of the first branch is unnecessary at present. The traffic of the other three, besides slaves, consists almost entirely of goods the produce of the Galla provinces of Enarea, Kaffa, Djimma, Gooraguay, Jingero, &c., between the latitudes of 3° and 8° north. Their several advantages, as affording facility of access to those provinces, are as follows:—The route from Mellinda or its neighbourhood is the only one on which a communication by water, even to a certain distance, can be looked for on the Rivers Joob or Gojeb, but, from the nature of the country generally, I am inclined to think that this would be stopped by the mountain range, not far inland, and before reaching those productive tracts I have mentioned; also the numerous barbarous tribes that inhabit the banks of these rivers would at first render the journey dangerous and slow, it would, however, be exceedingly advisable that every encouragement should be given to the thorough examination of these rivers. The route by Zeyla presents the advantage of passing in one district through the Kingdom of Shoa, a Christian nation acknowledging one Sovereign; on the other hand, his dominions are divided from the sea by an extensive and dangerous tract of country afflicted with severe drought during a great portion of the year. On the fourth route, the branch to Souakim labours under a similar disadvantage, and is also farther from the central point than the one to Massowah, which is comparatively free from these difficulties.

The caravans from the interior on crossing the Blue Nile at Basso, about 120 miles to the northward of the great emporium of Enarea, traverse a Christian country from thence to Dixa, an easy journey of three days from Massowah. Of this latter, even in the dry season, there is only a space of thirty or forty miles unprovided with water, and this, from their ignorance of well-making or other precautions; and the tribes inhabiting this belt between the sea and the high plateau or table-land commencing at Dixa, are a tolerably well-disposed though ignorant nomadic race nominally under the jurisdiction of the Naïb of Arkeeko.

The heat of this part of the coast is great during the summer months, but not unhealthy. The traffic is entirely carried on by means of beasts of burthen, which are numerous and cheap in all parts of the interior—horses, mules, and donkeys: these are left on the hills and the packages transferred to camels when about sixty miles from the coast.

Caravans arrive at and quit Massowah at all seasons of the year, but are most numerous about August and February.

The Mussulmans alone of Abyssinia export slaves. The goods that are brought from the interior are principally gold, of not a very fine quality, ivory, coffee equal to that of Yemen, musk or zibad, wax, some kinds of spices. Though gum abounds everywhere, even near the coast, the trade in that article has hitherto been comparatively trifling. From the cheapness of cattle a valuable trade in hides might be formed; much of the uncultivated land would be favourable to the production of indigo; and cotton might be grown in the neighbourhood of Massowah. Hippopotamus teeth are available in quantities were there a demand; saltpetre and sulphur are found abundantly, the latter particularly in a mountain about two days' journey from the coast. The export of mules to the Mauritius has been large of late years. The whole country abounds with iron. I bought specimens, now lost, of gold ore from the vicinity of Gondar, of which the inhabitants are ignorant, containing also copper. The duties at present levied on the Abyssinian exports at Massowah amount, I have reason to think, to about 70,000 dollars per annum, but I could not state this with certainty.

The return produce is as follows:—British goods, brought by the Parsee traders from Bombay, consist of calicos, plain and printed; scarlet cloth, silk, carpets of brilliant colours, red and blue Indians, or India piece goods in large quantities, velvet, and muslins. European sword-blades are much valued, but must be of a particular kind to suit the market. Matchlocks alone are prized on the other side of the River Tacasse as yet, but in the province of Tigré, a strong predilection exists for flint muskets, and even for percussion fire-arms.

The dress of the inhabitants consists at present entirely of cotton cloths spun and woven by hand labour; and in some years they purchase the raw material largely from Bombay, though entire provinces amongst them are cultivated with that article; but if once induced to adopt our common fabrics, the raw produce would probably come into the market. A good cloth of the country costs the wearer 3 to 4 dollars, which (considering that 1 dollar of grain is a year's consumption for one person) is an extravagant price. The only money that passes current is the German crown of Maria Theresa.

Of other European commodities in demand, I may mention German sword blades, matchlocks of Syria and Persia, carpets of any fabric, looking-glasses, copper in any shape, red morocco, frankincense, bottles, and tumblers; for the Galla market immense

quantities of beads are brought from Trieste through Egypt and Djeddah. Cutlery has been introduced, though an English knife is always an acceptable present.

The Abyssinian merchants are spirited and enterprising, and always inquire eagerly for novelties; and the genius of the nation generally appeared to me decidedly biassed towards trade. At present they are content with slow journeys and a large profit, the caravans being sometimes a year between Enarea and Massowah, but the principle of quick returns is thoroughly understood by the inhabitants of Tigré, the nearest province to the coast, and could some weights be removed even partially that now press heavily on the commerce of Abyssinia, I doubt not that it would again flourish, as when the merchants of India and Arabia thronged the harbour of the now ruined and forgotten city of Adoolis (in the Bay of Arkeeko).

The first and most important point would be to insure the British protection, and that effectually, to the Abyssinian merchants when they reach the coast. This, they themselves ardently long for; and it is my opinion that it cannot be afforded to them with mutual advantage save at Massowah, or its immediate neighbourhood.

The appointment of a Consul at that place would be of use, that he might report the course of events ; but the occupation of that island, if possible, by the English would be the most effectual means of establishing a permanent and valuable trade with the whole of the interior of this portion of Africa. The consequences of this would be that the intervening tribes would quietly submit to their neighbours, and the intercourse between the Christian country and the sea-coast become uninterrupted and constant. A Treaty effected with the Ras on friendly terms would insure access to the English to all his dominions, and he would easily be convinced of the utility to his revenues, of encouraging his own mercantile community by a better system of imposts, by improving the roads, and by building a few bridges, for which he would then be able to procure artificers. A Resident or Residents at his Court might insure with a little tact his correspondence in all our views.

Some time since a Treaty was broached between the English and the native chief of Tigré, the basis of which was that the trade of Massowah should be diverted into a new channel, by an English establishment in the Bay of Amphylla to the southward, the chief on his part engaging to open the road through the country of the Taltals for the caravans to the coast. In the present unsettled state of the district of Tigré, there would be many difficulties now in the way of such a scheme, still should no other spot be available, I think that our first object should be to secure a footing, however small, on any point within forty miles of Massowah, that will furnish a harbour.

Now if there exists a difficulty in treating with the Porte for any part of its possessions in that quarter, our views should be directed to a bargain with the Naib of Arkeeko, who is still acknowledged virtually as Sovereign of the mainland. The Treaties, in fact, existing between him and the Sultan, for the occupation of Massowah, are, I believe, rather ill-defined, but in point of fact the Turks pay the inhabitants of Arkeeko a subsidy of 1,000 dollars a month, and have no settlement or authority on the mainland. How far the Naib has bound himself not to dispose of any portion of his territory to other Powers I know not; but if he could be induced to sell to us any position on the land surrounding the Bay of Arkeeko, where fresh water is found, I should not think there would be any other material difficulty. At present the traders are all forced to dispose of their goods in the Island of Massowah. Should this idea be considered worthy of consideration, I beg to point out as an agent with the Naib, Mr. Coffin, who has been in that part of the country nearly forty years, and is well acquainted with all the former Treaties, the language, laws, &c. The jealousy and constant disputes between the Turkish Governor and the Naib, as well as the poverty of the latter, would perhaps facilitate any dealings with him. Supposing a British trade were established in that quarter, ships would time their voyage according to the Monsoon, arriving with the end of the southerly winds, and departing with the commencement of the northerly, in which case the distance between Massowah and the Indian Ocean would never occupy more than five or six days to ten. The voyage is, I believe, much less dangerous than that of Djiddah, and an accurate survey from Aden and the buoying of the channel through the Bay of Arkeeko would render it perfectly safe. The harbour is tolerable, but that of the Island of Massowah itself is excellent.

In fine, I would state it as my opinion, that our possession of the Island of Massowah, would render a permanent and valuable commercial intercourse with the whole of the interior of Abyssinia certain, and that an establishment on the mainland, if it could be effected through the Naib independent of Massowah, would offer a fair prospect of the same, attended however with some difficulties and a greater expense. Nor do I think any other part of the coast can compare with this in facilities for such a purpose.

I will now shortly state the position of Ras Ali in the interior, that no misunder-

standing may exist with regard to our relations with him. The rightful Emperor still resides, a shadow of royalty, at Gondar, and Ras Ali represents the race of powerful Chiefs, Galla by origin, but now Christian, who have now retained the Government about sixty years. He has reigned about sixteen years, and is much loved; but, as may be supposed, his power, though great, is not so fixed but that an unsuccessful battle may hurl him from his throne: he is rather, therefore, to be designated as the most potent Chieftain than as a King, and his influence extends on the one hand to Dixa, on the other to the Gallas and to Shoa, though sometimes disputed. With so uncertain a Government, I need scarcely point out the necessity for particularly considering the degree and nature of the alliance that we might form with him and his family, and the precise instructions on this point that should be given to whoever may be appointed to carry it into effect.

Respecting the Slave Trade, this being carried on, as I have mentioned, solely by the Mahomedans, and many of the Christian Chiefs being averse to it and permitting it solely on account of the duties they levy, our presence and advice would soon induce them to put a stop to it throughout Northern Abyssinia, as I have heard them express the wish to do. This would be at least a good commencement on this coast, and unattended with violence or expense, and more would be effected in this way and that of civilizing the country generally in two years, than by the efforts of our missionaries in a century.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 4.

Mr. Plowden to Mr. Addington.—(*Received August* 28.)

Sir, *August* 28, 1847.

I HAVE the honour to submit, for your perusal, a short Memorandum, as desired by you on Thursday, and respectfully awaiting a reply to the communication I then laid before you.

I am, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 4.

Memorandum.

IN reviewing the claims of different Powers to the Island of Massowah and the neighbouring coast, the one that has the priority is doubtless that of the Emperor of Abyssinia, who appointed the Baharnagaseh, or Ruler of the Sea. This officer resides at Dixa, and still retains his title; but so long a time has elapsed since he has been obliged to withdraw from all active interference near the sea, that, with reference to a British establishment, his rights may be considered null in that quarter.

There remains the somewhat complicated question of the respective rights of the Naib of Arkeeko, and the Turkish Government, now represented by the Officer of the Pasha of Egypt.

Some hundreds of years since the Turks appear to have conquered the coast, and to have appointed the Naib, a native Chieftain of power, who embraced the Mahomedan religion, as their representative on the mainland, he paying tribute. They subsequently abandoned their conquest in this quarter, and the Naib (whose residence is about six miles from Massowah), became virtually an independent Sovereign, over both the mainland several days' journey along the coast in either direction, and the Island of Massowah, and ceased to pay tribute.

In consequence of some disputes that occurred in his family, as to who should be the Chief, it would appear that the Turks were again invited by reference to the Pasha of Djiddah, to settle this point, and to the occupation of the island, they paying to the Naib a stipend of 1,000 dollars per month, in consideration of abandoning to them the duties levied on all merchandize, imports and exports; thus apparently, however, nullifying their former claims of vassalage. In fact, for some time the Naibs ceased to require a firman, but latterly they have even presented themselves at the island, and received their appointment from the Turkish Governor.

It is clear that, at the period of Mr. Salt's visit some forty years back, the Turkish Governor possessed little authority, as his party were refused a supply of water from Arkeeko, and a skirmish occurred.

In later times, within the last eight years, it is evident also that the Naib has been considered in all respects, after his appointment—and excepting the caravans—as an independent Sovereign on the mainland; the Turkish Governor being equally so on the island. All jurisdiction on the mainland, save where Turks are concerned, rests with the Naib; he makes war or peace at pleasure, receives tribute from all the native tribes, and ells land to individuals.

If a traveller wishes to proceed into the interior, a guide must be procured from him; and not long since he extorted large sums from English and other missionaries for permission to proceed. On the appointment of a French Consular Agent, he refused to allow him to cross over to the mainland, without a permission from himself, and payment of a sum of money. But he has ceded this point altogether, and the French Agent resides at a village on the mainland, his flag being hoisted at Massowah.

I think it probable that the Pasha of Egypt will establish a fortress at Arkeeko, and forcibly deprive the Naib of the power that he still possesses, to which he could offer no effectual resistance.

Now, with reference to the feasibility of the establishment of an English factory in that quarter, on land purchased, it appears to me that this haze of undefined rights or claims, resolves itself on all sides into the simple facts of strength and possession; and if the French could purchase, as they have done (hitherto without question), a portion of the mainland to the southward, in the name of the Governor of Massowah, who clearly possesses less right to it than the Naib, and who has never had a garrison or Agent there, why could not we, if considered advisable, purchase in like manner, from the Naib of Arkeeko, some portion of land in the Bay of Amphylla; or how could his right to sell it be questioned, as long as the Turks have not actually occupied it, or received tribute from it?

I mention Amphylla as the next best point on the coast to the Island of Massowah, and a point to which the caravan trade that now supports the latter might be made to diverge from the interior by arrangements with the Christian Chiefs, and superior facilities afforded to the merchants themselves. I, of course, as not knowing the facilities and difficulties of these arrangements, can only point out, from the situation of the places, which would be the most important that should fix the attention of Government.

I do not think that the authorities at Constantinople are yet much aware of the importance of Massowah; and it might be easier now to effect some understanding with them than it may be a few years hence, as a few years back it would have presented little difficulty had the matter then been brought to the notice of Her Majesty's Government.

Now, looking at the above facts with reference to the appointment of a Consular Agent by the English Government, I should think that he would be ordered to hoist his flag on the Island of Massowah, acknowledging the right of the Turkish Government there, a fact which on account of long possession can scarcely be disputed; and if ever British interests were concerned on the mainland, which would be seldom the case at present, referring the matter to the Naib, as the existing and ostensible power there. On the island his duties for the present would be to protect the interests of the Bombay traders, British subjects, and thus be of great utility to a considerable existing trade in British manufactures.

As British Consular Agent, however, he could afford no protection to the merchants of Abyssinia, an important point, which could only be done effectually on British ground. The Christian country of Abyssinia has, however, been mentioned, I believe, in some of the late Treaties connected with the affairs of Egypt, and this, of course, would be made the most of to the advantage of its traders.

I may perhaps venture again respectfully to state my conviction that the Island of Massowah is an important point that Her Majesty's Government should not lose sight of.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN."

1848.

No. 5.

Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 3, 1848.

HER Majesty's Government having decided to appoint a Consular Agent for the protection of British trade with Abyssinia, and with the countries adjoining thereto, I have to inform you that you have been chosen for that appointment.

You will, in the first instance, proceed to Massowah, and you will, for a certain time, eside either there or on the mainland in its vicinity, in order to acquire correct information as to the actual state of trade at Massowah as connected with Abyssinia, and in order that you may be able to report to Her Majesty's Government as to the extent of the rights of the Naib of Arkeeko as an independent ruler, and that you may ascertain whether the Turkish Government possesses lawful power over the Naib on the mainland as well as in the Island of Massowah, and if so, to what extent.

This information is necessary to enable Her Majesty's Government to determine whether the British Consulate shall be permanently established at Massowah or on the mainland. If the Naib is dependent on the Turkish Government both on the mainland and at Massowah, it may, in that case, be best that the Consul should be stationed at Massowah. If, on the other hand, the Turkish right extends to the Island of Massowah only, it may be better that the Consul should be stationed on the mainland.

On this matter, therefore, you will obtain the best information you can, and you will report to me fully upon the subject. It is right that I should explain to you that Her Majesty's Government, in establishing a Consulate on the shores of the Red Sea, have no intention to seek to gain possession, either by purchase or otherwise, of any portion of the African continent in that quarter, nor of any neighbouring island. They merely wish to avail themselves of such means as the natural resources of the country, the wants of the natives, and the favourable disposition of the Rulers, aided by the protection and influence of the British Government, may afford for the encouragement and extension of British commerce.

When you have acquired at Massowah all the information in your power on the matters above mentioned, you will proceed to Tigré with the presents intrusted to you for the Ras and for some of the principal persons at the Court of Abyssinia. You will explain to the Ras the cause of the delay which has occurred in sending him an acknowledgment of the presents which he sent by you, and in replying to his friendly overtures; and you will, at your own discretion, choose the proper moment for placing in his hands the presents destined for His Highness, and the inclosed letter which, by Her Majesty's commands, I have addressed to him. A copy of that letter is inclosed for your information.

You will assure the Ras of the earnest desire of Her Majesty's Government to maintain the most friendly relations with him and with his country, and you will impress upon him that the surest way of maintaining and strengthening such relations will be to encourage commercial dealings, which by making the people of the two countries better acquainted with each other, will more closely identify their mutual interests. You will also point out to him that increased commerce will bring with it increased revenue.

If you should find the Ras disposed to enter into a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Great Britain, you will propose for his acceptance the Treaty of which a draft is herewith inclosed. It has been drawn up purposely in a simple form.

You will not consider yourself authorized to make any material alterations in this draft without the previous sanction of this office.

The Ras being merely a *de facto*, and perhaps only a temporary, ruler in Abyssinia, the Treaty ought to be drawn up in the name of the Emperor, or in the joint names of the Emperor and the Ras, and should be signed by both.

While you are at Tigré or Gondar (if you should think it expedient to proceed to the latter place) you will endeavour to acquire all the information within your reach respecting the commercial and political state of the country, and as to the present position of the Ras.

You will also inquire into and report upon the present situation, and the probable

future stability, of the Chiefs, not only of Shoa, but of the other countries and districts which are more or less dependent upon or in connection with Abyssinia. And if you should believe that any material benefit might be derived from your visiting the capital of Shoa, you may proceed thither.

While you are in Abyssinia you will endeavour to establish friendly relations with influential Chiefs of families in the country.

On your return to Massowah you will place yourself in communication with the Naib of Arkeeko; and you will state to him that you are sent to assist in extending British commerce with the countries in the interior, and to give efficient protection to that commerce.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 5.

Viscount Palmerston to the Ras of Abyssinia.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 3, 1848.

CIRCUMSTANCES beyond my control have hitherto prevented me from replying to the friendly communication which you intrusted Mr. Walter Plowden to convey to me; but the fact of Mr. Plowden returning to Abyssinia with a Commission granted to him by my Gracious Sovereign Queen Victoria will satisfy your Highness that the British Government takes a warm interest in the welfare of Abyssinia, and entertains a true feeling of friendship for the illustrious Ruler of that country.

I doubt not that the communication which Mr. Plowden is authorized to make to you of the desire of the British Government to enter into a Treaty with Abyssinia will be highly satisfactory to your Highness, and that the proposals which are intrusted to him will meet with ready acceptance on the part of your Highness, who will clearly perceive the great advantage which Abyssinia will derive from intimate connection with the Sovereign of the British Empire, whose dominions extend from the rising to the setting sun, and whose fleets are to be met with in every part of the seas which encompass the earth.

I recommend, therefore, with confidence, Mr. Plowden to your Highness' favour and protection; and in taking leave of your Highness, I pray that God may preserve you in his holy keeping.

Your faithful friend,
(Signed) PALMERSTON,
Her Britannic Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

(The large Signet.)

To His Highness the Ras of Tigré,
Abyssinia.

Inclosure 2 in No. 5.

Draft of Treaty between Great Britain and Abyssinia.

WHEREAS commerce is a source of great wealth and prosperity to all those nations who are firmly united in the bonds of reciprocal friendship; and whereas the conclusion of a Treaty of Perpetual Amity and Commerce between Abyssinia and Great Britain, which has already been desired by their respective Sovereigns, would tend to the mutual advantage of both countries; and whereas it is desirable that the conditions should be specified whereupon the commercial intercourse betwixt the two nations should be conducted. Now it is hereby declared, done, and agreed as follows:—

ARTICLE I.

A firm, free, and lasting friendship shall subsist between His Majesty of Abyssinia and his successors on the one part, and Her Most Gracious Majesty Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and her successors, on the other part.

ARTICLE II.

For the purpose of preserving and strengthening the friendly relations subsisting between the two nations, His Majesty of Abyssinia and his successors shall receive and

protect any Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul whom Her Britannic Majesty or her successors may see fit to appoint; and shall preserve inviolate all the rights and privileges of such Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul.

ARTICLE III.

Her Britannic Majesty and her successors will in the same manner receive and protect any Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul whom His Majesty of Abyssinia or his successors may see fit to appoint, and will equally preserve inviolate all the rights and privileges of such Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul.

ARTICLE IV.

His Majesty of Abyssinia engages to grant to the subjects of Her Britannic Majesty, and to the produce and commerce of her dominions, all favours, privileges, advantages, or immunities, either as regards duties, imposts, or charges, or in any other respect whatsoever, which His Majesty of Abyssinia has already granted, or may hereafter grant to the subjects, produce, or commerce of any other foreign country.

ARTICLE V.

An import duty of 5 for every 100 and no more, may be levied and received by His Majesty of Abyssinia and his successors upon all goods and merchandize imported by British subjects into the Kingdom of Abyssinia, for sale either therein or in the countries beyond.

ARTICLE VI.

This import duty of 5 for every 100 shall be assessed upon the current value of the merchandize at the market-place of Gondar, and shall be paid at the rate of 5 for every 100, either in kind or in specie, at the option of the merchant.

ARTICLE VII.

When the said import duty shall have been duly paid, the importing merchant shall be at full liberty to dispose of his goods at any place or places within the territories of Abyssinia, without any licence being required for the removal of the same, and without any prohibition, restraint, or further duty or impost of any kind being imposed upon the buyer; and the importing merchant may, if he pleases, carry away such goods to any other country or place without any licence being required for the removal of the same, and without restraint, or molestation, or the payment of any further duty or impost whatever.

ARTICLE VIII.

British merchants shall be at liberty to purchase within the territories of Abyssinia all such commodities as they may think proper to buy, whether such commodities are the produce of those territories, or have been imported into those territories from other countries; and the said merchants may freely export the same without the payment of any duty whatever.

ARTICLE IX.

The subjects of His Majesty of Abyssinia shall have in the United Kingdom the advantages which are already enjoyed, or which may hereafter be enjoyed by the subjects of the most favoured nation, and no higher or other duties shall be imposed on the importation into the United Kingdom of goods, the produce of Abyssinia, than are or shall be payable upon the like goods the produce of any other foreign country imported in the like manner.

ARTICLE X.

A commercial intercourse shall be allowed and encouraged betwixt the subjects of Abyssinia and of the countries beyond that Kingdom, on the one hand, and the subjects of Great Britain, on the other.

ARTICLE XI.

In order to increase and promote commerce between Abyssinia and Great Britain, His Majesty of Abyssinia and his successors shall encourage merchants of all nations to bring the produce of the interior of Africa into the dominions of Abyssinia.

ARTICLE XII.

With a like view Her Britannic Majesty and her successors will protect British merchants in importing into Abyssinia such articles as may be needed therein.

ARTICLE XIII.

For the better security of merchants and their property, His Majesty of Abyssinia, and his successors, and Her Britannic Majesty, and her successors, will respectively, to the best of their power, endeavour to keep open and to secure the avenues of approach betwixt the sea-coast and Abyssinia.

ARTICLE XIV.

With a view to promote and encourage reciprocal intercourse between the subjects of the two nations respectively, His Majesty of Abyssinia engages for himself and his successors that no hindrance or molestation shall be offered to British travellers, whether residing within the territories of Abyssinia, or passing through them, for the purpose of visiting the countries beyond, but such travellers shall be protected both as to their persons and as to their property.

ARTICLE XV.

The effects belonging to such travellers, and not intended for sale, shall not be liable to duty of any sort, and shall in every respect be held to be their personal property, and to be inviolable.

ARTICLE XVI.

The subjects of His Majesty of Abyssinia shall meet with no hindrance or obstruction whilst residing in any part of the dominions of Her Britannic Majesty, and shall not be prevented from proceeding beyond those dominions at their pleasure.

ARTICLE XVII.

His Majesty of Abyssinia agrees that in all cases when a British subject shall be accused of any crime committed in any part of His Majesty's dominions, the person so accused shall be tried and adjudged by the British Consul or other officer duly appointed for that purpose by Her Britannic Majesty; and in all cases where disputes or differences shall arise between British subjects, or between British subjects and the subjects of His Majesty of Abyssinia, or between British subjects and the subjects of any other foreign Power, within the dominions of His Majesty of Abyssinia, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul or other duly appointed officer shall have power to hear and decide the same without any interference, molestation or hindrance, on the part of any authority of Abyssinia, either before, during, or after the litigation.

ARTICLE XVIII.

If any British subject shall die in the territories of His Majesty of Abyssinia, the British Consul or, in his absence, his Representative, shall have the right to take charge of the papers and property of the deceased, for the benefit of his lawful heirs or creditors, without any interference on the part of the Abyssinian authorities.

ARTICLE XIX.

Finally it is agreed that upon a strict observance of all the foregoing articles and conditions shall depend the continuance of a lasting and permanent friendship between the Contracting Sovereigns.

No. 6.

Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 3, 1848.

THE Queen having been graciously pleased to appoint you to be Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, I inclose to you herewith Her Majesty's Commission to that effect.

I also inclose a set of general instructions* prepared for the use of Her Majesty's

* The inclosures in this despatch are the ordinary Consular Instructions.

Consuls abroad; and I have to desire that you will lose no time in making yourself conversant with the details of the Consular service, and with the nature and extent of your duties. To this end you will give particular attention to the accompanying Circular despatches dated the 30th of September, 1833, the 1st of October, 1836, and the 1st of August, 1842, which relate to the general instructions above-mentioned.

You will be punctual in forwarding to this Department such of the Returns required from you as you may have an opportunity of furnishing from the place of your residence; and you will collect and transmit to me any further useful information relating to commerce and navigation, and any other branch of statistics.

You will receive a salary of 500*l.* a year, to commence ten days before the day of your embarkation for your post, and permission is given to you to engage in mercantile pursuits; but you will not be entitled to any pension or superannuation allowance on the termination of your services in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

Inclosure in No. 6.

Royal Commission to Mr. Plowden.

(L.S.) VICTORIA R. *November* 21, 1847.

VICTORIA, by the grace of God, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all and singular to whom these presents shall come, Greeting!

Whereas We have thought it necessary for the encouragement of Our subjects trading to the dominions of the Emperor of Abyssinia, to appoint a Consul to take care of the affairs of Our said subjects, and to aid and assist them in all their lawful and mercantile concerns, and to endeavour to procure for them that justice and equity which shall be agreeable to the friendship and good correspondence subsisting between Our dominions and those of the Emperor of Abyssinia:

Now know ye that We, reposing especial trust and confidence in the discretion and faithfulness of Our trusty and well-beloved Walter Charles Metcalfe Plowden, Esquire, have nominated, constituted, and appointed, and do by these presents nominate, constitute and appoint him the said Walter Charles Metcalfe Plowden to be Our Consul in Abyssinia, hereby giving and granting unto him full power and authority by all lawful means to aid and protect Our merchants and others Our subjects, trading or that shall trade to or reside within the said dominions, and also to appoint Vice-Consuls at such ports and places in the said dominions as may be necessary for the further protection of Our said subjects; to have and to hold the said office during Our pleasure, in as full and ample a manner as the Consuls of other nations resident or to be resident in the said dominions shall or may hold and enjoy their employments:

And We do in a friendly manner desire the Emperor of Abyssinia to receive and admit him the said Walter Charles Metcalfe Plowden for Our Consul as aforesaid, and the British Vice-Consuls whom he shall appoint, and upon all reasonable requests to do him and them that justice, and afford him and them that assistance, which may testify the friendship of the Emperor of Abyssinia to Us, and which We shall upon all occasions be ready to acknowledge:

And We do hereby strictly enjoin and require all Our subjects to take due notice of this Our Commission, and yield obedience thereto.

Given at Our Court at Buckingham Palace the twenty-first day of November, one thousand eight hundred and forty-seven, in the eleventh year of Our reign.

By Her Majesty's command.

(Countersigned) PALMERSTON.

No. 7.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 1, 1848.

ON your passage through Egypt you will communicate with Mr. Murray, Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General, who is instructed to furnish you at all times with

any information which he may think likely to be useful to you; and although you are not placed under Mr. Murray's control, I nevertheless think it desirable that all your despatches to this office should be sent through and under cover to Mr. Murray, and should be left open that he may peruse them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 8.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 4, 1848.

THE vicinity of Abyssinia to the Turkish dominions renders it expedient that you should be fully informed of the state of the commercial relations between the British and Turkish Governments, and of the powers conferred by Treaty and by Act of Parliament upon Her Majesty's Consuls in the Ottoman territories; and I therefore transmit to you copies of the Capitulations and Articles of Peace between Great Britain and the Porte, of an Act of the Sublime Porte granting to English vessels the privileges of commerce in the Black Sea, and of the Treaty of Peace between this country and Turkey concluded in 1809, in which will be found recorded important privileges which are secured to British subjects and to the British trade within and passing through the dominions of the Porte.

I also inclose a copy of the Convention of 1838 between Great Britain and Turkey.

In the draft of Treaty which you are provisionally instructed by my despatch of the 3rd instant* to propose to the Abyssinian Government, a clause has been inserted which, if agreed to, will confer upon Her Majesty's Consuls exclusive jurisdiction over British subjects in Abyssinia: but the powers thus granted by Treaty will not be sufficient to enable you to exercise such jurisdiction, unless Her Majesty shall issue an Order in Council applying to Abyssinia the provisions of the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, and such an Order cannot be issued until the Treaty is concluded and ratified. In the meantime it may be convenient that you should know what power of jurisdiction you may eventually be called upon to exercise, and I therefore inclose the Act of Parliament in question and various other papers relating to Consular jurisdiction in the Levant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 9.

Mr. Addington to Mr. G. Cornewall Lewis.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 12, 1848.

I AM directed by Viscount Palmerston to transmit to you, for the information of the President of the Board of Control, copies of an instruction and its inclosures which he has addressed to Mr. Walter Plowden,* who has been appointed by the Queen to be Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia.

Mr. Plowden will proceed in the first instance to Aden, and I am to request that the principal officer of the East India Company at that place may be directed at all times to afford Mr. Plowden such assistance as he may require for the due execution of the duties entrusted to him; and that he may be further informed that it is desirable that a vessel of the East India Company's Marine should occasionally be despatched to Massowah to communicate with Mr. Plowden, or, if he is up in the country, to give him that consequence in the estimation of the Native Chiefs of that and the neighbouring districts which the presence of a British ship of war on the coast cannot fail to confer upon him.

I am, &c.
(Signed) H. U. ADDINGTON.

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* No. 5.

No. 10.

Viscount Palmerston to Lord Cowley.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, January* 13, 1848.

I HAVE to acquaint your Lordship that Her Majesty's Government have considered it advisable to appoint a Consul to Abyssinia, and to endeavour to enter into commercial relations with the Ruler of that country.

Mr. Walter Plowden, who has resided for several years in Abyssinia, has been selected for this office, and will shortly take his departure from this country.

I inclose a copy of my instructions to Mr. Plowden.* The Treaty which he is authorized to propose will apply to the usual points connected with commercial intercourse between two countries; and if it should be accepted by the Ruler of Abyssinia and concluded in due form, it will be eventually communicated to Her Majesty's Embassy; but, in the meanwhile, I do not think it necessary to send you a copy of it.

It is not necessary that your Lordship should make any communication to the Porte at the present time respecting Mr. Plowden's appointment.

I am, &c.

(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 11.

Extract from the London Gazette, January 21, 1848.

Foreign Office, January 21, 1848.

THE Queen has been graciously pleased to appoint Walter Charles Metcalfe Plowden, Esq., to be Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia.

No. 12.

Mr. G. C. Lewis to Mr. Addington.—(Received January 29.)

Sir, *India Board, January* 29, 1848.

WITH reference to your letter of the 12th instant,† respecting the appointment of a British Consul in Abyssinia, I am directed by the Commissioners for the Affairs of India to transmit to you, for the information of Viscount Palmerston, a copy of a letter which was addressed to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, by order of this Board, and also a copy of a despatch which, in compliance with the wishes of Her Majesty's Government, the Court will send to the Governor in Council at Bombay, that being the Presidency to which the Company's principal officer at Aden is immediately subordinate.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. CORNEWALL LEWIS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 12.

Mr. G. C. Lewis to Mr. Melvill.

Sir, *India Board, January* 20, 1848.

I AM directed by the Commissioners for the Affairs of India to acquaint you, for the information of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, that the Queen has been pleased to appoint Mr. Walter Plowden to be the British Consul in Abyssinia.

In communicating this appointment to the Board, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has requested that the Company's Principal Agent at Aden may be instructed to afford to Mr. Plowden at all times such assistance as he may require for the due execution of the duties entrusted to him; and Viscount Palmerston has also expressed an opinion that it is very desirable that a vessel of the Indian navy should occasionally be despatched to Massowah for the purpose of communicating with Mr. Plowden, or, if he should be in the interior of the country, of giving him that consequence in the estimation of the Native Chiefs which the presence of a British ship of war cannot fail to confer upon him.

The Board will be happy to receive from the Court at their earliest convenience the draft of such instructions as may appear to be proper in furtherance of the views of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. CORNEWALL LEWIS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 12.

Draft Paragraphs proposed by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, to be sent to their Presidency at Bombay.

1. WE transmit a number, in the packet, of a letter which has been addressed to our Secretary by the Secretary to the Commissioners for the Affairs of India, notifying the appointment of Mr. Walter Plowden to be Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, and we direct that instructions conformable to the request made in the second paragraph of the letter be addressed to the British Representative at Aden.

2. You will further observe the wish expressed by Viscount Palmerston respecting the occasional despatch of a vessel of the Indian navy to Massowah, and it is our desire that this wish be complied with so far as is compatible with the exigencies of the public service.

No. 13.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received January* 31.)

My Lord, *London, January* 26, 1848.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 3rd January,* containing instructions relative to my appointment as Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, to all of which I shall carefully attend.

Also the inclosures, being the draft of a Treaty of Commerce to be entered into with the King of Abyssinia, and a letter addressed to His Highness the Ras of Abyssinia, with a copy for my information.

I also beg to acknowledge your despatch dated the 4th January,† instructing me to send all despatches under cover to Mr. Murray, Consul-General in Egypt, open for his perusal, which shall be duly attended to.

Hoping that I may be able to carry out successfully your Lordship's views, I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 14.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 31, 1848.

I INCLOSE, for your information, a copy of the instruction which has been given by the Court of Directors of the East India Company to the Government of Bombay,‡ relative to your appointment as Her Majesty's Consul for Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 15.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received February* 2.)

My Lord, *London, February* 1, 1848.

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch dated 31st January,§ inclosing copies of correspondence with the Court of Directors, and their despatch to the Bombay Government relative to my appointment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 5. † No. 7. ‡ Inclosure 2 in No. 12. § No. 14.

No. 16.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received March 31.)

My Lord, *Cairo, March 6, 1848.*

THE Island of Massowah being at present the sole route by which I shall be able to communicate with Aden, it is my intention to establish an agent there for the facilities of correspondence.

The presents destined for Ras Ali will also pass through that island.

On these grounds I have requested Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt to apply to his Highness the Pasha for a letter instructing his Governor in the above-mentioned place to afford me in those respects the consideration due to a Representative of the British Government passing through on the way to his post.

It would be very inconvenient should the Governor of Massowah insist upon examining my cases as the property of a private individual, when he would also probably exact duties on the articles destined as presents.

Should your Lordship consider that there is no material objection to the course I propose, I would beg that Mr. Murray should be authorized to apply for the letter in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 17.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 15, 1848.*

IN reply to your despatch of the 6th of March,* I have to acquaint you that Mr. Murray has been authorized to apply to the Egyptian Government for the usual facilities for the passage through Egypt, and any places under the control of that Government, of your baggage and effects, and of the presents with which you are charged.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 18.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received July 12.)

My Lord, *Aden, June 1, 1848.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 15th of April,† acquainting me that Mr. Murray has been authorised to procure from the Egyptian Government the order necessary for the passage of my effects through Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 19.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received October 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, August 15, 1848.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you of my arrival at Massowah on the 5th of August, with the presents destined for Abyssinia, in good order, in the Honourable Company's brig "Tigris."

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 16. † No. 17.

No. 20.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received October* 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, August* 16, 1848.

ON my voyage to Massowah I had the opportunity of paying a short visit to the harbour of Amphylla, situated about seventy miles to the southward. As a harbour it cannot compare with that of Massowah, though tolerable. The village now consists of but a few huts inhabited by savages of the Dancali and Taltal tribes, who acknowledge a nominal subjection to the Naib of Arkeeko. The country around is hot and dry, and I should think not so favourable with regard to water as the mainland near Massowah. The road from that port (of Amphylla) into the Christian Province of Tigré remains for me to explore, which I shall I trust be able to do on my return from the Court of Ras Ali. The practicability of inducing the caravans to adopt a new route will much depend upon some Chieftain of the family of Dejaj Sabagardis becoming paramount in Tigré, and adopting our views. Flocks, herds, and camels are plentiful in the neighbourhood of Amphylla. The report I formerly mentioned of a piece of ground on that coast having lately been purchased in the name of a French Company, and abandoned as useless, or perhaps on other grounds, is well founded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 21.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received October* 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, August* 16, 1848.

THE news I have learnt from the interior of Abyssinia informs me that the position of Ras Ali has become more imposing than before, inasmuch as he now receives tribute from all quarters, though his Government cannot be called stable. He seems disposed, I should say, to extinguish even the title of Emperor when he finds it practicable, and to make himself supreme in name as well as fact. The rains rendering the country at present impassable, I shall probably start in December, when I shall be able to inform your Lordship of the present disposition and influence of Oobeay, the Chief of Tigré, whom I shall visit on my way. Should a war break out between that Chief and Ras Ali, it will perhaps cause me to defer my departure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 22.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received October* 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, August* 16, 1848.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that a considerable change has taken place during my absence in the relative positions of the Naib of Arkeeko and the Egyptian Governor of Massowah.

The two claimants of the title of Naib having disputed, the Turkish Governor joined the one party with his forces, took the opposing Chief prisoner, and burnt down the town of Arkeeko. Their ally the Naib Mohammed as the price of assistance, and, in fact, being unable to do otherwise, has resigned his power into their hands (the Turks), who have in consequence fortified Arkeeko, and stationed troops at other points. The Governor who accomplished this was nominally disgraced by the Egyptian Government, but is still in Massowah, and I have reason to know that his conduct is privately approved of, and his reinstatement contemplated. The Shohos or natives of the hills in the neighbourhood have retired in most instances to their hills, refusing to submit to the Turkish rule. The Governor has at present about 500 troops (Nubians). It is evident that at no distant day all the claims of Turkey to the sovereignty of Abyssinia will be revived, so far, at least, as the levying of duties upon all articles of commerce, as if they were the produce of a Turkish province. Ibrahim Pasha has, I understand, already ordered that a duty of 12 per cent. be levied upon mules that come from Abyssinia.

The deposed Naib has little hope of ever recovering his liberty and power, the nominated Naib I should think none.

There is a harbour on the mainland two miles north of Massowah, commodious and safe; should your Lordship decide that the Turkish Government be not entitled to levy duties on the mainland that they have never previously occupied, nor to force all caravans (by armed bodies) to enter the Island of Massowah; it would be a spot well adapted for the encouragement of a more enlarged commerce. I shall on further investigation be able to furnish your Lordship, I trust, with fuller information on these subjects, in which nothing decisive need be done until my return from the interior, unless, indeed, your Lordship should consider it necessary to take an occasion to define more clearly the boundary of the independent State of Abyssinia and the right of the Turkish Government, on account of the possession of one harbour, to claim the entire coast, and thus the monopoly of the commerce of this quarter of Africa. With regard to this harbour being the one best adapted in point of situation for communication with Abyssinia, I have seen nothing to alter my opinion on that point. The Turkish Government has lately been pursuing a somewhat milder policy with the Abyssinian merchants.

I have learnt that an expedition was planned for the invasion of Hamaseyn (the northernmost Christian Province of Abyssinia) by troops from this place and Souakim, which was interrupted by the sickness of Mohammed Ali, and the change in the Egyptian Government; and also that it is the intention of that Government to repossess themselves of all the country on this coast formerly conquered by Sultan Selim. That it was with such views that the Government of this place was given over to the Pashalic of Egypt, I have no doubt, and were it again placed under the Pashalic of Djeddah as before, these ambitious views would be more easily checked, as the Turkish troops would have to cross the sea to carry them into effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 23.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received October* 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, August* 17, 1848.

AN Italian under the British protection is now at Massowah, who had formed in Egypt the idea that an establishment at Amphylla would be the means of diverting the trade from Massowah to that place if under efficient protection, as claims would immediately be set up by the Turkish Government otherwise. He had formed the project of purchasing the land near the watering place, and having found it feasible, requested me to inform him how far the English Government would support him in his rights to a free trade there, and to the land purchased from the proprietor, a relative of the Naib of Arkeeko. I told him that I had no authority to promise any such protection, but that I would communicate with your Lordship on the subject.

Lieutenant Lefèvre has lately visited Amphylla, and the elder M. d'Abbadie has, I understand, prepared a plan of the place, and some proposition relating to it for his Government, probably for the purchase of it nominally by some individuals. I cannot venture to offer any suggestion to your Lordship on this point, it being so intimately connected with our political relations with Constantinople; but I shall act as quickly as possible on any instructions I may receive.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 24.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 14, 1848.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 17th of August last* respecting a proposed establishment at Amphylla, I have to state to you that I must have some more specific information as to the plan in question, as to its practicability and objects, and as to the person proposing it, before I can form any opinion on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

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* No. 23.

No. 25.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received October 27.)

My Lord, *Massowah, September 17, 1848.*

THE Governor of Massowah has received a duty of 12 per cent. upon mules loaded by a French vessel for Bourbon, that did not enter the island of Massowah. The protest of the French Consular Agent was grounded upon the illegal amount of the duty exacted.

It would be, perhaps, premature in my present position were I to enter into any discussion with the Governor of Massowah, as to the extent of his jurisdiction, until I receive some instructions from your Lordship on that subject. Should, therefore, a British ship arrive while I am here for a similar purpose, I shall content myself with noting the particulars of the payment, and informing the Governor that I shall reclaim the amount as an illegal exaction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 26.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received October 27.)

My Lord, *Massowah, September 17, 1848.*

WITH reference to the Naibs of Arkeeko I have the following particulars:—

The Naib Mohammed, who is now in possession of power under the Turks, is the son of Naib Ayr, the younger; and the Naib Hassan, who is in confinement in Massowah, is the son of Naib Idris, the elder of two brothers, who succeeded each other in authority. The Turks paid till within the last fifteen months 1,000 dollars per month to the Naibs, and their occupation of Arkeeko and the mainland was solely effected to avoid this payment. The Naib Mohammed has now, as the price of their assistance against the Naib Hassan, given up to them all but the name of his authority. The Naib Mohammed being at some distance, and the Naib Hassan in confinement, I have been unable to procure any documents connected with the above facts, if any exist.

An army of Egyptian troops to aid in effecting further conquests, is openly spoken of as expected. Should there be any prospect of causing the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops from the main land, I think that either Naib upon our acknowledgment of his authority might be induced to enter into a favourable Treaty with us. In this case the bay two miles to the northward of Massowah appears to me to offer even superior advantages as a harbour, and equal in other points.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

1849.

No. 27.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received February* 1, 1849.)

My Lord, *Massowah, October* 29, 1848.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that since my arrival here the duties upon all imports from India or Arabia purchased by British subjects appear to have been equitably levied according to Treaty.

On goods imported from Abyssinia duties are levied according to the arbitrary pleasure of the Governor, amounting in some instances, including irregular fees and presents, to 25 and even 30 per cent. on the value.

In all questions, as far as I can learn, regarding merchandize, Abyssinia is regarded by the Egyptian Government as a tributary Province.

The monopolies of gum and senna having been removed, a duty of 12 per cent. is now levied upon these articles.

The duty of 12 per cent. was paid by the captain of a French merchant-vessel on a cargo of mules, under protest from the French Consular Agent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 28.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received February* 1, 1849.)

My Lord, *Massowah, October* 29, 1848.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the Chief of the Catholic mission in Abyssinia has been expelled by the Prince of Tigré; also that another branch of that mission, with a Bishop destined for the Galla countries, having failed in the design of reaching Shoa by way of Tajoura, a church is about to be established at Zehla by its members, if possible.

I believe that they count much upon protection from the English Government in their undertaking.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 29.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received February* 1, 1849.)

My Lord, *Massowah, October* 29, 1848.

I BEG to inform your Lordship that, having been in communication with Dejaj Oobeay, the present Ruler of Tigré, he has written to me, expressing his earnest wish to be on the most friendly terms with the English nation, and his readiness to forward me with all due respect to Ras Ali, who is anxiously expecting my arrival.

He has expressed his wish also that some means could be devised for the more efficient protection of the Abyssinian traders, through my intervention on the coast, and his astonishment at the encroachment of the Turkish Government on the coast. I trust he is sincere, and am making arrangements for starting on my journey next month.

After an interview or two with Dejaj Oobeay, I shall be able to inform your Lordship how far his views extend, and whether he is ready to co-operate in effecting a more enlarged communication with his nation. As the most powerful Chief in Abyssinia, after the Ras, his goodwill is important.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 30.

Viscount Palmerston to Mr. C. A. Murray.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 17, 1849.

IT would appear, from the inclosed copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Plowden,* that excessive duties are arbitrarily levied at Massowah on goods imported from Abyssinia. It is not quite clear from Mr. Plowden's despatch whether British subjects have suffered from such exactions. But I have to instruct you to endeavour to ascertain whether any British subjects have so suffered; and if they have, you will remind the Egyptian Government that the Treaties between Great Britain and the Porte strictly limit the amount of duties which can be levied upon goods imported by British subjects into Turkey from foreign countries to 3 per cent. import duty, with an additional 2 per cent. in lieu of internal duties, on such goods being sold in Turkey, or being sent into the interior for sale: and you will say that Her Majesty's Government consider Abyssinia to be a foreign country as regards Turkey; but that even if it were a possession of the Sultan, which it is not, the amount of duties which could be properly levied on Abyssinian produce exported and bought by British merchants, would fall far short of what Mr. Plowden reports to be the amount levied at Massowah on the trade in Abyssinian produce at the present time.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 31.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received March* 3, 1849.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 10, 1848.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that, since the occupation of the mainland in the neighbourhood of Massowah by the Egyptian troops, regarding which I have already written, the Naib has become so entirely subject to the Governor of Massowah, and has so completely resigned the appearance of the authority he possessed two years since, that unless some considerable change occurs, such as the abandonment of this island by the Egyptian Government or other, I see at present no chance of dealing with the Naib as an independent Ruler.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 32.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received February* 1, 1849.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 10, 1848.

IN further reference to the establishment of a commercial intercourse viâ Amphylla, with the interior of Abyssinia, I think it probable that the Ruler of Tigré would do his part in opening the road, and at least it would be attempted, if unsuccessful; but the same difficulty arises on the coast regarding the want of an established Ruler with whom Treaties might be entered into; as since the extinction, so to speak, of the Naibs, there is no pretence of a Government at Amphylla over the few fishermen or Bedouins who have built their huts there: the Turks might of course lay the same claim to it that they do even to Abyssinia, but they have not hitherto occupied it.

The harbour or roadstead of Amphylla is far easier of access than that of Massowah, though inferior to the latter in all other points, and I would suggest, if it could be done without inconvenience, that a correct survey of, and Report on, the harbour and the water on the neighbouring mainland, be ordered by Her Majesty's Government during my absence in the interior.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 27.

No. 33.

Sir J. Hobhouse to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received March* 2.)

My Lord, *India Board, March* 1, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to transmit for your information a copy of two letters, dated the 28th of January, addressed by the Political Agent at Aden, one to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, and the other to the Government of Bombay, reporting an irruption made by the Abyssinian army of Ras Oobeay into the territory in the neighbourhood of Massowah claimed by the Turks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN HOBHOUSE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 33.

Captain Haines to the Secretary to the Secret Committee.

Sir, *Aden, January* 28, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to forward copies of my latest letters to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay in duplicate, as per margin, and to report that the neighbourhood of Aden is tranquil.

This morning I received intelligence from Massowah, and though not far from Her Britannic Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, who is in Adowa, still dependence may be placed in it, as I have it from native sources I can rely on. The following is the statement from Massowah, dated January 12, 1849.

Ras Oobeay having issued orders to collect tribute, a force of between 8,000 and 12,000 Abyssinians, under the command of Kog Kong, made a sudden inroad into the Turkish possessions, visiting Moncooloo on the coast; from whence with difficulty M. de Goutier, the French Consul, and family made their escape, and are now located on an island with some 10,000 natives who have fled there for safety. Mr. Plowden's, the British Consul's house, was plundered and destroyed; also M. de Goutier's, and a small Roman Catholic Chapel, and their servants made prisoners.

The town of Arkeeko was also plundered; and his Excellency Halil Bey, Governor, is in dread of the plunderers visiting Massowah, having under his command only 400 Turkish soldiers.

The Abyssinian army have killed and maimed several hundreds of their own countrymen, taken 500 as slaves, and stolen about 10,000 head of cattle.

It is my intention to immediately despatch the Company's brigantine of war "Tigris," to watch proceedings and to render any assistance Mr. Plowden or others, including our Indian merchants, may require.

I have, &c.
(Signed) S. B. HAINES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 33.

Captain Haines to the Chief Secretary to Bombay Government.

Sir, *Aden, January* 28, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that since closing my general report of to-day, I have received native intelligence from Massowah, in which I place confidence, and have consequently informed the Secret Committee of it by to-day's mail, as Mr. Plowden, Her Majesty's Consul, is at Adowa, and has not written.

2. The following are the particulars:—Ras Oubie ordered the levy of revenue, and a body of between 8,000 and 12,000 Abyssinians (chiefly cavalry) made an inroad into the territory claimed by the Turks. They first visited Moncooloo, and committed devastation and plundered all around, burnt Mr. Plowden's house, then attacked and ransacked M. de Goutier's (French Consul) house (who fortunately escaped with his family to an island, where some 10,000 people have also fled) and destroyed it; as also a Roman Catholic Chapel erected by a M. Jacobi. The Abyssinian force then plundered the town of Arkeeko, and in all appear to have slaughtered about 500 people, taking as slaves 500 more, with a booty of 10,000 head of cattle. On the 12th of January (the latest intelli-

gence) they were bivouacked not far from Massowah on the mainland, and the Turkish Governor was rather alarmed, as he has *in toto* only 400 soldiers under his command.

3. I have requested the services of the Company's brigantine "Tigris" to proceed to Massowah to render any assistance in her power to Her Majesty's Consul and others residing there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) S. B. HAINES.

No. 34.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received March* 3, 1849.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 10, 1848.

SHOULD it be found impossible to open any other route for commercial pursuits than that of Massowah now frequented, and should I succeed in concluding the desired Treaty with the Ras of Abyssinia, I would beg to suggest that perhaps the best way of carrying out that Article of it in which we engage to keep open as far as possible the approaches and the coast, would be to place under the protection of the British flag at Massowah all Christian Abyssinian merchants, with, of course, their own consent, and enrolment of their names.

I, of course, can only throw out the idea, as I do not know how far an agreement to this effect with the Egyptian or Turkish Government would be practicable.

It would be the more feasible, as the Christian merchants of Abyssinia do not deal in slaves.

In case Her Majesty's Government should think this idea not unworthy of notice, I would beg to mention that any Agreement or Convention of the kind would be more complete in its effect did it include a distinct statement of the boundaries of Christian Abyssinia, and a rate of duties to be paid on all goods by the Christians of Abyssinia.

I write thus early on this subject, as I would request your Lordship to inform me how far I may sound the merchants on this subject, and lead them to look forward to our protection on the coast, earnestly desired, I think, by most of them.

I trust in a few days to proceed on my journey, having been delayed a fortnight by ill-health.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 35.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received March* 3, 1849.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 10, 1848.

WITH reference to the manner in which the trade of this place is checked and injured by the unjust exactions of the Governor of Massowah, I beg to mention two or three facts. On the article of butter, in which there is a large traffic with the opposite coast, a duty of 20 per cent. is charged to the Abyssinian merchant who imports it; a further duty of 5 per cent., formerly exacted by the Naib, is now charged by the Turkish Governor; and further, 5 per cent. of fees are exacted by officials.

The person who weighs all goods at the Custom-house on account of the Government pays to the Government 700 dollars per annum, and charges the importing merchant 5 per cent. for performing this duty.

The net profits of the port, after all expenses, amount to from 30,000 to 40,000 dollars per annum, of which the Egyptian Government probably may receive one-half.

The distance, the small and timorous population, render the Governor here nearly absolute, insomuch that no one dares to buy or sell, nor can I obtain workmen to work, or the smallest convenience, without his permission is obtained. Had I a cause of complaint, it is probable even that with some Governors I should find it difficult to forward my letters.

I trust, on my return from the interior, to be able to point out some remedies for this unsalutary state of things, and doubt not of the support of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 36.

Mr. Addington to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 10, 1849.

I AM directed by Viscount Palmerston to transmit to you an extract of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah,* suggesting the expediency of a survey being made of the port of Amphylla; and I am to request that you will lay this paper before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for their consideration, in the event of a survey of the coasts of the Red Sea being ordered by the Board.

I am, &c.

(Signed) H. U. ADDINGTON.

No. 37.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Mr. Addington.—(Received March 21.*)*

Sir, *Admiralty, March* 20, 1849.

HAVING laid before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your letter of the 10th instant,† transmitting an extract of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah suggesting the expediency of a survey being made of the port of Amphylla, for their Lordships' consideration, in the event of a survey of the coasts of the Red Sea being undertaken by their Lordships, I am commanded by my Lords to acquaint you, for the information of Viscount Palmerston, that at present their Lordships have not any Surveyors in the East Indies. Their Lordships' Hydrographer has, however, examined the survey of the Red Sea made by the officers of the East India Company, and finds that the ports in question are duly marked there, but on too small a scale to answer the Consul's views.

Their Lordships desire me to add that, if the object is of consequence, Lord Palmerston perhaps might induce the Court of Directors of the East India Company to send a vessel from Bombay to execute this survey.

I am, &c.

(Signed) H. G. WARD.

No. 38.

Viscount Palmerston to Sir J. Hobhouse.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 28, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to state to you that I called the attention of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty† to a suggestion made by Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, that if the Board of Admiralty should undertake any survey in the Red Sea, such survey should specifically be extended to the port of Amphylla, which is represented as being of easier access than that of Massowah, and as being likely therefore to be of considerable importance with a view to the establishment of commercial intercourse with the interior of Abyssinia.

I have since been informed by the Board of Admiralty that the Admiralty have not at the present moment any surveyors in the East Indies, and that the Admiralty Hydrographer, upon examining the survey of the Red Sea made by the officers of the East India Company, finds that the port in question is duly marked thereon, but on too small a scale to answer the purposes referred to by Mr. Consul Plowden.

Under these circumstances, and considering that it would be desirable that a more exact survey of the port of Amphylla should be made, I should wish to know from you whether such a survey could, without much inconvenience, be made by some of the [redacted] belonging to the East India Company.

I am, &c.

(Signed) PALMERSTON.

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* No. 32.

† No. 36.

No. 39.

Sir J. Hobhouse to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received March* 30.)

My Lord, *India Board, March* 29, 1849.

WITH reference to my letter of the 1st instant,* I have to acquaint your Lordship that, by a despatch dated the 26th ultimo, the Political Agent at Aden has informed the Secret Committee of the East India Company, that at Massowah all is again quiet, the Abyssinian army having returned to their mountains on the payment of 12,000 German crowns by the Turkish Governor. Her Majesty's Consul was eight days' journey inland, and his despatches had not reached the Company's brigantine "Tigris," but were daily expected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN HOBHOUSE.

No. 40.

Mr. C. A. Murray to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received April* 2.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, March* 18, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch dated the 17th of February last,† with an inclosure from Mr. Consul Plowden, instructing me to make certain representations to the Egyptian Government in respect to illegal exactions levied at Massowah by the Governor of that town.

On applying to Artin Bey concerning this subject, I was informed by him that Massowah is no longer under the administration of the Egyptian Viceroy, having been lately restored to the Sublime Porte; I shall therefore forward a copy of your Lordship's despatch and of its inclosure to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, leaving it to his Excellency to make the requisite representations to the Sublime Porte.

No. 41.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 6, 1849.

I HAVE received your despatches to that of the 10th of December inclusive.

With reference to your despatch of that date‡ I have to acquaint you that any protection which a British Consul at Massowah could properly under present circumstances afford to natives of Abyssinia at that place, must be unofficial. Any attempt to do more would involve Her Majesty's Government in many difficulties and embarrassing discussions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 42.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received April* 18.)

My Lord, *Adowa, January* 27, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship of my arrival in safety thus far, with the presents destined for Ras Ali. Though suffering from a severe illness I have been able to pay a visit to Dejaj Oobeay, the Chief of Tigré, at his residence in Lemen, four days' journey, and having been well received by him, have obtained his promise of protection and convoy through his territories. The Abyssinian Christian merchants have hailed my arrival with joy, and I believe intend, through Ras Ali, to petition for the British protection at Massowah. I leave this, if strong enough, to-morrow for the interior, and though some difficulties still await me, as no effort shall be spared on

* No. 33. † No. 30.

‡ No. 34.

my part, I trust soon to send to your Lordship an account of my safe arrival at the camp of the Ras.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 43.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received April* 18.)

My Lord, *Adowa, January* 27, 1849.

I HAVE to inform your Lordship that since my departure for Massowah the forces of Dejaj Oobeay have made a descent upon the coast, declaring that the Turkish troops, by occupying the mainland, had trespassed upon the ancient dominions of Abyssinia, and had, by crushing the Naib, prevented that Chief from paying to Dejaj Oobeay his accustomed tribute. They burnt the town of Moncooloo; my house with the rest; but this, I believe, from what I can learn, was the effect of the malice with which I am regarded by many of the inhabitants of Massowah, partly from fear and partly from fanaticism.

It is probable that succours will be sent from Egypt to the Governor of Massowah, who will use them for further conquests. It would be well, should the occasion be now taken to settle the question of their rights in this quarter, and if, as is probable, the Chief of Tigré should address a letter to Her Majesty on the subject, I trust that your Lordship will give it prompt consideration. In the meantime, I would beg your Lordship to send an energetic message to Massowah regarding any interception of my correspondence, or threatening and ill-usage of my messengers, as without this the arrival of my letters will be uncertain; and the last messenger I sent reports that he was even threatened with death by the inhabitants.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 44.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received April* 18.)

(Extract.) *Adowa, January* 28, 1849.

THE Chief of Tigré demands that the Turks should not quit the Island of Massowah, and that the Naib ruling the coast, as heretofore, should pay tribute to the Abyssinians. The Naib at present has retired to the mountains, refusing to enter Massowah.

I trust that if the Chief of Tigré should claim your Lordship's protection, it will be afforded decisively, by declaring that the English Government do not consider the possession of the Island of Massowah to involve any authority over the coast, and that the Turks or others who have now suffered in consequence of residing on the main land have no right to claim reparation except as private individuals. This point carried would lead to the appointment of the Naib by Dejaj Oobeay, and the Naib residing on the coast would soon learn to respect our commerce in any port on the main land that might be selected.

No. 45.

Mr. C. A. Murray to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received April* 18.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, April* 5, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch recently addressed by me to his Excellency Sir Stratford Canning, relative to the subject of Mr. Consul Plowden's despatches dated Adowa, January 27 and 28, 1849,* which reached me under flying seal on the 23rd ultimo, and are forwarded to your Lordship by this mail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CH. A. MURRAY.

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* Nos. 42, 43, and 44.

Inclosure in No. 45.

Mr. C. A. Murray to Sir S. Canning.

Sir, *Cairo, March* 25, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of three despatches from Her Majesty's Consul for Abyssinia, addressed to Lord Palmerston, and forwarded through me under flying seal.*

Your Excellency will observe that, as the towns of Massowah and Souakin are now under the direct government of the Porte, whatever representations Her Majesty's Government may think fit to make in consequence of the information sent by Mr. Plowden will be made through the Embassy; wherefore I have thought it my duty to take the earliest opportunity of transmitting these papers to your Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CH. A. MURRAY.

No. 46

Viscount Palmerston to Sir S. Canning.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 23, 1849.

I HAVE been informed by Mr. Consul-General Murray that he has transmitted to your Excellency copies of Mr. Consul Plowden's despatches from Adowa, dated the 27th and 28th January,* respecting an attack made from Abyssinia on the territories on the mainland, near Massowah.

In one of these despatches Mr. Plowden alludes to a supposed intention on the part of the Abyssinian Christian merchants to petition for British protection at Massowah. Mr. Plowden had already touched upon this point in a previous despatch, of which I inclose a copy for your Excellency's information;† and you will perceive by the inclosed copy of my reply to Mr. Plowden,‡ that I consider that a British Consul at Massowah could not without great inconvenience interfere otherwise than unofficially in favour of these persons.

With regard to the wish expressed by Mr. Plowden in his despatch of the 27th January,§ that measures should be taken to prevent his correspondence being intercepted at Massowah, your Excellency will apply to the Turkish Government for instructions to their authorities at Massowah to that effect.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 47.

Mr. C. A. Murray to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received June 5.)

My Lord, *Cairo, May* 21, 1849.

ON examining the messenger who brought the document herewith inclosed, I have satisfied myself that it really is a missive from the young King of Shoa.

If credit may be given to the statement of the messenger, the young King has, of late, considerably increased his power and influence, and has compelled Ras Ali and others of the neighbouring rival Princes to succumb or retire. On this head it is probable that more certain advices will arrive from Mr. Consul Plowden.

The messenger says that the presents from the young King to Her Majesty have been sent by way of Aden. I believe that the animal called "koba" in the translation is nothing more nor less than the rhinoceros; it seems to be an error of the translator, as the koba is a much smaller animal, and its horns are not considered useful or valuable.

The messenger is about to pursue his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and I have promised him that on his return he should have a reply to the King's letter, which promise I trust your Lordship will enable me to fulfil.

The letter is in the Amharic language; possibly there may be scholars in London capable of making a better translation than the one herewith inclosed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHAS. A. MURRAY.

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* Nos. 42, 43, and 44. † No. 34. ‡ No. 41. § No. 43.

Inclosure in No. 47.

The King of Shoa to Her Majesty the Queen.

(Translation.)

This letter is sent from the King of Shoa, Beshshaheh Ouerid, for the Queen of England.

Madam,

I PRESENT you all my respects. You well know that my father was your good friend, and I, I am his son.

I am about to reproach you because you did not write to me or send any one to me at the death of my father, but now I beg you to send me 1,500 dollars, if there are of gold I wish the same amount of gold.

I hope that the mission may be rapidly made by Dr. Krapf, and your officers who are with him, as far as Massowah.

Madam, I hope you will not neglect to write to me for all things you desire to have. I will send them to you with the greatest pleasure as far as Aden.

[NOTE.—Dr. Krapf is a German missionary who was for some time resident in the Kingdom of Shoa, and who is now supposed to be engaged in a Mission to Zanzibar.]

Private Instructions conveyed by the Messenger.

I will send as far as to Aden twenty-six elephants' tusks and thirty-one kobas' horns.

I also beg that you will send me persons who can make a crown, and make cannons, and paint pictures, and build palaces.

Translation of the preceding Letter made by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Superscription.—For the Sovereign Lady.*

MAY this diploma,† sent from Bashâh Ourad, King of Shoa, safely reach the Queen of the country of the Franks.‡ How is your Majesty in health? Now my father was your Majesty's friend, and I am his son reigning since his death. Why is it that your Majesty has not sent to me one young man of your attendants? Now then if there be 1,000 or 500 pieces of silver or gold at hand, put them in charge of the young man Krapf, and let your Majesty send them to me speedily by him, as a friendly gift.§

Let your Majesty inform me of your wishes. I will send over as far as Aden.

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* Literally: "It belongs to," or "it is for," "the Lady." As the word translated Lady, though applied also to inferior rank, is used by subjects of their Sovereign, I have thought "Sovereign Lady" the fairest translation of it here. In the body of the letter, where the word Majesty is introduced, there is no distinct word bearing that sense in the Amharic text; but, as the honorific forms of nouns and verbs are used, it seemed the fairest way of representing the meaning of them to make use of the title that we are accustomed to apply to royalty.

† "Official letter," "despatch."

‡ The word in Amharic here is "Farage," which I cannot doubt to be a mere casual mistake for "Farange," or, as it is sometimes expressed in Roman letters, "Feringe,"—the well-known appellation of the nations of Western Europe in the East.

§ This sentence, in which the main point and substance of the whole letter lies, is unhappily so deficient in grammatical construction and connexion that I am unable to give a literal translation of it. I have set-down above what appears to me to be its general purport.

The word which I suppose to be a proper name, "Krapf," is written "Kramf," and there is an erasure in it as though it had been at first intended to spell it differently. This is easily accounted for, if Krapf is the name intended, there being no "p," properly speaking, in the Amharic alphabet, though a substitute is used for it by the learned. Mr. Krapf was a missionary in Abyssinia, who, from his knowledge of the language, was very useful to Captain Harris during his residence there.

The observations that I have made about irregularity of construction and consequent obscurity and uncertainty of the sense, apply also to the clause, "and I am his son, reigning since his death."

No. 48.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received June* 28.)

My Lord, *Debra Tabor, March* 3, 1849.

I INCLOSE a letter to myself from Dejaj Oobeay, Chief of Tigré, with a translation annexed, containing a request for some European masons to build him a church. As Dejaj Oobeay is a man of his word, I have little doubt that he will treat them well and with liberality. As he has received me with every respect, and has shown every desire for our friendship, I would recommend that Her Majesty's Government send him the workmen he desires, even should they be guaranteed a certain sum per annum.

The Chief of Tigré has up to this time shown the greatest contempt for all Europeans, and I may say that I have effected in our favour a complete change in his ideas; of this I trust that your Lordship will take present advantage, which can most effectually be done by meeting his wishes. Should your Lordship be of my opinion, I would recommend that one man of creditable attainments as an architect and, if possible, bridge builder, be sent as chief, with four assistants, who should understand stone-cutting and the making of bricks; they should be amply provided with instruments for these purposes and for building; should a carpenter be added for the wood-work, it would be better, with tools for felling trees, &c., a turning-lathe. After their arrival at Massowah I shall arrange for their reception in Abyssinia, even if still with Ras Ali, and if they should be sent, I trust with promptitude.

The request on the part of Dejaj Oobeay shows a high confidence in us, and it will be a good commencement of that friendly intercourse between the two nations that is desired by Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 48.

Dejaj Oobeay to Consul Plowden.

(Translation.)

Dejaj Oobeay, greeting, to Mr. Plowden,

IF you can find five or three workmen if possible at Massowah, if not by sending to your country, builders or masons, bring them for me; if they wish for lands or appointments I will give them plenty; if they wish for wages I will give them wages and take care of them.

No. 49.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received June* 28.)

My Lord, *Debra Tabor, March* 3, 1849.

WITH reference to my despatches of the 27th and 28th January last* I have now the honour to inclose a letter from Dejaj Oobeay, with a translation annexed, requesting the assistance and interference of Her Majesty in regard to his claims upon the coast of the Red Sea, and the late descent of his forces in the direction of Massowah. I trust that your Lordship will take immediate occasion of this opportunity for deciding the question between the Abyssinians and the Governor of Massowah, in favour of the former, which will put us at liberty to choose a favourable harbour for our commerce and intercourse with Abyssinia. Should your Lordship so arrange this affair as that the Turkish Government should lay no claim to anything beyond the Island of Massowah, the rest may be safely left to me, and I trust that your Lordship will assist me thus far and promptly, as it may be long before so favourable an opportunity presents itself, or any European obtain the influence I now possess in these countries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* Nos. 43 and 44.

Inclosure in No. 49.

Dejaj Oobeay to Her Majesty the Queen.

(Translation.)

DEJAJ OOBEAY, greeting, to Her Majesty Victoria, Queen of the English:—

Formerly my ancestors were in possession of, and governed all the coast of the Red Sea and Massowah; recently when we quarrelled amongst ourselves, the Turks took possession of Massowah. After this, two years back, they also sent troops to the mainland, and occupied Moncooloo and Arkeeko. The Naib of Arkeeko being thus prevented from paying me my usual tribute, I this year sent down my forces and drove the Turks back into the Island of Massowah. You are a Christian Queen, and the friend of Christians; you are powerful, and I now request your assistance and friendship, that you will not permit the Mahommedan forces to ravage and occupy my territories, but will insist on their remaining content with the possession of the Island of Massowah (though that even they have no right to), without setting foot on the mainland, or interfering with the Naib that I appoint at Arkeeko and the coast. My soldiers, by mistake and from ignorance, burnt the house of your Consul at Moncooloo for which I was sorry. I wish much for the friendship of the English, and trust that you will now show the sincerity of your good-will towards Abyssinia.

No. 50.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received June 28.)

My Lord, *Debra Tabor, March* 3, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship of my safe arrival at this place, the residence of Ras Ali, on the 27th February.

The next day I presented the gifts of Her Majesty to the Ras, with the accompanying letter, everything has arrived in good order.

The Ras was much delighted with the present, and expressed his intention to do everything in his power to retain the friendship of myself and of the English nation. I hinted but lightly at a Treaty and its advantages, as I rather wish the proposal to come in part from himself. To all he replied that he would talk matters over with me at leisure, with continued assurances of friendship and good-will. I doubt not that I shall induce him to sign the Treaty, though I am not so sure of obtaining his consent to the signature of the Emperor, with whom he is now at variance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 51.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received June 28.)

My Lord, *Debra Tabor, March* 5, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your despatch of the 14th October, 1848.* The person proposing an establishment at Amphylla, is at present in the interior of Abyssinia. Should I obtain any further information from him regarding his views, I shall communicate it immediately.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 52.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 3, 1849.

I HAVE received your despatches to that of the 5th of March inclusive.

With reference to the request from Dejaj Oobeay, contained in his letter to the

* No. 24.

Queen inclosed in your despatch of the 3rd of March,* that the British Government would support his claims on certain portions of the coast of the Red Sea, I have to state to you that this is a matter with which it would not be advisable for Her Majesty's Government at present to meddle.

I have accordingly addressed the inclosed letter to Dejaj Oobeay in reply to his letter to the Queen, and I have to instruct you to forward it to that Chief, with a translation made from the copy of it herewith transmitted to you.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Viscount Palmerston to Dejaj Oobeay.

Foreign Office, July 3, 1849.

I AM commanded by the Queen to acquaint you that Her Majesty has received your letter,† in which you request her assistance in support of your claims to the possession of certain districts on the coast of the Red Sea near Massowah, which you state to have been occupied and ravaged by the Turkish forces. The Queen commands me to assure you that she would gladly do anything which might be agreeable to you in this respect if the circumstances of the case admitted of her supporting your claims. But the Sultan of Turkey is also a friend of the Queen, and it is inconsistent with the principles which regulate Her Majesty's conduct towards other Powers to pronounce an opinion on any point on which her friends are at issue without being previously applied to by both the dissentient parties. The Queen accepts the expression of your regret for the damage occasioned to the property of her servant at Moncooloo by the conduct of your soldiers, and she desires me to assure you that she takes a lively interest in your welfare, and that she will always rejoice to hear through her servant Plowden that you are in the enjoyment of good health and worldly prosperity.

I subscribe, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 53.

Viscount Palmerston to Sir S. Canning.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 3, 1849.

YOUR Excellency will have seen in Mr. Consul Plowden's despatches of the 27th and 28th January of this year,‡ of which copies were forwarded to you by Mr. Murray, that the Abyssinians under Dejaj Oobeay had made a descent on the coast of the Red Sea, opposite to the Island of Massowah, with the view of expelling the Turks from the places which they occupied in that quarter.

I received, a few days ago, from Mr. Plowden, a further despatch on this subject, inclosing a letter from Dejaj Oobeay to the Queen requesting Her Majesty's assistance in support of his claims to the district in question. I inclose, for your Excellency's information, copies of those papers, and of a letter which I have addressed to Dejaj Oobeay;§ and I have to instruct your Excellency to endeavour to ascertain on what grounds the respective claims of the Porte and of the Abyssinians to the district in question are supposed to rest.‖

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

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* No. 49. † Inclosure in No. 49. ‡ Nos. 43 and 44. § No. 49, and Inclosure; and Inclosure in No. 52.
‖ See further despatch dated June 7, 1850, No. 86.

No. 54.

Mr. Addington to the Secretary to the Commissioners of Woods.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 3, 1849.

I AM directed by Viscount Palmerston to transmit to you, to be laid before the Commissioners of Woods and Works, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia,* on the subject of a request made to him by the Chief of Tigré for the services of some European masons and workmen; and I am to request that the Commissioners of Woods and Works will have the goodness to acquaint Lord Palmerston whether it is possible to comply with this request, and if so what would be the probable cost.

I am, &c,
(Signed) H. U. ADDINGTON.

No. 55.

Viscount Palmerston to the King of Shoa.

Foreign Office, July 4, 1849.

I AM commanded by the Queen to acquaint you that Her Majesty has received the friendly letter† which your Agent delivered to the Consul-General Murray for transmission to England. The Queen thanks you for your inquiries after her health, and she hopes that you also are in good health, and that you will long continue to rule over the country which you have inherited from your late father. The Queen thanks you for the elephants' tusks and kobas' horns which your agent states that you have sent to Aden for Her Majesty, and she commands me in return to send you, in the gold coin of her country, the sum of money which you desire to receive.

With respect to your wish for the assistance of some men skilled in the arts, Her Majesty commands me to explain to you that the distance between England and your country is great, and the journey occupies much time; and, moreover, the workmen in her dominions are at present much employed: but if any should be at liberty at any future time and willing to go to Shoa, the Queen would be very glad that any of her subjects should be useful to you in any of the things which you mention.

With every wish for your personal welfare, I subscribe myself your sincere friend,
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 56.

Viscount Palmerston to Mr. C. A. Murray.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 4, 1849.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a letter which I have addressed to the King of Shoa‡ n reply to the letter from him to the Queen, which was inclosed in your despatch of the 21st of May.§

You will cause a translation of this letter to be made from the copy which I also send you, and you will deliver it, with the original letter, to the King of Shoa's agent on his return from Jerusalem.

I also inclose a packet containing 300 sovereigns, as mentioned in my letter to the King of Shoa, which you will deliver to the King's Agent, to be conveyed to his master.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 57.

Sir S. Canning to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received July 5.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 6, 1849.

I HAVE applied to the Turkish Government for Vizirial letters directing the authorities at Massowah and Souakin to protect the correspondence and messengers arriving

* No. 48. † Inclosure 1 in No. 47. ‡ No. 55. § No. 47.

there from Her Majesty's Consul, Mr. Plowden. I have not yet received an official reply, but Aali Pasha's language induces me to suppose that my application will soon be complied with.

I have, &c.
(Signed) STRATFORD CANNING.

No. 58.

Sir S. Canning to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received July 5.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 19, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith in translation a Vizirial letter, the original of which I have obtained and transmitted to Mr. Murray for the protection of Mr. Plowden's correspondence on its passage through the port of Massowah. I have endeavoured to provide for contingencies by getting it expressed in comprehensive terms, and applied to Souakin as well as to Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) STRATFORD CANNING.

Inclosure in No. 58.

Vizirial Letter addressed to Hassib Pasha.

(Traduction.) 19 *Regib,* 1265 (10 *Juin,* 1849).

L'AMBASSADE Britannique a demandé par un Tacrir que les autorités de la Sublime Porte dans les échelles de Massowah et de Souakin facilitent le transport de lettres et d'autres objets que les Agents du Gouvernement d'Angleterre qui se trouvent dans l'intérieur de l'Afrique expédient voie les échelles sus-mentionnées.

Donner une assistance complète dans des opérations de cette nature est une suite nécessaire des relations amicales qui existent heureusement entre la Sublime Porte et la Cour de la Grande Bretagne, et des Traités conclus entre les deux Gouvernements. Ainsi votre Excellence voudra bien donner des ordres rigoureux aux autorités des échelles susdites d'avoir à faciliter l'expédition des lettres et d'autres choses arrivées là; et à mettre tous leurs soins à donner dans ces occasions toutes espèces de protection et d'assistance. Et c'est à ces fins que j'écris la présente lettre à votre Excellence.

(Signé) MUSTAPHA RESHID.

No. 59.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 6, 1849.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 27th of January, I inclose, for your information, a copy of a Vizirial letter* which, at the request of Sir Stratford Canning, the Porte has addressed to the Pasha of Djeddah for the protection of your correspondence at Souakin and at Massowah.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 60.

Viscount Palmerston to Sir S. Canning.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 6, 1849

I HAVE to instruct your Excellency to thank the Turkish Government for the instructions which have been given to the Pasha of Djeddah, as reported in your despatch

* Inclosure in No. 58.

of the 19th of June,* for the protection of Mr. Consul Plowden's correspondence at Souakin and at Massowah.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 61.

Mr. Turner to Mr. Addington.—(Received July 14.)

Sir, *Office of Woods and Forests, July* 14, 1849.

I HAVE, on behalf of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, &c., to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant,† transmitting, by direction of Viscount Palmerston, a copy of a despatch from Mr. Plowden, Her Majesty's Consul at Abyssinia, on the subject of a request made to him by the Chief of Tigré, for the services of some English masons and builders, and inquiring whether it is possible to comply with such request, and what would be the probable cost.

I am, on behalf of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, &c., to acquaint you, for his Lordship's information, that the climate of Abyssinia, the expense of travelling, conveyance, residence, and personal maintenance, are so little known here, that any statement by this Board of the probable cost of such an establishment must be considered only as a proximate estimate of the expenditure to be incurred for the service described.

I am also to observe that the number of persons (three or five) mentioned in the letter to Mr. Consul Plowden appears to be too few to afford proper aid to each other, or to enable the Chief to form an adequate idea of the value of the services of English workmen, there being no class of workmen known as builders, and that carpenters and smiths must necessarily, for the purposes desired, accompany masons and bricklayers.

According to Mr. Plowden's recommendation a creditable architect, with a knowledge of bridge-building (a properly qualified professional officer), with his staff, will be required to meet the requisition. The personal services of such a staff would probably cost from 1,000*l.* to 1,500*l.* per annum, and their outfit with tools and machinery commensurate for effecting the Government's objects by such a mission would require an outlay of (say) 1,000*l.*; and a competent interpreter also seems to be an essential requisite for the success of such an enterprize.

If Lord Palmerston shall entertain Mr. Plowden's proposition for sending an English architect and artificers to the Chief of Tigré, it is submitted for his Lordship's consideration that the period and conditions of the proposed engagement should be distinctly ascertained, and that the parties should be at liberty to quit the service at their discretion, and be satisfied that, while employed, their personal safety and agreed-for remuneration would be secured; as without some such assurance it is doubtful whether respectable English mechanics would be induced to undertake such a service, for which none but men of good character in every respect can be fit.

I am likewise to state that the Board will ascertain whether either of the English foremen now at Constantinople can be dispensed with, in time for, and be induced to enter on, this service; and that the Board will defer taking other proceedings until they shall be apprized of the further views of Lord Palmerston on the subject.

(Signed A. TURNER.

No. 62.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 23, 1849.

I COMMUNICATED to the Commissioners of Woods and Works your despatch of the 3rd of March,‡ respecting the wish of Ras Oobeay that some workmen should be sent to him from England, and I inclose, for your information, an extract of a letter which has been received from that office in reply.§

Considering the difficulties and the expenses which would attend a compliance with Ras Oobeay's request, it is desirable that you should divert his thoughts from the notion of obtaining the assistance of English workmen; but, if you cannot do so, you must send me some more precise and specific information as to the purpose for which these persons

* No. 58. † No. 54. ‡ No. 48. § No. 61.

would be wanted, and as to the length of time during which they would be required to remain in Abyssinia.

It is possible that the assistance desired by Ras Oobeay might be obtained from India more easily than from England, and natives of that country would doubtless be quite competent to perform any services which the Ras might require of them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 63.

Mr. Addington to the Commissioners of Woods.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 23, 1849.

I AM directed by Viscount Palmerston to request that you will acquaint the Commissioners of Woods and Works, with reference to your letter of the 14th instant,* that it is not necessary at present to take any further steps in regard to the question of sending workmen to Abyssinia, which formed the subject of my letter of the 3rd instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) H. U. ADDINGTON.

No. 64.

Sir J. Hobhouse to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received July 31.)

My Lord, *India Board, July* 31, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your information, an extract, relating to Abyssinia, of a letter, dated the 7th ultimo, addressed by Lieutenant George Adams of the Indian navy to the East India Company's "Political Agent at Aden."

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN HOBHOUSE.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Lieutenant Adams, I.N., to the Political Agent at Aden.

(Extract.) *June* 7, 1849.

ABYSSINIA has been getting on quietly and well. Since the raid of Oobeay, nothing has occurred: however, a few days since, news came to Massowah that Carthsei, a dependent of Ras Ali, had refused to appear when called on by him to do so, and it was thought that disturbances would shortly break out in consequence, more especially as Oobeay is on good terms with Ras Ali and is said to be inciting him to fall upon Carthsei and seize his territories. Near Gondar, gold has been found in great quantities.

Massowah and Souakin are to be given over to the Sultan: Salim Effendi has arrived at Massowah, and the place is to be under his hands. The Sultan's troops have not yet arrived, but are expected some time this month, when Kaled Beg, the present Governor, goes to Cairo, and the Egyptian troops proceed to Abbas Pasha's district in Nubia.

A deputation of Indian merchants waited on me: they said they were well-treated, and that the duty charged on imports and exports was quite correct. I had previously waited on the Governor and Salem Effendi requesting them to protect and see respect shown to them, and which they said should be done.

M. de Goutier was to leave for Cairo on the 6th June, he having been relieved by M. Bolange who has been sent out by the French Government; the latter speaks a little English, but has no knowledge of Turkish or Arabic. M. le Fevre, who has been travelling for some years, has been recalled to France. The master of the French brig "Grenouille" has remained at Massowah for mercantile purposes.

The former French Consul and Mr. Stephen have made the town of Goob Ducnoo; they have discovered a number of hot springs at the lower end of the inlet, temperature of some, 142°, of others, 160°; also a small river, some temples (pillars of black granite), and the ruins of a large fortification. At Dissec, on the eastern side, silver ore was found.

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* No. 61.

No. 65.

Mr. C. A. Murray to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received August 20.)

My Lord, *Cairo, July* 25, 1849.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch dated the 4th instant,* inclosing a letter addressed to the King of Shoa,† as also of a separate packet containing 300 sovereigns; and I beg to assure you that, on the return from Jerusalem of the King of Shoa's messenger, I will not fail carefully to execute the whole of the instructions conveyed to me in your Lordship's despatch above named.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CH. A. MURRAY.

No. 66.

Mr. C. A. Murray to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received November 21.)

My Lord, *Cairo, November* 5, 1849.

IN a despatch dated the 4th July last* your Lordship instructed me to remit to the King of Shoa, by the hand of his messenger, 360*l.* sterling, which amount was forwarded to me simultaneously with the above-named despatch.

The said messenger was expected to return hither from his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the course of the month of September; but as October has now passed and nothing has been heard of him, I am apprehensive that some accident has happened to him by the way.

As the 300*l.* are still in my bureau, I wish to have your Lordship's instructions whether I am to retain them until further orders, or whether it is your pleasure that I should transmit them to Aden, to be forwarded to their destination by Captain Haines, Political Agent there, on the first safe and favourable occasion that may present itself.

In the event of the messenger's arrival before I receive a reply to this despatch, I shall follow your Lordship's original instructions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CH. A. MURRAY.

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* No. 56. + No. 55.

1850.

No. 67.

Viscount Palmerston to Mr. C. A. Murray.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 23, 1850.

AS I have heard nothing further from you since the date of your despatch of the 5th of November,* respecting the messenger of the King of Shoa, who was expected to return to Alexandria from Jerusalem in the month of September last, and who was to have conveyed to his master the letter and box of sovereigns transmitted to you in my despatch of the 4th of July,† I think it may be advisable that you should send the letter and box to the Resident of the East India Company at Aden, requesting him to retain possession of the same, until either a person is sent from Shoa authorized to receive them, or until some other suitable means should be found for forwarding them securely to Shoa, without any additional cost to Her Majesty's Government.

You will, at the same time, write a letter to the King of Shoa, acquainting him that the letter and box are at Aden, and requesting him to send some trustworthy person to that place to receive them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 68.

Mr. C. A. Murray to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received April 1.)

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 18, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 23rd of January last,‡ respecting the transmission to the King of Shoa of the letter and box of sovereigns referred to in my despatch of the 5th November last;* and I beg to inform your Lordship that, being still without news of the messenger of the King of Shoa, whose return to Alexandria from Jerusalem was expected in September last, I will lose no further time in carrying out the instructions conveyed in your Lordship's above-named despatch of the 23rd January, 1850.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CH. A. MURRAY.

No. 69.

Sir J. Hobhouse to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received April 1.)

My Lord, *India Office, March* 30, 1850.

IN reply to your Lordship's letter of the 28th of March, 1849,§ I have the honour to transmit, for your information, a copy of a letter dated the 28th instant, together with its inclosure, which I have received from the Secret Committee of the East India Company, relating to the proposed survey of Amphylla on the coast of Abyssinia.

I request that your Lordship will give directions for the return to me of the accompanying selection of papers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN HOBHOUSE.

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* No. 66. † No. 56. ‡ No. 67. § No. 38.

Inclosure in No. 69.

The Secret Committee to Sir J. Hobhouse.

Sir, *East India House, March* 28, 1850.

WE have had under consideration your letter of the 2nd of April, 1849, informing us that Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia has suggested the expediency of establishing Amphylla, on that coast, as a place of trade, stating, that to give effect to the suggestion, a more perfect survey than now exists of the port should be obtained; and requesting our opinion whether a re-survey can be made under the orders of the Government of India, without much inconvenience.

In reply, we have the honour to offer the following observations founded on a selection of papers respecting Amphylla and Massowah, which we have caused to be made.

From the documents above referred to it appears that Amphylla is nearer to Babel Mandel than Massowah, though there is no difficulty in reaching the latter place, which is represented to be an excellent port; while the former, according to the information at present existing, does not appear to offer any advantages as a harbour, but to be, in fact, a mere open roadstead.

Amphylla may be viewed as the most central place for trade with the Tigrés, Gallas, and Shoas; tribes inhabiting the interior of Abyssinia. Formerly some trade was carried on by Abyssinians through Amphylla, but it was stopped by the Naib of Arkeeko, apparently with the concurrence, if not with the assistance of the Turkish authorities, to whom the Naib of Arkeeko is ostensibly subject in common with most of the other chiefs on this part of the coast, and now the inland trade of Abyssinia is rigidly confined to Massowah.

Amphylla itself, is represented to be "one of the most miserable places on the coast;" to be a village, situated on the verge of an extensive sandy plain, consisting of six huts and a population of thirty persons. Water can be procured at an inconvenient distance from the shore only. It is said to be "despicable" in regard to quantity, and little better in respect to quality. Of all stores requisite for shipping the place is entirely destitute.

In conclusion, we have the honour to observe, that, should it be deemed advisable to obtain further information respecting the capability of Amphylla as a port, we do not consider that a fresh survey of that part of the coast would be attended with inconvenience.

We have, &c.

(Signed) A. GALLOWAY.
JOHN SHEPHERD.
ROBERT CAMPBELL.

No. 70.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 4, 1850.

I REQUESTED the opinion of the President of the Board of Control on the suggestions respecting the expediency of a survey being made of the port of Amphylla, which were contained in your despatch of the 10th of December, 1848,* and I now inclose for your information a copy of a letter from the Secret Committee of the East India Company to Sir John Hobhouse, reporting on the capabilities of Amphylla as a port for trade.

I have to acquaint you that I consider that the facts stated in this paper are quite sufficient to show that Amphylla is no port, and that no further survey can be wanted.

I am, &c.

(Signed) PALMERSTON.

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* No. 32.

No. 71.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, April 2, 1850.*

I HAVE the honour to send the Treaty between Great Britain and Abyssinia, signed by his Highness Ras Ali. The seal of the Emperor at Gondar is affixed thereto, also by order of the Ras.

His remark on hearing the Treaty read was, that the proposals were excellent, but that probably in ten years one English merchant might trade to Gondar. It must be equally obvious to your Lordship that the Abyssinian nation being powerless on the coast, unless we in some striking way carry out that Article of the Treaty by which we are engaged to exert ourselves in opening a road and facilitating a mutual commerce, this Treaty will be as useless as the one effected with the late King of Shoa has hitherto been.

Her Majesty the Queen in ratifying this Treaty will acknowledge the Ras as an independent and friendly sovereign, and it does not appear inconsistent, that we should enforce those Articles in our Treaties with Turkey that relate to trade with independent nations through a port in the Sultan's dominions.

It would be well that a ratification of this Treaty be sent to the Ras to impress him with the reality of the transaction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 71.

*Treaty of Friendship and Commerce between Great Britain and Abyssinia.**

Signed in the English and Amharic languages, at Ennowga, November 2, 1849.

(Her Majesty's Ratification delivered to the Ras of Abyssinia, March 1, 1852.)

WHEREAS commerce is a source of great wealth and prosperity to all those nations who are firmly united in the bonds of reciprocal friendship; and whereas the conclusion of a Treaty of perpetual Amity and Commerce between Abyssinia and Great Britain, which has already been desired by their respective Sovereigns, would tend to the mutual advantage of both countries; and whereas it is desirable that the conditions should be specified whereupon the commercial intercourse betwixt the two nations should be conducted: Now it is hereby declared, done, and agreed as follows, between Walter Charles Metcalfe Plowden, Esquire, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul to His Majesty of Abyssinia, duly empowered to that effect by Her Britannic Majesty, and by His said Majesty of Abyssinia on the other part:

ARTICLE I.

A firm, free, and lasting friendship shall subsist between Her Most Gracious Majesty Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and her successors, on the one part, and His Majesty of Abyssinia and his successors, on the other part.

ARTICLE II.

For the purpose of preserving and strengthening the friendly relations subsisting between the two nations, His Majesty of Abyssinia and his successors shall receive and protect any Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul, whom Her Britannic Majesty or her successors may see fit to appoint; and shall preserve inviolate all the rights and privileges of such Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul.

ARTICLE III.

Her Britannic Majesty and her successors will, in the same manner, receive and protect any Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul, whom His Majesty of Abyssinia or his successors may see fit to appoint, and will equally preserve inviolate all the rights and privileges of such Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul.

* Laid before Parliament, June 17, 1852.

ARTICLE IV.

His Majesty of Abyssinia engages to grant to the subjects of Her Britannic Majesty, and to the produce and commerce of her dominions, all favours, privileges, advantages, or immunities, either as regards duties, imposts, or charges, or in any other respect whatsoever, which His Majesty of Abyssinia has already granted, or may hereafter grant, to the subjects, produce, or commerce of any other foreign country.

ARTICLE V.

An import duty of five for every hundred, and no more, may be levied and received by His Majesty of Abyssinia and his successors, upon all goods and merchandize imported by British subjects into the Kingdom of Abyssinia, for sale either therein or in the countries beyond.

ARTICLE VI.

This import duty of five for every hundred shall be assessed upon the current value of the merchandize at the market-place of Gondar, and shall be paid at the rate of five for every hundred, either in kind or in specie, at the option of the merchant.

ARTICLE VII.

When the said import duty shall have been duly paid, the importing merchant shall be at fully liberty to dispose of his goods at any place or places within the territories of Abyssinia, without any licence being required for the removal of the same, and without any prohibition, restraint, or further duty or impost of any kind being imposed upon the buyer; and the importing merchant may, if he pleases, carry away such goods to any other country or place, without any licence being required for the removal of the same, and without restraint or molestation, or the payment of any further duty or impost whatever.

ARTICLE VIII.

British merchants shall be at liberty to purchase within the territories of Abyssinia all such commodities as they may think proper to buy, whether such commodities are the produce of those territories, or have been imported into those territories from other countries; and the said merchants may freely export the same without the payment of any duty whatever.

ARTICLE IX.

The subjects of His Majesty of Abyssinia shall have in the United Kingdom the advantages which are already enjoyed, or which may hereafter be enjoyed, by the subjects of the most favoured nation; and no higher or other duties shall be imposed on the importation into the United Kingdom, of goods the produce of Abyssinia, than are or shall be payable upon the like goods the produce of any other foreign country imported in like manner.

ARTICLE X.

A commercial intercourse shall be allowed and encouraged betwixt the subjects of Abyssinia and of the countries beyond that kingdom, on the one hand, and the subjects of Great Britain, on the other.

ARTICLE XI.

In order to increase and promote commerce between Abyssinia and Great Britain, His Majesty of Abyssinia and his successors shall encourage merchants of all nations to bring the produce of the interior of Africa into the dominions of Abyssinia.

ARTICLE XII.

With a like view, Her Britannic Majesty and her successors will protect British merchants in importing into Abyssinia such articles as may be needed therein.

ARTICLE XIII.

For the better security of merchants and their property, His Majesty of Abyssinia and his successors, and Her Britannic Majesty and her successors, will respectively, to the

best of their power, endeavour to keep open and to secure the avenues of approach betwixt the sea-coast and Abyssinia.

ARTICLE XIV.

With a view to promote and encourage reciprocal intercourse between the subjects of the two nations respectively, His Majesty of Abyssinia engages, for himself and his successors, that no hindrance or molestation shall be offered to British travellers, whether residing within the territories of Abyssinia, or passing through them for the purpose of visiting the countries beyond; but such travellers shall be protected both as to their persons and as to their property.

ARTICLE XV.

The effects belonging to such travellers, and not intended for sale, shall not be liable to duty of any sort, and shall in every respect be held to be their personal property, and to be inviolable.

ARTICLE XVI.

The subjects of His Majesty of Abyssinia shall meet with no hindrance or obstruction whilst residing in any part of the dominions of Her Britannic Majesty, and shall not be prevented from proceeding beyond these dominions at their pleasure.

ARTICLE XVII.

His Majesty of Abyssinia agrees that in all cases when a British subject shall be accused of any crime committed in any part of His Majesty's dominions, the accused shall be tried and adjudged by the British Consul, or other officer duly appointed for that purpose by Her Britannic Majesty; and in all cases when disputes or differences shall arise between British subjects, or between British subjects and the subjects of His Majesty of Abyssinia, or between British subjects and the subjects of any other foreign Power, within the dominions of His Majesty of Abyssinia, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, or other duly appointed officer, shall have power to hear and decide the same without any interference, molestation, or hindrance, on the part of any authority of Abyssinia, either before, during, or after the litigation.

ARTICLE XVIII.

If any British subject shall die in the territories of His Majesty of Abyssinia, the British Consul, or in his absence his representative, shall have the right to take charge of the papers and property of the deceased, for the benefit of his lawful heirs and creditors, without any interference on the part of the Abyssinian authorities.

ARTICLE XIX.

Finally, it is agreed, that upon a strict observance of all the foregoing Articles and conditions, shall depend the continuance of a lasting and permanent friendship between the contracting Sovereigns.

In witness whereof the present Treaty has been signed and sealed by the above-named Walter Charles Metcalfe Plowden, Esquire, and by His Majesty of Abyssinia.

Done at Ennowga, the second day of November, in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-nine, corresponding with the Abyssinian date the twenty-fourth day of Tekumt, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-two.

WALTER PLOWDEN. (L.S.)

[Signature of the Ras.]

[Seal of the Emperor.] [Seal of the Ras.]

No. 72.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, April 2, 1850.*

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch of the 3rd July, 1849,* with the accompanying letter from Her Majesty to Dejaj Oobeay on the subject of his claims to some part of the coast.

I have the honour to inform you that I presented in person Her Majesty's letter, with a translation in Amharic, to that Chief. He is able, inflexibly severe, but sufficiently just, and his remarks are characteristic. "This letter from Queen Victoria is polite, but the substance in three words is, We won't assist you; you say that you are friendly to us and to our religion; I do not see it yet. You say that you are more powerful than the Mahometan; you do not prove it. It is now many years since I have been in correspondence with several European nations on the faith of promises of assistance in two points that I much wish to gain—one the protection of my merchants, the other the suppression of the Slave Trade at Massowah in concert with Ras Ali and the Franks on the coast. With pleasure should I see Massowah in the hands of the Christians. I have the power perhaps to take it, but could not keep it against ships and cannon. We shall see with time if you English are like all the rest."

His reception of myself was polite, but as it is impossible to make him understand the political reasons that bind us to Turkey, it is natural that he should find it strange that we should trouble ourselves to send assurances of friendship, and yet omit to occupy some point that would place us in intimate connection with our allies in religious faith.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 73.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, April 2, 1850.*

I HAVE had the honour to receive your despatch of the 23rd July, 1849,† with extract of a letter from Her Majesty's Commissioners of Woods and Forests.

Dejaj Oobeay appeared somewhat vexed at the non-arrival of the workmen he had applied for, and pointed out the number of Europeans, Armenians, Greeks, &c., who had resided securely for years in his dominions, as the best guarantee that he could give, trusting also that something might yet be done for him.

Should your Lordship's views lead to a closer intimacy with Abyssinia, it would be worth while to procure two or three workmen of the description I have pointed out from India at a less expense than that mentioned in your Lordship's despatch, as they would probably possess skill sufficient for Oobeay's present purposes. An interpreter I shall be able to procure here at a trifling cost.

In any case, however, it will not be difficult to temporize with Dejaj Oobeay till such time as something decisive be done regarding our Abyssinian connection.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 74.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, April 2, 1850.*

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 6th July, 1849,‡ inclosing the copy of a Vizirial letter for the protection of my correspondence. I regret to say that this letter has been little attended to by the authorities here.

On my arrival here I found seventeen cases of private effects of mine, including letters and papers, in the Custom-house of Massowah. These effects are of considerable value, and their detention has deprived me of many necessary and medical stores in the interior.

* No. 52. † No. 62. ‡ No. 59.

Having demanded an explanation of this conduct from the Chief of Customs in the presence of the Governor of Massowah, in company with the commander of a British man-of-war in the port, he refused to make his appearance or any explanation.

Much as I am inconvenienced by the detention and perhaps destruction of my property, my reputation as Her Majesty's Consul depends too much on a point like this to permit of any accommodation of the affair without an apology from and the punishment of the authorities concerned, and the repayment as far as possible of the loss I have suffered.

I have made myself respected and influential in many countries considered barbarous; as the representative of Her Majesty I trust to your Lordship's vigorous support to make me equally so in a district governed by a Power supposed to be amicable, but by whose officers I am thwarted as far as possible in my endeavours to serve Her Majesty in this part of Africa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 75.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, April 2*, 1850.

WITH reference to my previous despatch of this date, I beg to say that, for the effectual support of my Consular authority in this distant country, an order from Constantinople is necessary on three points:—

1st. The punishment of those concerned in the detention of my effects, and the repayment of my losses.

2nd. An authority for the purchase of ground or houses either in the Island of Massowah or on the mainland, for the use of Her Majesty's Consulate, and also to build on such sites, when purchased, in any material that may be most convenient.

3rd. That my effects may pass without question or delay from the Custom-house officers; on an affirmation from myself or my agent as to their being my private property or effects sent by the British Government.

As affairs are at present conducted here by the Turkish authorities, it is impossible for me to live here in a manner becoming an officer of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 76.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 3.)

(Extract.) *Massowah, April 4*, 1850.

HAVING signed a Treaty of Commerce and Amity with Ras Ali, and striven to effect a general impression in favour of England in Abyssinia, it remains to be seen what may result from these proceedings.

Massowah, from its proximity to the more civilised nations, is the most favourable point on this coast for the establishment of trade.

The hopes of the merchants of Abyssinia are turned on England for the protection of their persons and the enlargement of their commerce; the Ras has engaged to protect Englishmen of all classes that travel in his dominions: Dejaj Oobeay has expressed his readiness to do the same. Their subjects visit not Europe, and we can only make them a return in two ways: one, to place their merchants under the protection of the English flag at Massowah, and to regulate within just bounds the duties levied by the Turkish authorities; the other, to empower the British Consul to rescue from slavery the Christian subjects of our ally, stolen and brought to this market, ordering that all facility shall be given to their identification.

These points being established, whatever might be the changes of power in the interior, our influence there would be stable; the merchant, safe and encouraged, would bring a greater amount of produce into the market than at present, and the British adventurer find in mutual interest his surest guarantee.

I await your Lordship's reply, and if it is decided that my flag be hoisted at Massowah, an exequatur should be promptly taken out, that I may enter formally upon my duties there, while still able to pay visits to the native Chiefs from time to time as may be desirable.

No. 77.

*Mr. C. A. Murray to Viscount Palmerston.**—(*Received May* 3.)

My Lord, *Cairo, April* 15, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a letter lately addressed to me by M. de Goutin, who was for many years French Consul at Massowah.

Although I conceive that the title which the original French purchasers have to offer could have little practical efficacy in conveying the province referred to securely to any individual purchaser, it might possibly be available in the hands of a Government possessed of the means of maintaining its right of possession; and, considering the extreme rarity of fresh water and harbourage on all the coasts of the Red Sea, I have thought it my duty to submit the proposal to Her Majesty's Government before giving any reply to M. de Goutin.

The province in question lies in latitude 14° north and longitude 41° 40′ east, and the most minute particulars concerning the harbour of Edd and the adjacent coast could be afforded to Her Majesty's Government by Captain Moresby, now commanding one of the Peninsular and Oriental steamers plying between Southampton and Alexandria.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CH. A. MURRAY.

Inclosure in No. 77.

M. de Goutin to Mr. C. A. Murray.

M. le Consul-Général, *Caire, le* 6 *Avril,* 1850.

UNE Société Française a acheté dans le mois d'Août 1840 une province située sur la côte d'Abyssinie, dont la capitale est Eid, bordant la Mer Rouge, environ par les 14 degrés de latitude; elle a pour limites d'une part le Cap Cordonéat, et à 90 milles de longueur toutes les petites îles voisines en dépendent.

Le contrat a été passé avec le propriétaire légitime, qui en est Roi, indépendant de Puissances Musulmanes, comme de celles de l'Abyssinie Chrétienne, et le prix a été payé comptant, à l'exception d'une faible somme qui doit être donnée le jour de la prise de possession.

Depuis l'époque de l'acquisition de Eid cette affaire a été négligée; me trouvant aujourd'hui aux lieux et place des acquéreurs, je vous prie, M. le Consul-Général, de me faire connaître s'il serait de convenance du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique de faire l'acquisition de cette province; je pourrais me rendre à Londres pour traiter directement, ou de toute autre manière que vous voudrez bien m'indiquer.

La Province de Eid est un des plus beaux sites de la côte d'Abyssinie; il y a un bon port; on a trouvé, en toute saison, près de la mer, de l'eau douce en abondance; et il y a des communications directes avec le pays Chrétien de l'intérieur.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) A. DE GOUTIN.

No. 78.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received May* 20.)

My Lord, *Lamgee, January* 2, 1850.

HAVING accompanied the Ras on a distant campaign, and the rainy season, with roads infested by the enemy, having since interrupted all safe communication, I trust my silence will be sufficiently explained. Being now in comparative security on the borders of the Lake Tsana, *en route* for Tigré, I write to inform your Lordship that the Ras has signed the Treaty proposed by Her Majesty.†

* No notice was taken by Her Majesty's Government of this proposal. See No. 102.

† See No. 71 and inclosure.

The signature of the Emperor it was impossible to obtain in concert with that of the Ras; and as the latter becomes daily more powerful, and the former more irretrievably insignificant, I judged it better not to risk alarming the jealousy of the Ras. I shall not risk the despatch of the Treaty, signed on the 2nd of November, 1849, until my arrival at Massowah, when I shall also offer some remarks with reference to it. I have parted on the most friendly terms with his Highness the Ras.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 79.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 20.)

My Lord, *Lamgee, January 2, 1850.*

ON the 5th December, 1849, being *en route* from Godjam to Tigré, I had the honour to receive your despatch of the 6th April, 1849.* Perhaps the signature of the Treaty by Ras Ali may modify your Lordship's views on the subject of protecting Abyssinian merchants and trade.

Further remarks on this subject I shall offer when I have received your Lordship's reply to my letters of January and March, 1849;† in the meantime I shall decline receiving the supplication that the merchants of Abyssinia wished me to forward to Her Majesty, and shall scrupulously avoid all steps that might involve Her Majesty's Government in discussion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 80.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 20.)

My Lord, *Lamgee, January 2, 1850.*

I INCLOSE a letter from the Ras to Her Majesty, declaring his acceptance of the proposed Treaty, and desire for our continued friendship, stating also that he forwards some presents to Her Gracious Majesty.

I send this despatch at once, that I may receive from your Lordship early instructions regarding the disposal of these presents, which I could not avoid receiving without offending; also an answer to his Highness.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 80.

Ras Ali to Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

(Translation.)

RAS ALI, King of Abyssinia, to Queen Victoria, Queen of the English, greeting:—

I have received with pleasure the present conveyed to me by Consul Plowden, and have sealed the Treaty he showed me, that our friendship may not dissolve.

I am poor when I see your wealth, and can only send such small matters as are found in our country. I send now—

Two shields and one lance, two shotels (Abyssinian sabres), two betoäs (silver armlets), two kalichas (silver coronets), two horse saddles, two mule saddles (with ornaments and accoutrements), four fine cloths (cotton fabric), four elephants' teeth, two long-haired sheep-skins.

In my poverty, with constant war and many soldiers, dollars wherewith to pay them would be the best proof of your friendship, with the protection of my merchants at Massowah.

Of other things, the glass-cloth and scarlet-cloth you sent me, with guns and rifles of 2-ounce ball, and long octagon barrel, please me best. All English who come to my country will be received as friends, as far as my power extends.

(Signed) ALI, King of Abyssinia.

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* No. 41.

† Nos. 42, 43, 44, 48, 49, 50, and 51.

No. 81.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received May* 20.)

My Lord, *Lamgee, January* 3, 1850.

I HAVE not judged it expedient to visit Shoa at present, as it is important that our relations with Ras Ali and Dejaj Oobeay should be clearly understood, and the position of my Consulate more defined with reference to the conflicting claims on the coast.

Also after the somewhat free expenditure of Major Harris, to proceed there entirely empty-handed would be impolitic.

I learn that the young King, son of Sahela Selassi, is of a just and generous disposition, but entertains a jealousy of the English, from the fear that they wish to deprive him of his territories, and the conviction that they have the power to do so. The former part of this idea is sufficiently common here also to have caused me some difficulty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 82.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received May* 20.)

My Lord, *Lamjee, January* 4, 1850.

THE Government of Massowah having reverted to the Pashalic of Djeddah, which has no official notice of my existence or appointment, it would be advisable that a letter from the Ottoman Porte be obtained, similar to that formerly written by Mohammed Ali, viz., to the Governor of Massowah, to regard me as an officer of Her Britannic Majesty, to offer no obstacle to myself in passing to and fro, or my property that may have to pass the Custom-house of Massowah, and the inspection of which may cause inconvenience, or lower the consideration of the inhabitants for me.

I mention this, as I hear that for some months past cases for me are detained at Massowah, the Turkish Governor having insisted on their being opened, and my agent properly refusing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 83.

Sir J. Hobhouse to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received May* 28.)

My Lord, *India Board, May* 27, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your information, a copy of two letters dated the 18th and 27th ultimo (and of their respective inclosures), which the East India Company's Political Agent at Aden has addressed to the Government of Bombay, relating to Abyssinia, and Her Majesty's Consul in that country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN HOBHOUSE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 83.

The Political Agent at Aden to the Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, April* 18, 1850.

WITH reference to my requisition for the services of the Honourable East India Company's schooner "Constance," and my letter, dated February 19, 1850, for the guidance of Lieutenant Adams, her commander, I have the honour to report that she returned to Aden on the 13th instant, and I immediately sent Her Britannic Majesty's Consul's despatches on to Egypt and England. I herewith inclose two letters I have received from her commander, Lieutenant Adams, and for the supply of rice and dhole supplied to Mr. Plowden, as per letters annexed. I have written my approval to the senior naval officer, with a request he will kindly be pleased to sanction the disbursement in public orders for the passing of Lieutenant Adams's accounts.

Mr. Plowden has requested the return of the "Constance" or other vessel to Massowah for the protection of British interests, as it is probable the approach of Dejaj Oobeay's troops, some 15,000 or 20,000 in number, to enforce the annual tribute from the Turkish Government, may cause great confusion and panic, also stop trade and supplies for a time. It is consequently my intention to despatch the "Constance" to Massowah when ready, which will be about the 24th or 25th of this month.

Mr. Plowden has requested me to send him a small 3-pounder gun-carriage for mountain service. It is intended, I believe, as a present for Ras Ali. I have consequently applied for one through Brigadier Cunningham, with a request that a new one may be indented by the Ordnance Department here to supply its place, and the cost, &c., be sent to me for liquidation for Her Majesty's service agreeable to Mr. Plowden's request.

I also take the liberty to inclose the copy of a letter I received from Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, of which I will take due notice, by writing a friendly though firm letter of remonstrance to his Highness Hasyb Pasha at Jeddah, also to the Governor and other authorities at Massowah, which I trust will have the desired effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) S. B. HAINES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 83.

Lieutenant Adams, I.N., to the Political Agent at Aden.

Sir, *"Constance," at Sea, April* 8, 1850.

IN consequence of a letter received from Her Britannic Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia (a copy of which is annexed), may I beg you will kindly be pleased to write to the Senior Naval Officer at Aden requesting him to issue a squadron order for me to supply the following provisions for his use, viz.—Rice Mangaloo, 997 lbs.; dhole, 150 lbs.; bags double gunny, 7 in number.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. N. ADAMS.

Inclosure 3 in No. 83.

Consul Plowden to Lieutenant Adams, I.N.

Sir, *Massowah, April* 4, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that fearing the approach of Dejaj Oobeay's troops, Massowah is, as it were, in a state of siege. There is no market, and the usual supplies from the mainland are cut off. I have arrived but a day or two from the interior with a numerous establishment, and from the sudden death of my agent have found no preparations for their subsistence; under these circumstances, if you could assist me in any way with supplies I should feel obliged to you, as the purchase of anything is almost impossible.

Your schooner has already lain here so long that I cannot think of detaining her, but on many accounts I trust that Captain Haines, on your representation of the state of affairs here generally, will soon be able to send up this or another vessel, if possible, with strict instructions as to her conduct with regard to the detention of my effects by the Custom-house officers, which orders I cannot supply, not being Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah.

I should wish you also, before you go, to speak forcibly to the chief of the troops here regarding his conduct to and protection of myself and other Europeans here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure 4 in No. 83.

Lieutenant Adams, I.N., to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Massowah Harbour, April* 4, 1850.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date, and in reply thereto I have to state that I can supply you, under existing circumstances, with six bags of rice and one of dhole for the use of your establishment.

Should you deem it necessary, the Honourable Company's schooner of war, under my command, can remain at this port for the protection of yourself and other British subjects some few days longer, or until Dejaj Oobeay's troops may leave this part of the country, although, in my opinion, that Chief does not intend Massowah to be attacked.

With respect to the last paragraph of your letter, I will at once see the Commander of the troops of his Highness the Sultan of Turkey, and forcibly impress on him that every assistance and protection in his power be afforded yourself and other subjects of Great Britain, and those claiming our protection.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. N. ADAMS.

Inclosure 5 in No. 83.

Lieutenant Adams, I.N., to the Political Agent at Aden.

Sir, "*Constance*," *April* 11, 1850.

ON my arrival at Massowah I learnt that Dejaj Oobeay's troops were at Hamazeyn (about sixty miles from Adowa) in January last, and in consequence of that Massowah had been greatly distressed for water and provisions during that month; that about twelve days after Oobeay's arrival there, he had sent an Ambassador to the Turkish Governor stating that he had no hostile intentions against the Turkish provinces, and that he wished for the future prosperity and tranquillity to that part of the country and its inhabitants; at the same time, he urged that the Turkish Government should pay Oobeay the tribute that had been established for so many years, viz.—1,000 German crowns yearly. The Messenger or Ambassador was sent back by the Turkish authorities to Oobeay with some trifling presents of about 130 German crowns value and many unmeaning compliments. About 10th of March another messenger came from Oobeay demanding payment of 4,000 dollars (four years' tribute), and in case the authorities should fail to pay the same very shortly he would enter the country, take their cattle, and burn their villages, &c., &c. The demand was not complied with, and from the 26th ultimo to the day I left, viz., 6th April, people from all parts came flocking in with their wives, families, &c., &c. Thousands are on or near the Bunder and the point opposite the Fort, on the mainland, to be under its shelter and the guns of the two war buggalows which were moored, head and stern, in position to protect the island, &c. Mr. Fenton, an English traveller, and another gentleman, who were shooting about forty or sixty miles inland, were abandoned by their servants and camel men, and were obliged to leave their baggage, provisions, &c., as none of the natives, although offered large rewards, could be persuaded to stay, even to load the camels they had with them; they reached Massowah on the evening of the 2nd instant.

For the last few days I was at Massowah it was impossible to procure the necessaries of life; the Governor could get no one to go out to buy bullocks for the troops, and Mr. Plowden, the day previous to our departure, could only procure one solitary fowl. Water is obtained from Arkeeko (which is protected by a fort), but though all the boats of the place are employed, yet the scrambling and quarrelling for it is very great.

Mr. Plowden, who left Oobeay's camp on the 15th March, assured me that strict orders had been given to his chieftain Cocober not to attack Massowah, and which order Cocober dare not disobey. The people of Massowah are of opinion that it is Mr. Plowden who has brought him down to the attack, an opinion equally as foolish as the one in circulation on the schooner's first anchoring, viz., that the British Government had determined to take the place, with Oobeay's assistance.

Mr. Plowden has the greater part of his establishment at Moncooloo, which is otherwise deserted. On Thursday, the 4th instant, he and Mr. Coffin went out there to try and give confidence to the natives. It had been currently reported that Cocober would certainly attack Massowah on that day.

The Ras is still in Godjam, the greater part of Oobeay's forces are with him as hostages for Oobeay's good behaviour; the Ras is blockading a refractory Chief in some of he hill forts in that country. Nubia is quiet. Carthsey's troops have not as yet got over he defeat they met with from the Egyptians about a year and a-half since.

The French Consul, M. Raulland, left prior to my arrival, it is said, dissatisfied with the authorities. He left, as Consular Agent, the master of the brig "Grenouille" (M. Bisson), but as he had no regular introduction the Turkish authorities would not receive him as such.

On the 28th of February, the day we anchored at Massowah, 200 Irregulars arrived

from Djeddah, and 200 more were shortly expected. On the night of the 2nd ultimo, Naib Mahomed was thrown into prison and fettered, and afterwards sent in a buggalow to Djeddah by Omar Effendi, on suspicion, it was said, of having secretly invited Oobeay down to attack Massowah.

Our British Indian merchants were only just arriving, and up to the time of our leaving had no complaints to make.

At Mocha I found the "Elphinstone," and as inquiries had been instituted by Captain J. P. Sanders, the senior naval officer at Aden, I made none.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. N. ADAMS.

Inclosure 6 in No. 83.

Consul Plowden to the Political Agent at Aden.

Sir, *Massowah, April* 6, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that there is at present no Government at Massowah. There is an officer of Customs appointed by the Pasha of Djeddah, who holds himself responsible to no one.

The Chief of the troops having declared his inability to interfere with him in any way, our countrymen have suffered generally many annoyances here lately.

First. Since December last, cases have been lying in the Custom-house, my private property, which of course could not be opened without my sanction, and to avoid any detention of which, strict orders had been issued from Constantinople to the Pashalic of Djeddah. Also there was detained a post-office packet, which, fortunately, did not contain documents of public importance. On demanding an explanation of this detention, the Chief of Customs refused even to make his appearance in the presence of the so-called Governor, and coolly told us that we might all three come to him, that is, the Governor, Lieutenant Adams, and myself.

Second. The officers of the Honourable East India Company's schooner "Constance" are subjected to the most vexatious annoyances by the Custom-house authorities each time they have occasion to visit the island or the mainland.

Thirdly. Passing over many disagreeable occurrences, on my presenting a horse, my private property, to Lieutenant Adams for his own transport to Aden, the Chief of Customs refused to allow it to be put on board without payment of duty. Foreseegin dangerous consequences later, if such conduct were allowed to pass unnoticed, I requested Captain Adams to insist strongly on the immediate embarkation of the animal by the authorities. This, after some demur and a night's delay, was effected.

In this country so distant from the seat of Government, and amidst a semi-barbarous population, at a time when the island is in a state of siege from the fear of the Abyssinian forces, and the Governor declares himself null, I think we should be justified in taking the law into our own hands, at least, so far as shall procure us that respect necessary here to our safety even.

I trust that you will write forcibly to the Pasha of Djeddah, and that steps will be taken for the restitution with apology of my effects, and the dismissal of the officer who has conducted himself so inimically towards us.

The Chief of the troops showed every disposition to befriend us, but has neither the power nor the courage to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure 7 in No. 83.

The Political Agent at Aden to the Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, April* 27, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to report I have requested the services of the Company's schooner "Constance" to proceed to Massowah. A copy of my letter of instructions for the guidance of Lieutenant Adams, her Commander, I beg to annex for the information of Government, also a copy of my letter to Walter Plowden, Esq., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul for Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) S. B. HAINES.

Inclosure 8 in No. 83.

The Political Agent at Aden to the Senior Naval Officer, Aden.

Sir, *Aden, April* 27, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to request the services of the Company's schooner "Constance" to proceed to Massowah, conveying to Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, W. Plowden, Esq., such packets as I may have ready for him, also a 3-pounder gun carriage with limber complete.

2. As the General of Ras Oobeay was shortly expected to ravage the vicinity of Massowah with a very large Abyssinian force, it was more than probable the inhabitants of Massowah will be in great fear, and the presence of the "Constance" under such circumstances will give protection and confidence to the British Indian merchants. May I therefore beg you will kindly be pleased to direct the Commander to use his judgment on the occasion, affording our merchants any assistance they may be in need of, and at the same time placing himself in communication with Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, and attending to any official requisition he may receive from that officer.

3. Her Britannic Majesty's Consul having complained to me that the authorities at Massowah will not permit his private baggage and dispatches to pass the Custom-house without examination, I have addressed a remonstrance to the Governor of Massowah on the subject, and should wish it to be delivered in person by the Commander of the "Constance," so that he may point out to the Governor the apparent want of courtesy and respect towards an official officer, delegated with power from Her Britannic Majesty, with whom the Sublime Porte is on terms of friendship. I should also wish Lieutenant Adams to inform the Governor I have addressed a letter to His Highness Hasyb Pasha on the subject, as I look to him as Governor-General of the Turkish possessions in the Red Sea, and to the Governors of all Turkish towns, to enforce due respect from all subordinates under their authority to the British flag, and expect that officers in charge of the Custom departments at all towns under Turkish rule will abide by the rules laid down in the Convention of Commerce between our respective Governments, and also show courtesy and respect to all British official functionaries as well as subjects.

4 The "Constance" should be back to Aden, if possible, in six weeks, or as early as Lieutenant Adams considers her services at Massowah can be dispensed with, in case her services are otherwise required; he should also look in at Hodeida and Mocha for political information, and to ascertain the state of trade on his return to Aden.

5. I should also be glad to obtain, through Lieutenant Adams, all information on the political state of affairs in Abyssinia to the latest date for the information of Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) S. B. HAINES.

Inclosure 9 in No. 83.

The Political Agent at Aden to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Aden, April* 27, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated April 6, 1850.

2. In reply, I beg to inform you I have dispatched the Honourable Company's schooner of war "Constance" to Massowah to afford protection to our Indian merchants during the period of the Abyssinian force being in the vicinity; her Commander, Lieutenant Adams, will place himself in communication with you, and render all assistance in his power.

3. Further, I have addressed a letter to the Governor of Massowah on the subject of your despatches and baggage being detained, and have also politely requested His Highness Hasyb Pasha to issue such instructions as will prevent a repetition of similar unfriendly conduct towards you.

4. The 3-pounder gun carriage and limber will be conveyed by the "Constance" to you.

I have, &c.
(Signed) S. B. HAINES.

No. 84.

Viscount Palmerston to Sir J. Hobhouse.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 5, 1850.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you copies of a correspondence which I have had with Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia respecting the wish of the Ras Oobeay to obtain the services of some European workmen.* The expense which sending workmen from England to Abyssinia would necessarily occasion, seems to be a sufficient reason for declining to comply with the specific request of the Ras; but I should be glad to have your opinion as to the practicability of engaging persons in India who might be competent to perform the works contemplated by the Ras, and as to the expense which would be incurred in sending them to, and maintaining them for a limited time in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 85.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 7, 1850.*

YOU state in your despatch of the 3rd of January† that the King of Shoa is supposed to entertain apprehensions in regard to the possible designs of the British Government. You will, of course, take every opportunity of reassuring that Chief on this point, and of endeavouring to satisfy his mind, and also the minds of any other persons who may be under the influence of similar apprehensions, that the British Government entertain no aggressive intentions whatever with respect to any portion of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 86.

Viscount Palmerston to Sir S. Canning.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 7, 1850.*

I HAVE to inform your Excellency that Mr. Consul Plowden has concluded with the Ras of Abyssinia the Treaty which, in my despatch of the 13th of January, 1848,‡ I acquainted Lord Cowley that Mr. Plowden was instructed to negotiate. I transmit to you herewith a copy of that Treaty,§ which will forthwith be ratified by Her Majesty.

I furnish your Excellency at the same time, with copies of several despatches which I have received from Mr. Plowden,‖ and I should wish to have any observations which may occur to you on the points alluded to therein.

I have not yet received any report from your Excellency in reply to my despatch of the 3rd of July, 1849,¶ respecting the claims of the Porte, and of the Abyssinian Rulers, to the districts on the mainland in the neighbourhood of Massowah. Mr. Plowden appears to be anxious that he should be allowed to exercise authority at Massowah. But in that case it would be requisite that he should have a Consular Commission for that port, on which a Berat from the Turkish Government enabling him to act could be obtained.

In regard to Mr. Plowden's complaint on the subject of the interference of the Turkish authorities at Massowah with his correspondence and effects, I have to instruct your Excellency to call the attention of the Porte to the little deference which has been paid by those authorities to the Vizirial letter in favour of Mr. Plowden which it appears, from your despatch of the 19th of June last,** the Porte at your Excellency's instigation consented to issue; and your Excellency will request not only that satisfaction may be given for the wrong done to Mr. Plowden in this respect, but that more stringent orders may be issued by the Porte to secure him from similar molestation hereafter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

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* Nos. 48, 62, and 73. † No. 81. ‡ No. 10. § Inclosure in No. 71.
‖ Nos. 74, 75, 76, and 82. ¶ No. 53. ** No. 58.

No. 87.

Viscount Palmerston to Sir S. Canning.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 7, 1850.*

WITH reference to my previous despatch of this day's date,* inclosing copies of despatches from Mr. Consul Plowden, I inclose, for your Excellency's information a copy of a despatch from the Resident of the East India Company at Aden to the Bombay Government, dated the 18th of April,† containing some information respecting the state of affairs in the neighbourhood of Massowah, and inclosing copies of correspondence with Mr. Consul Plowden.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 88.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 7, 1850.*

I HAVE received your despatches to that of the 4th of April inclusive. Her Majesty's ratification of the Treaty signed by you with Ras Ali on the 2nd of November last is in course of preparation, and will be forwarded to you by the next mail.

I will send to you, if possible, by the same opportunity, some presents for the Ras, as requested in his letter to the Queen inclosed in your despatch of the 2nd of January;‡ and in regard to the presents which the Ras proposes to send to the Queen, you will cause them to be forwarded to this country by any good opportunity which may present itself.

I have communicated to Sir Stratford Canning copies of your despatches dated the 4th January and the 2nd and 4th April,§ and his Excellency will endeavour to induce the Porte to take effectual measures for securing your correspondence and effects from undue interference on the part of Turkish authorities.

For the future you will forward to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople copies of all despatches which you may address to this office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 89.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.‖

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 15, 1850.*

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your despatch of the 2nd of April last,¶ inclosing a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce which, in pursuance of the instructions of Her Majesty's Government, you had concluded with the Ras of Abyssinia, on the 2nd of November, 1849; and I have much satisfaction in conveying to you the approval of Her Majesty's Government of your conduct in the negotiation and conclusion of that Treaty.

I transmit to you the Queen's ratification of the Treaty under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet. You will take the earliest suitable opportunity of delivering this instrument to the Ras in due form, accompanied by expressions of Her Majesty's sincere desires for His Highness' health and happiness and for the prosperity of the countries under his rule.

You will obtain from His Highness, and transmit to me, a certificate according to the inclosed form, of his having received the Queen's ratification.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

Inclosure in No. 89.

Draft of Certificate.

HIS Majesty of Abyssinia hereby certifies that he has received from Walter Charles Metcalfe Plowden, Esq., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, the ratification by Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, of the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce concluded and signed between Her Britannic Majesty and His Majesty of Abyssinia on the 2nd day of November 1849, corresponding with the Abyssinian date the 24th day of Tekumt, 1842.

In witness whereof His Majesty of Abyssinia has hereunto affixed his seal this day of in the year of our Lord 1850, corresponding with the Abyssinian date the day of in the year of our Lord

No. 90.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received June 20.)

My Lord, *Massowah, April* 14, 1850.

SINCE my last despatch I have to inform your Lordship that the conduct of the Turkish authorities here renders my stay injudicious, if not impossible.

Finding it too difficult to protect myself from the insults daily and studiously offered to me, to think that I can at present protect others, workmen of all classes having been prohibited under penalties from entering my employment, refused permission to rebuild the hut that the Abyssinian troops are said to have burnt, and thus obliged to live in tents, on ground purchased, planted, and inclosed by me two years since; the present of ivory from Ras Ali to Her Majesty the Queen having been seized and locked in the Custom-house, with denial to me even of permission to see and recognize it; and answers to my letters being positively refused, I shall await your Lordship's replies to my late despatches in Tigré.

This conduct, so strange when the Sultan of Turkey has so lately experienced the benefit of our friendly alliance, is, your Lordship will readily perceive, aimed at my connection with the Abyssinian Chiefs; adopted to persuade them that the English nation is no longer of any weight; and virtually declares that, if possible, the English Government shall not appoint any officers in that country.

I beg further to mention, that whatever firmans may be procured from Constantinople are in themselves useless at this distance, and the Governor here may be changed frequently during the period of reference. I therefore trust, whatever orders are given, that the Political Agent at Aden will receive instructions to enforce their strict execution, both at the time of receipt and thereafter.

The insults I have received having been sufficiently public, unless a public reparation, such as the inhabitants of Massowah can understand, be made by the authorities here, there is little chance of Europeans finding their future residence here agreeable, and the Abyssinians will be convinced that our forbearance arises from our weakness.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 91.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received June 20.)

My Lord, *Massowah, May* 12, 1850.

I MENTIONED in my despatch of the 2nd April* that I had had an interview with Dejaj Oobeay, and the disappointment of that Chief at the contents of Her Majesty's letter

Dejaj Oobeay at that interview also requested me to procure him a carriage for a dismounted 3-pounder in his possession, originally from England. This I did not hesitate to promise, as I considered it necessary at that moment to retain his goodwill, and accordingly I obtained one at my expense, and landed at Massowah.†

The Pasha refused to allow it a passage into Abyssinia, and it remains at the Custom-house, to the detriment in some measure of my influence in Tigré.

By what right this officer interferes with my transactions in Abyssinia I know not,

* No. 72.

† See Inclosure 9 in No. 83.

except it be the idea that he is Ruler of that country on the strength of his possession of Massowah.

As long as this access to Abyssinia is monopolized by the Turks, it is evident that all checks that may be and are thrown in the way of my efforts to communicate with that country must be forbidden, or else that your Lordship should take some other steps for throwing open the commerce of this portion of Africa to our Colonies, it being probable that no efforts can at present surmount the injurious effects produced on trade by such a system as exists at this port.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN

No. 92.

Consul Plowden to Mr. Bidwell.—(Received June 29.)

Sir, *Massowah, May* 11, 1850.

A QUESTION has arisen here respecting duties on articles purchased by British subjects in Abyssinia.

Mules are now become an important article of trade between this port and our colony of Mauritius.

These mules are purchased in the province of Tigré by some agent, and furnished here to the captains of vessels, at a rate fixed by contract.

The actual price paid for the animal by the agent, exclusive of expenses, is from 10 to 12 German crowns a head. On this tariff, 5 per cent. paid as transit duty to the Pasha of Massowah, would be about half a dollar a head.

The demand made by the Pasha is of 12 per cent. on the price paid by the captain of the vessel, which includes all expenses and the profit of the agent. This demand is thus of $2\frac{1}{4}$ dollars per mule, or at my valuation of 10 dollars,—25 per cent.

I can at present only protest, but I trust that an order will be sent to the Pasha to refund all sums levied above the amount of duty I have suggested, and also that none but transit duties at the same rate shall be levied on goods of any description purchased by British subjects in Abyssinia, and brought for sale or shipment to the harbour of Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 93.

Sir J. Hobhouse to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received September 4.)

My Lord, *India Board, September* 3, 1850.

WITH reference to your letter of the 5th of June last,* I have the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a letter from the Military Board at Bombay, stating the terms on which, in their opinion, European workmen could be engaged at that Presidency for service in Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN HOBHOUSE.

Inclosure in No. 93.

The Military Board, Bombay (Secret Department), to Lord Falkland.

My Lord, *July* 23, 1850.

WE have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Chief Secretary Malet's letter, of the 17th instant, and in reply to state, that if we had authority to engage the men required for Abyssinia, we have no doubt we could procure well-conducted and able men.

2. The Superintendent might be supplied from the subordinate department of Public Works, and the Assistants, with the requisite qualifications, either from the same source, or from the European regiments.

* No. 84.

3. We are of opinion that 200 rupees per mensem to the superintendent, and 100 rupees to each assistant, would be sufficient remuneration to induce properly qualified men to offer their services, provided all their expenses were paid.

4. The Ras would, we presume, pay their expenses after their arrival; the only additional expense, therefore, would be for tools, &c., and for passage to and from Abyssinia.

(Signed) GEORGE MOORE, *Colonel, Military Auditor-General.*
GEORGE JERVIS, *Colonel, Chief Engineer.*

No. 94.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 1, 1850.

WITH reference to the question of sending artizans to Abyssinia referred to in your despatches of March 3, 1849, and of April 2 of this year,* I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government think it best to let that matter drop; and if the Ras should again refer to his wishes in this respect you will say that there is much difficulty in bringing such persons from distant countries to Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 95.

Mr. Addington to the Secretary to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 17, 1850.

WITH reference to a communication which will have been made by the Board of Admiralty to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company respecting the conveyance from Southampton to Alexandria, and from Suez to Aden, of three cases addressed to Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia to the care o the Resident of the East India Company at Aden, and of a fourth case similarly addressed, containing 5,000 percussion caps, I am directed by Viscount Palmerston to request that directions may be given to the agent of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company at Alexandria to cause the cases in question to be forwarded from that port to Suez, and I am to state to you that upon transmission to this office of an account of the expenses incurred in forwarding these packages between those ports, directions will be given for payment of the same to the Company in this country.

I am, &c.
(Signed) H. U. ADDINGTON.

No. 96.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

(Extract.) *Foreign Office, October* 19, 1850.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 7th of June,† I have to acquaint you that four packages are this day forwarded to you, addressed to the care of the Resident of the East India Company at Aden, containing the following articles designed as presents from Her Majesty's Government to Ras Ali, on the occasion of the conclusion of the Treaty of the 2nd of November last, viz.:—

Two rifles, 6 percussion guns, 5,000 percussion caps, 10 yards of glass cloth, 20 yards of scarlet broad-cloth, first quality; 45 yards of scarlet superfine cloth, second quality.

In addition to these presents, I have to authorize you to present to Ras Ali, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, 500 German crowns, which I presume are to be obtained at Aden.

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* Nos. 48 and 73.

† No. 88.

No. 97.

Sir J. Hobhouse to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received November 2.)

My Lord, *India Board, October 31, 1850.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your information, an extract from a letter addressed by the Political Agent at Aden to the Bombay Government on the 10th ultimo, relating to the box of 300 sovereigns which was sent by your Lordship for the King of Shoa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN HOBHOUSE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 97.

The Political Agent at Aden to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay.

(Extract.) *Aden, September 10, 1850.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the messenger that conveyed the letters to the King of Shoa returned on the 3rd of September, bringing me a reply evidently requesting I will transmit the present from Her Britannic Majesty, as also powder and medicine with it: original and translation inclosed. The wording of the reply is apparently hurried, strange, and imperfect. The messenger states that the King wrote it in the field, having prepared his forces to attack the Gallas.

The orders I received with the box of 300 sovereigns were to deliver it into the hand of the King's accredited agent only. Consequently, I would request the Government's permission to despatch another messenger to Shoa, at a cost of 50 German crowns, to again inform the King that to his accredited messenger alone am I authorized to give it, and he must send one.

Further, may I beg the commands of Government with respect to powder and medicines; the latter is much required in the country, but powder would be used in slaughtering the Gallas.

Inclosure 2 in No. 97.

The King of Shoa to the Political Agent at Aden.

(Translation.)

YOUR letter has reached me, the letter you sent me by the hands of Ibrahim Shehem. You have written to me and I feel much love for you. You will send me powder. Let the people you will send me bring it. Let it be plenty. Send me medicine in plenty. This I want much. Let the arrival of your messenger with these pleasing things be speedy.

From HYLA SELASSEE.

No. 98.

Viscount Palmerston to Sir J. Hobhouse.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 25, 1850.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st of October last,* inclosing an extract of a letter from the Political Agent of the East India Company at Aden, respecting the box of sovereigns which was forwarded to him for presentation to the King of Shoa; and I have to state to you, in reply, that I am of opinion that Captain Haines should be authorized to despatch another messenger to Shoa, as he proposes in his letter, and to inform the King of Shoa that the box of sovereigns will be delivered to any person duly accredited by the King as his agent to receive and take charge of it.

As regards the other requests made to Captain Haines by the King, Captain Haines should be instructed to comply, as far as may be in his power, with the King's wishes to be supplied with medicine, but he should not supply the King with any gunpowder.

I have further the honour to state that the expenses which Captain Haines may incur on this account will be repaid to him when an account thereof shall have been sent to this Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

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* No. 97.

1851.

No. 99.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received January* 16, 1851.)

My Lord, *Hahlaë, October* 28, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch of the 4th of April, 1850,* inclosing copy of a letter from the Board of Control, on the subject of a survey of the port of Amphylla, and stating your Lordship's opinion that Amphylla has no capabilities as a place of trade.

I previously mentioned that Amphylla is in no point comparable to Massowah, which latter place, by its general salubrity, its abundant supply of water, fine harbour, and proximity to the trade of Abyssinia and the Gallas, would, in other hands than those of the Turkish Government, have no superior as a commercial port on either coast of the Red Sea.

I hear, however, that the port of Amphylla has been selected by some company of French merchants as the seat of extensive commercial operations, which company is said to be under your Lordship's protection.

Its agent has already made me some proposals, but as I have received no official communication on the subject, I have declined giving any reply.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 100.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received January* 16, 1851.)

My Lord, *Hahlaë, October* 28, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, up to this date, I have received no replies to any of my despatches of this year, from January to May inclusive. I mention this, as, in my uncertainty as to your Lordship's intentions, I have maintained, up to this time, the same expensive establishment that was necessary to me during my visit to His Highness Ras Ali, during which I was permitted to draw for my expenses.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 101.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 18, 1851.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith duplicates of the despatches which I have addressed to you since the 4th of April of last year, the originals of which were forwarded to you to the care of the Resident of the East India Company at Aden. It appears, however, from your despatch of the 28th of October,† that you have not received any of these despatches; and as Her Majesty's ratification of the Treaty with the Ras of Abyssinia was inclosed in my despatch of the 15th June,‡ I have to instruct you to communicate, as soon as possible, to Captain Haines the place to which he had better forward your letters, and also the presents from Her Majesty's Government to Ras Ali, sent on the 19th of October,§ so as to insure your safely receiving them.

I am, &c.

(Signed) PALMERSTON

* No. 70. † No. 100. ‡ No. 89.
§ See No. 96.

No. 102.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 20, 1851.

I HAVE received your despatches of the 28th of October,* and I have to state to you, in reply to the former of them, that I know nothing of the French Company which you mention as being established at Amphylla; and there is no foundation whatever for the statement that they are in any way under the protection of the English Government.

Some months ago, a M. de Goutin, formerly French Consul at Massowah, wrote to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, offering to make over to the British Government a district named Edd, situated a little to the south of Amphylla, which he stated had been purchased by a French Company from the native ruler in the year 1840; but Her Majesty's Government did not think it necessary to take any notice of this proposal.†

I have, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 103.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 19, 1851.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 14, 1850.

I BEG to acknowledge your despatch of June 7, 1850,‡ and shall attend to your orders, which are in conformance with the line of conduct I have always pursued.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 104.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 19, 1851.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 15, 1850.

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 7th June, 1850,§ and shall forward the presents from Ras Ali to Her Majesty as soon as practicable.

I have received, through the exertions of Sir Stratford Canning, letters addressed by the Porte to the Pasha of Djeddah, which I have forwarded to that officer, and I trust that when the orders transmitted shall have been communicated to the Governor of Massowah, I shall have no further annoyances to complain of.

I shall, as directed, send copies of all my despatches to the Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 105.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 19, 1851.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 15, 1850.

I HAVE the honour to be in receipt of your despatch of the 15th June, 1850,‖ inclosing the ratification by Her Majesty of the Treaty I have concluded with His Highness Ras Ali.

In pursuance of instructions I shall take an early opportunity of delivering the ratification to the Ras, who is in Godjam still, and obtaining from him a receipt according to the form furnished me.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* Nos. 99 and 100. † See No. 77. ‡ No. 85. § No. 88. ‖ No. 89.

No. 106.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received May* 19, 1851.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 15, 1850.

I BEG to acknowledge your Lordship's despatch of October 1, 1850,* and shall act in conformity with its instructions. This will not be difficult, if the orders now sent to the Turkish authorities should induce them to pass the gun-carriage procured by me for Dejaj Oobeay, as per my despatch of the 2nd April, 1850,† and which was intended by me as a present that should allay his disappointment in the matter of the artisans he required.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 107.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received May* 19.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 15, 1851.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, having received in the month of November 1850,‡ letters from Constantinople for the redress of my complaints against the Pasha of Massowah, addressed to the Pasha of Djeddah, I received no reply up to the 8th February from our Vice-Consul at Djeddah, to whom I had immediately forwarded them.

On that date the Honourable Company's schooner "Mahi" arrived here, bringing letters and boxes containing presents for Ras Ali. In the interval the Governor of Massowah had continued his usual system of annoyance, to such a point that my usual residence at Massowah having become uninhabitable, on my attempt to reconstruct it he flogged the workmen on frivolous pretences, and others dared no longer perform the most trivial offices for me.

The ivory from the Ras he still retained, and on the landing of the cases from the "Mahi" refused to give them up unopened, stating that they contained fire-arms and powder, which he should seize and not allow to pass into Abyssinia; he also refused to return these cases to the ship, which the captain requested, as they had got wetted on the passage.

Being of opinion that my letters to the Pasha of Djeddah had not been delivered, and a third letter on the same subject having arrived by the "Mahi," I obtained a passage in that vessel to Djeddah. On my arrival there I found the Vice-Consul dangerously ill, and the letters for the Pasha in his desk, as no person in Djeddah was able to speak or read the English language but himself.

I delivered all these letters to the Pasha, and after several interviews obtained from him orders to the Governors of Massowah corresponding to the instructions from the Vizier, I then returned, and arrived in Massowah after an absence of twenty-nine days, of which twenty-two were spent at sea.

The Pasha has now expressed himself ready to obey his orders, has delivered up the ivory and the cases, and I shall now, I trust, be able to proceed into Abyssinia with the presents for the Ras, and also to forward his presents to England.

The matter is thus temporarily arranged; but I do not conceal from your Lordship that I have little faith in the duration of these good results, as it is evident from the hostility existing between the Turks and the Abyssinians that the former must always regard with jealousy my influence and friendship with the latter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 108.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(*Received May* 19.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 16, 1851.

THAT it may not be supposed that I have in any way given occasion to the Governor of Massowah for his hostility I beg to state:—

1st. That the house he has obstructed me in building, is one room, erected at my expense (the landlord being poor), on ground rented by me at Massowah, but which contains no habitable residence.

* No. 94. † No. 73, and Inclosure 1 in No. 83. ‡ See No. 86.

2ndly. That I have never taken advantage of your Lordship's permission to trade, seeing that it might weaken my influence both in Massowah and Abyssinia, and might afford a pretext to the Governor for some of his acts, and that I could not carry out so efficiently the orders of Her Majesty's Government.

3rdly. That I have imported no fire-arms into Abyssinia, excepting those sent as presents by your Lordship and some few for my own use.

4thly. My house on the mainland is a garden for raising vegetables. and a few sheds for the reception of my mules and servants when I arrive from the interior.

I think this will convince your Lordship that I have been careful to avoid giving any pretext for the conduct of the Governor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 109.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 19.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 18, 1851.

WITH reference to my despatches of the 15th and 16th instant,* I beg to say that I shall probably now be able to proceed into the interior and deliver Her Majesty's ratification to the Ras, perhaps before the rainy season. As this was important I arranged matters as amicably as possible, but the communication with Djeddah is long and uncertain, and if such difficulties are thrown in my way, it will cause a serious loss of time and may affect my negotiations with the native chiefs in a country so liable as Abyssinia to change and revolution.

It will be impossible for me, entirely unassisted as I am, to arrange such matters as those I have detailed, and at the same time to be engaged in my numerous affairs and journeys in Abyssinia.

My absence might easily cause reports in the interior highly injurious to my interests in so ill-governed a kingdom, and perhaps give an opening for success to the numerous intrigues constantly on foot to eject me from it.

In order, therefore, that it may be possible for me to execute my instructions, I trust that, before my return, your Lordship will have considered the best means either of avoiding the necessity of communicating with Abyssinia through a Turkish port, or of impressing on the Turkish Government that our communication be free and uninterrupted in all cases, save a transit duty on merchandise, even should it consist of firearms or cutlery or even powder.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 110.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 19.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 18, 1851.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch of 19th October, 1850,† and to state that the presents therein mentioned were given up to me by the Governor of Massowah on the 14th instant.

Your Lordship, in your letter, has given me no discretion on the point; but as I am now obliged to make a hurried journey, I shall venture only to take him a portion of these presents just now, and forward him the remainder on my return to the coast.

I hear, indeed, that the Ras has gone on a distant campaign against the Gallas, and if so, the country beyond Gondar will not be safe.

I beg also respectfully to state, that in my opinion the money mentioned had better not be given to the Ras at all; what your Lordship has sent otherwise is more than sufficient, if there were no other reason for not presenting it. I shall, therefore, not draw for that sum unless I receive a further order from your Lordship to present it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* Nos. 107 and 108.

† No. 96.

No. 111.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 19.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March 27, 1851.*

I AM in receipt of your despatch of 18th January, 1851,* and beg to state that I received the originals of your Lordship's despatches since 4th April, 1850, on the 17th November last, and at once acknowledged them, having also duly received Her Majesty's ratification; but owing to the want of any safe opportunity, and also to the occurrences stated in my despatch of the 15th instant,† all my letters from December last inclusive only start in the course of this week.

I can have no safe communication with England except when a man-of-war is sent here, which is, I believe, as often as the schooners of the East India Company can be spared from other duty; probably three or four visits in the year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 112.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 19.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March 27, 1851.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch of the 20th January, 1851.‡

On the subjects mentioned therein, I shall keep your Lordship informed of any thing worth communicating.

A French corvette has just paid a short visit to this place, but left for Djeddah before my return from thence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 113.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received May 19.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March 27, 1851.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a list of the presents sent to Her Majesty by Ras Ali. The Ras has since expressed a wish to add to them: but as that would have caused a delay, I said that I trusted that though of no value, Her Majesty would be pleased to accept them as a token of his amicable feelings.

There is a slight discrepancy between this list and the one I furnished in August 1847;§ but at the time of writing I had not actually received them, having only an order for their delivery to me by the Negadeh, Ras of Gondar. That officer has since been discharged, partly on account of my complaints of his conduct in that affair.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 113.

List of Presents from Ras Ali.

No. 1.—One shield of buffalo hide (with silver ornaments), and strip of lion's mane; two silver coronets; two silver-gilt armlets; three fine cotton cloths, worn by Abyssinians of rank; one large coloured wicker basket; one small ditto.

No. 2.—Two mules' saddles complete; two brass ornaments, suspended on the necks of mules.

No. 3.—Two horse saddles, one with bridle, one without, with brass ornaments for face and neck; two sheep-skins, as worn by the Abyssinians over the cloth, each the skin of one sheep; two Abyssinian double-edged sabres, handles of rhinoceros horn.

No. 4.—Two elephants' tusks.

No. 5.—Two elephants' tusks.

No. 6.—Two Abyssinian lances.

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* No. 101. † No. 107. ‡ No. 102. § See Annex to No. 1 B.

No. 114.

Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 23, 1851.

I HAVE to acquaint you, in reply to your despatch of the 18th of March,* that I approve of your abstaining from giving to the Ras of Abyssinia the money which, by my despatch of the 19th of October last,† you were authorised to present to him.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 115.

Viscount Palmerston to Sir S. Canning.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 27, 1851.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency copies of three despatches from Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia,‡ and, with reference to that of the 18th of March,§ I have to instruct you to state to the Turkish Government that if the Governor of Massowah gives Her Majesty's Government any further cause of complaint in regard to his conduct towards Mr. Plowden, a British ship-of-war will be sent to Massowah, the Commander of which will be instructed to adopt such measures as may be necessary to protect Mr. Plowden in the full enjoyment of those liberties and privileges which of right belong to him, and to obtain redress and satisfaction for all past grievances.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

No. 116.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received August 27.)

My Lord, *Massowah, May* 18, 1851.

HAVING visited Dejaj Oobeay, the Governor of Tigré, that Chief evinced much reluctance in permitting me to pass through his dominions on my visit to Ras Ali, and even made me large offers to induce me to remain. I succeeded, with much difficulty, in obtaining his permission to proceed, and in parting with him on friendly terms.

It is my opinion that he intends shortly to rebel against the Ras, and as he has just vanquished the last enemy that troubled himself, and is in large force, the result of the contest will be doubtful.

I mention this now as, should a war break out whilst I am with the Ras, all correspondence will be impossible, the only road to the sea being through the passes in Dejaj Oobeay's territories.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 117.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received August 27.)

My Lord, *Bichana, June* 24, 1851.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I arrived here at the Ras's camp last night, and should have presented to him this morning Her Majesty's ratification.

During the night, robbers broke into the house appointed by the Ras for my residence, and carried away a box containing my papers, including the Queen's ratification, and I have with difficulty procured this sheet of paper and writing materials.

The Tacassee River will be full in twelve days hence, and I therefore lose not a moment in requesting your Lordship to send me a copy of the ratification and draft of certificate; also a copy of my last despatch, dated the 18th ultimo.‖

No other public papers have been lost, but of my private documents not one has escaped.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 110. † No. 96. ‡ Nos. 107, 108, and 109. § No. 109. ‖ No. 116.

No. 118.

Viscount Palmerston to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 17, 1851.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 24th of June last,* stating that you had arrived on the preceding day at the camp of the Ras for the purpose of delivering to him the Queen's Ratification of the Treaty signed on the 2nd of November, 1849; but that during the night the place of your residence had been broken into by robbers, who carried off a box containing the ratification and other papers.

I lose no time in sending you, according to your request, a duplicate of Her Majesty's ratification, as well as of my despatch transmitting it, and a copy of your despatch of the 18th May last;† but in so doing I cannot help observing that you ought to have kept those important papers in the room in which you slept.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PALMERSTON.

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* No. 117.

† Nos. 89 and 116.

1852.

No. 119.

Mr. Herries to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received April* 22.)

My Lord, *India Board, April* 21, 1852.

WITH reference to the letter which Viscount Palmerston addressed to the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India on the 25th November, 1850,* I have the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch, dated the 22nd ultimo, from the East India Company's Political Agent at Aden to the Secretary of the Bombay Government, together with a copy of a letter from the King of Shoa to the Political Agent, written in November last, returning the box of 300 sovereigns which, by Lord Palmerston's desire, had been delivered to the King of Shoa.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. C. HERRIES.

Inclosure 1 in No. 119.

Captain Haines to the Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, March* 22, 1852.

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 20th instant I was surprised by the messenger of the King of Shoa returning to me the box containing 300 sovereigns (two of which only were injured, one cut in half, the other had been put in fire and filed), with a letter, the substance of which, translated, is annexed for the information of Government.

2. The messenger claimed from me 100 German crowns, as the King of Shoa declined remunerating him: this I declined, stating that he was sent by the King, and had not been employed by me. I thanked him for the box, and gave him a receipt, at the same time expressed my astonishment and regret at the ignorance of the people of Shoa. He stated that the King was exceedingly angry when it was found that merely a small box was sent him. "Why," exclaimed he, "the Commander Harris brought my father presents that required 150 camels to carry them, while to me they send a box of brass coins; why should the son be differently treated from the father?"

3. The messenger then asked for powder, shot, and guns, to which I informed him I could only obey orders, and I must now wait for further orders. He left Aden immediately, leaving the sovereigns in my possession.

4. May I request the orders of Government on the subject? I will communicate the above to the Honourable Charles Murray, C.B., Consul-General in Egypt, from whom I received the sovereigns for transmission to the King of Shoa.

I have, &c.

(Signed) S. B. HAINES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 119.

The King of Shoa to the Political Agent at Aden.

Praise be to God.

MAY the refreshing coolness of the north wind, and all health in sickness, attend Commander Haines Sahib, the beneficent, the most beneficent the leader of all learned doctors; the peace of God on him. Amen!

I beg to state you informed me you sent by the hands of Hadji Ibrahim what you had sent, and it was gold as I had asked you. It reached me, and I took hold of it and found it not to be gold. I tried it in the fire, I cut one in two, but could not make it out gold. It became brass. I told you to send red gold that would not turn to brass. I send this back to you by the hands of Hadji Shehem.

The friend of the father is the friend of the son; our affection for each other has been of profit, and when will it benefit you to break it off? I put between us Hadji Ibrahim

* No. 98.

Shehem, as agent. Even if our friendship is yours, let there not be enmity between us. Salam!

Written on Sunday, the month of Suffur (November 1851).

(Seal. Dedjasmaj Jeleel bin Saleh Selassee.)

No. 120.

The Earl of Malmesbury to Mr. Herries.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 28, 1852.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st instant,* inclosing a copy of a despatch from the Resident of the East India Company at Aden, from which it appears that the King of Shoa has returned the box of sovereigns sent to the Resident by Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, under instructions from this Office, to be forwarded to Shoa; and I have to request that the Resident may be directed to send back the box in question, and its contents, to this Office by the first convenient opportunity.

I am, &c.

(Signed) MALMESBURY.

No. 121.

Mr. C. A. Murray to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received May* 3.)

My Lord, *Cairo, April* 15, 1852.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that agreeably to instructions received from the Foreign Office in despatches dated July 4, 1849, and January 23, 1850,† I forwarded to Captain Haines, Political Agent at Aden, 300 sovereigns to be transmitted by him, on the first favourable occasion that might occur, to the King of Shoa.

I have the honour to inclose herewith, copy of a despatch, with its inclosures, which I have lately received from Captain Haines, from which it appears that his sable Majesty, insisting upon it that our English sovereigns are made of brass, has returned them to Captain Haines, who now holds them subject to the orders of Her Majesty's Government.

As the amount in question has been passed in the Treasury accounts of the year 1849, Her Majesty's Government will probably not desire that it should be diverted from its original purpose, and, as the ignorant native Prince seems unable to appreciate the donation in its present form, perhaps your Lordship will think it advisable that Captain Haines should ascertain what articles would be most desired or valued in Shoa, and should be instructed to purchase and forward such articles to the amount of the sum he now holds in deposit.

Waiting your Lordship's further instructions, I have, &c.

(Signed) CH. A. MURRAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 121.

Captain Haines to Mr. C. A. Murray.

Sir, *Aden, March* 26, 1852.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the 300 sovereigns you sent me for transmission to the King of Shoa have been returned under the impression that they were brass coins.

A copy of the King's letter to me, with my report to the Government of Bombay annexed, will explain particulars.

I have, &c.

(Signed) S. B. HAINES.

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* No. 119.

† Nos. 56 and 67.

Inclosure 2 in No. 121.

The King of Shoa to Captain Haines.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 119.]

Inclosure 3 in No. 121.

Captain Haines to the Secretary to Government, Bombay, March 22, 1852.

[See Inclosure 1 in No. 119.]

No. 122.

The Earl of Malmesbury to Mr. C. A. Murray.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 8, 1852.

I HAVE to acquaint you, in reply to your despatch of the 15th of April,* that the Resident of the East India Company at Aden will receive instructions to send back to this country the box with the 300 sovereigns returned to him by the King of Shoa.

I am, &c.

(Signed) MALMESBURY.

No. 123.

Consul Plowden to Viscount Palmerston.—(Received June 14, 1852.)

My Lord, *Ya Ginteet, October* 26, 1851.

THE rainy season having interrupted all communication since my last despatch dated the 24th June,† I inclose a copy of that document, as it may not have reached your Lordship.

The Ras is still quiet at Bichana, and no movements can be made by any of the chiefs for another month.

I have received no despatches from England since last March: I have posted messengers at Massowah to receive any that may arrive, and bring them immediately.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 124.

Consul Plowden to Earl Granville.—(Received June 14.)

My Lord, *Massowah, April* 8, 1852.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge Lord Palmerston's despatch of the 17th September, 1851,‡ inclosing a duplicate of Her Majesty's ratification of the Treaty concluded by me with the Ras of Abyssinia.

I inclose two certificates of the receipt of that ratification by His Highness the Ras, to which his seals are affixed.

I prepared two certificates, as I had no instructions respecting the language to be employed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 125.

Consul Plowden to Earl Granville.—(Received August 6.)

My Lord, *Massowah, June* 15, 1852.

HIS Highness the Ras has begged me to forward to Her Majesty the Queen a copy of the Psalms of David, in the Geez language, which as a specimen of Abyssinian writing and binding may not be uninteresting.

* No. 121. † No. 117. ‡ No. 118.

The Ras requests that a book may be sent to him of the same size filled with blank white vellum, such as that on which was written the ratification by Her Majesty of the Treaty concluded with a scroll border of an inch round each page and gilt edged.

He also requests a double-barrelled rifle, with powder, caps and lead, and a large musical box, the first sent being broken.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 126.

*Consul Plowden to Earl Granville.—(Received August 6.)**

My Lord, *Massowah, June* 20, 1852.

I HAVE the honour to inclose some remarks on a few points of the social system of Abyssinia that bear directly upon the Treaty we have concluded with His Highness Ras Ali. So peculiar is that system; so difficult to assimilate to European ideas—a difficulty felt by Bruce, and the cause, perhaps, of his ill-reception in England—that each despatch must swell to a volume should I endeavour to explain it in all points of view; nor will it ever be thoroughly understood until, by proximity, a free and frequent communication take place betwixt the two nations.

I may, by affording such information as I possess, induce each to think more, perhaps more favourably, of the other; but no efforts of mine can annihilate the 3,000 miles that interpose, or the more fatal barrier of the Turkish domination along the line of coast.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 126.

Remarks on the Social System of Abyssinia, in some points bearing upon the Treaty lately concluded.

IN speaking at all of Abyssinian institutions, it must be remembered, as a general key to their peculiarities, that the form of government and its military spirit are feudal; whilst in the laws and customs, the Jewish institutions are everywhere traceable.

The title of Ras signified, in the times of prosperous and hereditary succession, the Prime Minister and Commander-in-chief of the Emperor, and the highest rank in the Empire.

The Ras now claims the right, as then possessed by him, of appointing all other Chiefs of Provinces, and officers of every kind, at his will and pleasure: and having a sufficiently commanding force at his disposal, is, in fact, master and king of the country, the form even of consulting the Emperor having been disregarded for many years.

Amidst the conflicts, however, of great families, whose members claim the hereditary Chieftainship of different provinces, and whose name will at any moment conjure into existence a numerous army for rebellion or rapine, the Ras is obliged to employ a subtle and tortuous policy, rather than violence, in order to retain his control over those fierce warriors—his equals by birth, impatient of a superior, and in some instances sufficiently powerful to be nearly independent. The resemblance is apparent to the times of Louis XI of France and his rebellious vassals.

Each Chief holding the rank of "Dejajmatch," *quasi* Duke, appointed by the Ras, or as often only obtaining his consent after a successful contest with his own immediate rivals, is entire master of all sources of revenue within his territory, with full power really of life and death, theoretically vested in the Ras alone. His feudal subjection consists in the obligation to send, from time to time, some presents to his superior, and to bear his shield; that is, to follow him to war with as large a force as he can muster; against private enemies he is generally expected to protect himself. He takes tolls from all merchants passing through his district.

The most powerful of these feudal inferiors of the Ras is the Dejajmatch Oobeay, Chief of Yemen, who having added by conquest the whole of Tigré and other Provinces has become in point of warlike equipments fully the equal of the Ras, possesses every

* Laid before Parliament, 1866.

avenue leading from the interior to the sea, and acts in every respect as an independent Sovereign, though still nominally subject to the Ras, and paying to him a small yearly tribute of 5,000 to 10,000 dollars.

The immediate troops of the Ras consist of a number of petty Chiefs, governing one, two, or more villages, who imitate as far as they dare the independence of the greater Barons, and who take the field, when called on, with 5 or 500 men, according to their means.

Besides these, who are numerous, the Ras has his matchlock men, and four or five bands of rude and disorderly soldiery, his guards. From the lax system of government, and the manner of paying these men by quartering them on the country-people, with instructions to levy so much grain or other property, it may be supposed that these undisciplined troops, when at a small distance from the camp, are almost equally independent of the Ras, and frequently are simply organized bands of robbers, the rather that after the commission of any profitable crime they have but to reach the camp of some great feudal Chief at a distance from the Ras, and by entering his service obtain perfect immunity, or, would they enjoy in ease their spoil, to take shelter in the nearest well-reputed church, which is inviolable as the "city of refuge" of the Mosaic Law.

Regarding the collection of duties, each Chief claims them as part of his revenues, excepting those levied at Gondar, Adowah, and a few other towns, collected by an officer called the "Negadeh Ras," who pays a fixed sum yearly to the Ras or Oobeay, and extorts as much as he can from the merchants for his own profits.

Custom-houses, or rather passes, have been established in Abyssinia on every spot where Nature in that mountainous country has confined the road to some narrow defile, not to be avoided without an immense détour, if at all, and near some commandng elevation where a good look-out can be stationed, or perhaps at a brook fordable only at one spot; and as the different Chiefs sometimes give orders on the sudden to allow no one to pass, great trouble ensues, not only to merchants, but to all wayfarers. Frequent quarrels, and even deaths, occur at these posts, always kept by armed men, and it requires no little temper and knowledge of the country to avoid these inconveniences, or to send messengers, &c., to any distance in safety.

A merchant starts from Massowah for Basso, the last mercantile station to the southward of Christian Abyssinia; he pays at Massowah the import or export duty to the Turkish Governor: he must then engage a guide from the Shohos, an independent tribe inhabiting the hills near the coast, and in possession of the only passable roads winding through defiles for fifty or sixty miles; according to the agreement made, and his appearance, wealthy or otherwise, he may pay this guide from 10 dollars to $\frac{1}{2}$ dollar. Arriving then in Oobeay's dominions, he will be stopped four or five times before he reaches Adowah, and on each occasion must arrange with those in charge of the tolls as he best can as regards payment, the amount being arbitrary, and the system in fact one of legalizedplunder.

On arrival at Adowah he pays certain more regulated duties to the Negadeh Ras of that town, a douceur, moreover, being expected as the price of a friendly settlement of dues.

After meeting the exactions of several minor posts he will next have to pay at the town of Doobaruk, in the Province of Waggera, duties on the same scale with those of Adowah, generally about 1 dollar per mule-load of merchandize, and being then clear of the territories of Dejajmatch Oobeay, enters those of Ras Ali, whose tolls commence at Gondar. Here the duties are nominally somewhat settled, though long disputes almost invariably occur, and after three or four more detentions and payments on a smaller scale in Begemder, he passes the Nile, and arrives in the domains of the Chiefs of Godjam or Dámot. These may be in a state of entire rebellion or of sulky submission to the Ras: as in the latter case they pay him a fixed tribute, he does not interfere with their toll-levying, and the merchant must disburse at some eight or ten more stages of his journey ere he can reach Basso.

It is needless to dwell on the danger to the merchant in the case of revolted Chiefs, who plunder indiscriminately, and from whom, even if captured, the recovery of any property is hopeless As tolls are taken each way at the places mentioned, all these observations apply equally to exporting as to importing.

A code of laws called the "Feth Negust," said to have been compiled by the Council of Three Hundred, in the earlier ages of the Church, and regarded originally as of almost equal authority with the Sacred Writings, is the guide of the Abyssinian Chiefs in their decisions as judges. The twelve "Licks" of Gondar originally formed the Supreme Court of Justice, a Court of Final Appeal; but the office ceased with the power of the Emperors.

The "Feth Negust" is now expounded by some learned priest or scribe, and there are few in the country competent to the task. It is frequently consulted, more after the fashion of the "Sortes Virgilianæ," the book being opened with solemnity, and the first passage found that appears to bear upon the question, being hastily dressed to suit the case in hand, and present an aspect of oracular wisdom; in this light it is at least regarded by the uninformed multitude, that is, the whole nation, save the priesthood, and it is invariably set aside when the passions or whims of the presiding Chief seem to require it.

On the accusation of any man in Abyssinia of any crime, he has the right to demand to be heard in the first instance by his own Judge, that is, either the Chief of his village or the master to whom he is attached for the time being, and to be forwarded to his residence, together with his accuser, by any authority to whom he shall appeal in the King's name.

Strangers may be judged by the district Chief or the Chief paramount, as they may choose; in every way the final right of appeal to the Supreme Ruler exists, but the Ras not being strong enough to enforce this right at present in the case of Oobeay, the decisions of that Chief are considered final. The Chiefs of the Agows of Lasta, called the "Wagshoom," and the Chief of Kwora, on the borders of Sennaar, although feudally subject to the Ras, claim also this privilege of final judgment; but with these exceptions the greatest Chief may, on the complaint of a peasant, be summoned from any distance to appear at the Ras's Court, and be obliged personally to answer the charge before the "Af-a-Negoos," or King's mouth, an officer who hears all cases, and reports them concisely to the Ras for his verbal decision.

After an accusation, before the pleadings can commence, both parties must give security approved of by the "Af-a-Negoos." These bails or securities are answerable for the execution of the sentence whatever it may be, or must suffer it themselves should the principals abscond. But at the end of the trial these first securities may declare off in case of doubting their principals, and others must be found; the only alternative to the convicted party being chains.

In all suits, civil or criminal, there is no prosecution by the Crown, and no police of any kind. The party aggrieved must lay the accusation, find out the aggressor, seize him, and convict him as he best may.

The Mosaic law of blood for blood being in full force, when a man is convicted of having killed another, whether purposely or by accident, or in self-defence, he is handed over to the relatives of the deceased to be put to death by them, unless they can be persuaded to accept the blood-money, a similar sum being also paid into the Royal Treasury. It not unfrequently happens that no relation is found sufficiently near of kin to interfere in the matter, and the homicide then escapes scot-free. With the greater Chiefs there is generally a desire to administer justice impartially, when not embarrassed by some political motive.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

1853.

No. 127.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received April* 29, 1853.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 15, 1852.

HAVING recently travelled in the independent districts to the northward of Massowah, along the coast of the Red Sea, the following facts I think it right to communicate.

These tribes were formerly subject to the Emperors of Gondar, and one station of importance was in the country of the Hababs, where extensive ruins are still visible of stone houses. At present, from want of protection, these tribes have no fixed habitations, and are equally persecuted for tribute by Turk and Christian. For the same reason they have, within the last hundred years, seceded from the Christian and adopted in great measure the Mahometan faith, as being that of the nearest of their tormentors.

I know from the mouths of many that they would be happy to return to the faith of their fathers, literally speaking, as many even of the present race bear Christian names; but they must then be able to claim a Christian protector.

The way in which this might be effected I have already more than sufficiently pressed on Her Majesty's Government; I shall therefore limit myself to the communication of any interesting fact such as the above that may fall under my notice from time to time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 128.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received April* 29.)

My Lord, *Massowah, January* 24, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that one of the great vassals of Ras Ali, named Dejajmatch Kasai, possessing large provinces between Gondar and Sennaar, has rebelled, and having defeated and slain the great chieftain Dejajmatch Goseho, despatched against him by the Ras, has pillaged Gondar and the adjoining provinces.

The Ras has ordered several large bodies of troops to be put in motion from Tigré and Godjam, but the final result of these matters is still very uncertain. Much must depend upon the continued fidelity or neutrality of the Dejajmatch Oobeay, who, whilst tributary, is nearly the equal of the Ras himself.

It is evident that as long as the feudal system prevails in Abyssinia, it is hopeless to expect tranquillity; I trust, however, that at present the position and power of the Ras will be in nowise endangered.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 129.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received April* 29.)

My Lord, *Massowah, February* 12, 1853.

I HAVE to state for your Lordship's information, that, in addition to a Roman Catholic Bishop of Abyssinia, there has also been appointed a Bishop of the Gallas, with several assistant priests.

This person has at last entered into the Galla county, south of the Abyssinian province of Godjam with one companion. I have written to Godjam for further and exact information; and must point out to your Lordship how vigorous is this step, in comparison with the fruitless squabbles of our Protestant Missions, by which they first wasted their time, and then lost their footing—squabbles with a corrupt nation, studiously kept in ignorance by an all-powerful and numerous priesthood.

With two Bishops, some ten or twelve priests, and a large command of money, your Lordship will see that the Romish Church is not inactive in this quarter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 130.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(Received April 29.)

My Lord, *Massowah, February* 13, 1853.

I HAVE to inform you that the Turkish Pasha of this place had ordered an expedition by land and sea against Amphylla, to assert there the authority of the Sultan, and to receive tribute.

The Shohos, a powerful tribe in this neighbourhood, then assembled to the number of 3,000, and threatened to plunder the whole country in the rear of the Turkish troops, as far as Massowah. The Naib, who has still some family influence, went to the meeting, and has partially pacified these people ; the expedition proposed to Amphylla has, however, been postponed indefinitely.

It is singular, that with scarcely a foot of ground beyond their fortress, the Pasha should, the other day, ask me in full Divan, if I did not consider Abyssinia as a Pashalic of the Sultan. I simply replied, that I had no information on that point. It is certain that both Egypt and Constantinople have never ceased to covet the possession of that fine country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 131.

*Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(Received July 2.)**

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 23, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a short statement of our present relations with Northern Abyssinia.

I have much difficulty in presenting the information I would give, in a concise form, as I know of nothing that I can refer to, analogous with the singular institutions of this country.

I have received no reply to my despatch of the 20th June, 1852,† with an inclosure, upon similar matters, as bearing upon our Treaty with the Ras Ali. I trust that your Lordship will now deem it fit to examine both the reports, and to furnish me with instructions that shall consider the difficulties that I have endeavoured to point out, and inform me, as far as may be deemed expedient, of the views and intentions of Her Majesty's Government here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 131.

*Statement of Relations with Abyssinia.**

THE power of the Ras of Begemder dates nearly from the overthrow of the Ahtyee, or Hatze, or Emperor of Gondar, by Ras Michael.

The present Ras, though no other Chief is powerful enough to encounter him in the field, can only retain his title by the maintenance of a large army and constant wars against his rebellious vassals. Of all the inferior Chiefs, " whose title is Dejajmatch," the greatest is Dejajmatch Oobeay, who, partly by the concurrence of the Ras, and more by subtlety, fortune, and the force of arms, governs with absolute sway the country from near the coast of the Red Sea to Gondar, and from Lasta to Sennaar.

The only conditions that should prevent him from being regarded as an independent sovereign, being—his title of Dejajmatch held from the Ras, and the payment of a tribute of money to him yearly, as his feudal superior. Otherwise the Ras does not interfere with

* Laid before Parliament, 1866. † No. 126.

his rule over these vast provinces by which he commands every avenue to the interior of the country available for trade or policy.

The Ras is engaged in the siege of a hill-fort in Godjam now for four years, and another Chief in rebellion, after gaining two battles, has pillaged Gondar, and rendered all communication with Godjam circuitous or dangerous.

It is now doubtful if the Dejajmatch Oobeay will be faithful to his allegiance, or rebel, in the hope of seizing the supreme power. In the latter case, the whole land will bristle with arms, and all communication become impossible.

Such is the present political state of Abyssinia.

The boundaries of Northern Abyssinia, at present defined as the districts inhabited by Christians, do not reach by ninety or one hundred miles to the Red Sea at any point. This interval is occupied by various more savage tribes—the Adaiel, the Azobo Gallas, the Areya Gallas, the Danakil, the Taltals, the Shoho, the Habab, and the Arab tribes of the Beni Ameer; these have adopted more or less strictly the Mussulman faith, and are all, excepting the Gallas, wandering tribes, living by their flocks or their camels, governed by no master, and occupied with incessant feuds or combats.

Through the district occupied by the Shoho is the nearest route to Abyssinia, and the most practicable. It is indeed the only one desirable, seeing that it bears directly on Massowah, the only good harbour I believe in the Red Sea from Sowakin to the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb.

These tribes of Shoho furnish guides to all passers for half-a-dollar each, and even conduct a party for the same sum; rich native caravans pay according to their numbers, but always moderately, and a white man is of course considered fair booty to be fleeced according to the extent of his ignorance or his fears. Though vexatious by their delays, they are never known to rob or ill-treat any voyager; they fulfil strictly their contract of safe conduct through their terrritories into Abyssinia, and no reasonable man can find fault with their moderate charge for this. It is true that occasionally the Taltal tribes make an incursion, and plunder travellers not well armed, in spite of the Shiho, watching their occasion when the warriors of the latter tribe are engaged elsewhere; but this impugns not their good faith, having never been suspected of collusion.

They acknowledge no superior, save the elders of the tribe in council, now that the Naibs of Arkeeko are politically extinct.

The Turkish Government occupying the island of Massowah, their Pasha here claims also the coast for fifty or sixty miles inland, and forces various feeble tribes in those limits to pay tribute, but, in return, affords them no protection when devastated by the Shoho, or the ruthless soldiery of Oobeay. These people are, therefore, sufficiently miserable and poor.

No. 132.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received July* 2.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 24, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inclose three statements relative to the trade of Massowah during the year 1852, and as the Turkish Government, here at least, does its best to repress all commercial vivacity, these statements will be about the average commerce of each year.

It is the system of the Turkish Governors here—"a system that changes not with the Governor"—to teach the fanatics of Massowah and the more ignorant Abyssinians, as far as possible, to hate or regard with suspicion all Europeans.

I shall mention only one fact in support of that assertion, being that all merchants of this town, as well as all officers of the Pasha, are deterred either by direct threats (verbal, of course) or strong hints from ever paying me the common civility of a visit.

Nor do I say this from any irritation, as I am able to state that, notwithstanding such unfriendly proceedings, I am much and generally respected by the inhabitants, Mahometans and Christians.

But I have had some difficulty in collecting the data for these statements, which are, however, I believe, pretty correct.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 132.

(No. 1.)—PRODUCE of Abyssinia exported from Massowah.

Article.	Imported from Abyssinia.		Exported.	Value in German Crowns.	Duties in German Crowns.
Slaves*	Number	1,100	1,010	..	7,205
Coffee	Kantar	800	400	5,000	600
Civet or Zibbad	Horns	200	200	10,000	1,200
Wax	Frasla	2,000	2,000	8,000	960
Ghee	Madana	60,000	57,500	90,000	11,800
Ivory	Okeea	1,500	1,500	46,750	5,610
Hides	Koraja	750	750	5,350	642
Gold	Ounces	2,500	..	38,125	Smuggled.
Pearls	..	..	..	25,000	,,
Pearl shells	..	..	..	2,000	,,
Mules	Number	413	413	4,130	500
Senna†	..	..	..	..	..
Gum	Kantar	200	200	800	96
Mats	Number	2,500	1,250	500	60
Honey	Kobas	10,000	7,000	2,000	240
Cowries	Baskets	27	27	$37\frac{1}{2}$	$4\frac{1}{2}$
Total	..	..	..	$237,692\frac{1}{2}$	$28,917\frac{1}{2}$

* Value of slaves, probably 35,000 German crowns.

† No trade; but grows in abundance.

NOTE of Weights and Measures.

1 frasla is 20 lbs. of anything.
1 okeea is 43 lbs.
1 kantar is 100 lbs.
1 zembeel is 300 lbs.
1 horn is 450 drachms.
1 koba = $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
1 madana is 8 kobas.
1 koraja is 20 pieces of any stuff, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 132.

(No. 2.)—IMPORTS into Massowah from India by British Indian Subjects.

Article.	Quantity.		Value.	Duty.
			German crowns.	German crowns.
Suli (red bunting)	Koraja	1,250	25,000	1,250
Maraodi, Keshi	Ditto	6,500	19,500	975
Ditto, Surati	Ditto	1,500	9,750	$487\frac{1}{2}$
Korjan	Cases	475	9,500	475
Cloth, red	Pieces of 3 yards	1,800	3,600	180
Cotton	Bähr	300	7,500	375
Tobacco, Surati	Bundles	900	13,500	675
Nails	Ditto	100	1,000	50
Pepper, black	Ditto	150	1,800	90
Calico, Seliti	Koraja	400	6,000	300
Ditto, Percala	Ditto	50	400	20
Calico	Ditto	1,500	2,625	$131\frac{1}{4}$
Handkerchiefs, called Mahazem	Ditto	250	6,250	$312\frac{1}{2}$
Ditto, ditto Kesseer	Ditto	600	3,600	180
Ditto, ditto Shawader	Ditto	250	2,500	125
Ditto, ditto Jarro	Ditto	150	1,500	75
Coffee cups	Boxes	8	400	20
Sugar candy	Casks	100	500	25
Ditto, in powder	Sacks	75	675	$33\frac{3}{4}$
Damask	Pieces	50	1,250	$62\frac{1}{2}$
Ditto, cotton velvet	Ditto	150	900	45
Ditto, silk velvet	Ditto	10	100	5
Printed calicos	Ditto	400	1,000	50
Black silk handkerchiefs, from Bengal	Koraja	50	1,100	55
Cotton handkerchiefs, from Surati	Ditto	400	2,400	120
Red silk ditto, ditto	Ditto	10	400	20
Zinc or solder	Farasla	500	625	31
Handkerchiefs, silk, Surati	Koraja	250	5,000	250
Ditto, cotton	Ditto	100	600	30
Cords	Bundles	150	450	$22\frac{1}{2}$
Coarse printed cloth, called Soora	Koraja	100	600	30
Turban pieces	Pieces	500	500	25
Handkerchiefs, called Kesshi Kani	Koraja	75	1,125	$56\frac{1}{4}$
Canvass	Pieces	100	400	20
Sandalwood	Farasla	200	350	$17\frac{1}{2}$
Inferior linen cloth	Bundles	20	800	40
Planks	Koraja	7	140	7
Raw silk	Papers	200	250	$12\frac{1}{2}$
Total	..		133,590	$6,679\frac{1}{2}$

NOTE.—1 bahr. .. .. = 360 lbs.
1 bundle of tobacco .. .. = 25 frasla.
1 ditto of nails, called rubta .. .. = 6 ditto.
1 ditto of pepper, called mora .. .. = 9 ditto.
1 ditto of cords .. .. = 50 lbs.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure 3 in No. 132.

(No. 3.)—IMPORTS from Arabia and Egypt.

Article.	Quantity.		Value.
			German Crowns.
Silk, raw	Koraja ..	150	9,000
Beads, Gemrat	Papers ..	2,000	8,000
„ Romanee	Boxes ..	20	1,600
„ of sorts	„ ..	200	4,000
„ Angat	„ ..	20	400
„ Teemoo	„ ..	10	200
„ Moho	Papers ..	100	100
„ Manjoor	„ ..	500	1,000
„ Kurhanee	„ ..	200	500
„ Tufo..	„ ..	100	200
Copper	Shedad ..	500	17,500
Cloth, Egypt	Koraja ..	500	17,500
Red morocco	„ ..	150	1,050
Green morocco	„ ..	50	100
Coarse long cloth	„ .	100	3,500
Turbans	„ ..	100	2,000
Antimony	Kuttah ..	50	750
Soap	Kantar ..	50	500
Cotton handkerchiefs	Koraja ..	20	100
Tumblers	„ ..	200	400
Coffee cups	„ ..	1,000	250
Coarse turbans	„ ..	5	100
Paper	Shedad ..	200	300
Silk, raw, of colours	Koraja ..	2	120
Cutlery, looking glasses, &c.	..		500
Scents, as oil of cloves, &c.; also alum and sal ammoniac	..		800
Canvas	Koraja ..	5	75
Assafœtida	Zimbeel ..	10	50
Solder	Frasla ..	1,000	2,000
Spices	Ardab ..	10	100
Tobacco, Persian	Zimbeel ..	10	50
Printed calico	Koraja ..	20	300
Total	..		73,045

NOTES.

1. The duty cannot be named here, as it is already levied at Djeddah or other ports, and the goods enter Massowah on exhibiting a "rufteea," or pass.
2. Matchlocks are also sold in some quantity, but being prohibited, the trade is secret.
3. 1 shedad is 140 lbs.; 1 kuttah is 250 to 300 lbs.; 1 urdab about 120 lbs.
4. Total value of exports from Abyssinia, viâ Massowah, 272,692½ German crowns; total value of imports, 206,635 German crowns.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 133.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(Received July 2.)

My Lord, *Massowah, April 2, 1853.*

IN the inclosure to my despatch of the 23rd ultimo,* I have endeavoured to show that a Consul can effect little by his unaided struggles in Abyssinia.

There is also another consideration.

Were it possible that the Consul should succeed in surmounting all the difficulties that I have pointed out, and be perfectly well supported in his functions by the existing

* No. 131.

Chiefs, Ras Ali and Dejajmatch Oobeay, this would still be only for a lifetime, and the caprice of their successors would probably destroy a system that has no solid foundation.

This would be certain, were those successors their enemies, as often happens, in a country the prey of the most fortunate soldier.

I have been led to mention these reflections now, by the ill-health of Dejajmatch Oobeay. Should that Chief die, war, private and public, license and brigandage, will for months, perhaps years, convulse every province from the sea to Gondar, and with whom the final success may rest, none can say.

It is probable that Tigré will revert to some native Chief, and that the rest of the large territory Oobeay has united by the force of singular daring and capacity, will be divided amongst his sons or followers, but not till after many and bloody conflicts.

What course these Chiefs may adopt with regard to the Consul, or what influence the Ras may acquire over them, cannot be foreseen.

In the Records of the Foreign Office in the year, I think, 1830–31, will be found some correspondence with Dejajmatch Sabagardis, then Sovereign of Tigré, with the account of a political mission sent to him; the objects of which were finally disappointed by his defeat in battle, and slaughter in cold blood afterwards, at the instigation of Dejajmatch Oobeay, who thereby paved the way for his own conquest.

The mission, which thus arrived too late, was in continuation of former propositions made to the Ras Welda Selassie of Tigré, predecessor of Sabagardis, through the medium of Mr. Salt, then Consul-General in Egypt.

During the whole life of this Ras, Sabagardis was in rebellion, and on his death attained to power by the sword; so that on each occasion the reigning Prince has been succeeded by his mortal enemy. The Ras Welda Selassie was also the object of hatred and persecution to the famous Ras Michael, who preceeded him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 134.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received September 19.)

My Lord, *Adowah, May 23, 1853.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 2nd ultimo,* I have the honour to inform you that Dejajmatch Oobeay is happily quite recovered from his dangerous illness; I say happily, inasmuch as his death would have been the signal for plunder and disorder throughout all the country between Gondar and the sea.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 135.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received September 19.)

My Lord, *Adowah, May 24, 1853.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 24th January last,† wherein I mention the revolt of Dejajmatch Kasai against the Ras Ali, I have the honour further to inform you that this rebel Chief has gained another decisive victory over the combined forces of Ras Ali and Dejajmatch Oobeay sent against him, killing the Chiefs in command, near relations of the Ras.

He has since ravaged Begemder in various directions, and even as far as Debra Tabor, the residence of the Ras.

On the other hand, the Ras himself in Godjam, after five years' siege, has reduced the rebel Chief of that province to submission; and, being a humane and generous man, has granted him free pardon with his former rank and authority.

The Ras will now, therefore, probably return to Begemder, to check in person the formidable revolt of Dejajmatch Kasai, who has shown himself a daring and skilful adversary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 133. † No. 128.

No. 136.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received September 19.)

My Lord, *Adowah, May* 24, 1853.

IN my despatch of the 23rd of March last,* I have pointed out the precarious nature of a Consulate here, owing to the distracted state of the country, and the absence of any efficient sovereign authority; at the same time not to lose the ground I have gained, I am now negotiating with the Ras for the public proclamation of the Consulate, and the principal points of the Treaty we have concluded with him.

For the same reasons as above, this proclamation will be at present of little real use, still it will be a step in advance.

From the difficulty of corresponding, and the hesitating nature of the Ras, it will be a work of some time; the Ras having expressed his readiness to accede to my proposal at some indefinite period. I am pressing him to act at once.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 137.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.†

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 3, 1853.

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration the observations respecting your position in Abyssinia, and the difficulties in regard to opening a commerce with that country, contained in your despatches of the 20th of June, 1852, and of the 23rd of March, 1853.‡

Her Majesty's Government were led by the representations formerly made by you to expect that advantage would result to British interests from the conclusion of a Treaty with the Rulers of Abyssinia and from the establishment of a British Consulate in that country. It appears, however, from your reports now before me, that there is little reason to expect that such will be the case.

Nevertheless, Her Majesty's Government having concluded the Treaty and established the Consulate, are reluctant to renounce all hope of benefit from those measures; but their means of obtaining in this country information on which to act are necessarily very limited; and I must have recourse to you for a report as to the possibility of your establishing yourself either at Massowah or any other place on the sea-coast where you may retain an influence on the Rulers of Abyssinia, and facilitate communication with the provinces under their Government.

The measure which you have taken, as reported in your despatch of the 24th of May,§ for obtaining a public recognition of the Treaty and of the obligations resulting from it, appears to me to be judicious; but it is obvious from your despatches that the difficulty of dealing with Abyssinia results, in a great measure, from the absence of any place on the coast with which a safe communication can be kept up: and it is to the discovery of such a place at which you may fix your residence that I would particularly direct your attention.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 138.

Consul Plowden to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 28.)

My Lord, *Hallai, July* 25, 1853.

I HAVE alluded in my despatches dated the 24th January and 24th May of this year,‖ to the revolt of Dejajmatch Kasai against the Ras Ali.

Dejajmatch Kasai is increasing in force, and having, with the assistance of some Turks, in a degree disciplined his army, it is even thought by some that the Ras is in danger.

* No. 131.
† Laid before Parliament, 1866.
‡ Nos. 126 and 131.
§ No. 136.
‖ Nos. 128 and 135.

The rainy season having now set in and the rivers being flooded, all military operations will be suspended for about two months and a-half.

Dejajmatch Kasai has shown on several occasions a more enlarged and generous disposition than is usually found in an Abyssinian Chief, and appears disposed to encourage strangers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 139.

Consul Plowden to Lord J. Russell.—(*Received October* 28.)

My Lord, *Hallai, July* 28, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have just received the following report:—

That the Dejajmatch Kasai has completely defeated the Ras Ali, the latter having however escaped, hotly pursued.

There is just a possibility that the report may be false; but as from the antecedents, I think it highly probable, and as I have it upon strong authority, I think it right to inform your Lordship of so important an event at once.

I do this the rather as I know that others will write at once to Egypt, and if the statement be untrue I shall soon receive certain information.

I shall content myself at present with stating that there is some probability that Dejajmatch Kasai may become master of Abyssinia, and that he appears to be a man of sufficient capacity to civilize and improve this distracted country.

He has already, in his camp and territory, put a stop to several barbarous and disgusting practices, and in his reception of Europeans has shown that he values them and their arts far more highly than any other Abyssinian Chief has lately been disposed to do.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 140.

Consul Plowden to Lord J. Russell.—(*Received October* 28.)

My Lord, *Hallai, July* 28, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to state that the Aboona Salama, High Priest of Abyssinia, a man from his position necessarily of great influence, has preferred to me the following request:—

That having occasion often to send followers or property to Egypt, they are subject to loss or maltreatment at Massowah and Djeddah for want of any legal protection.

He therefore requests that his emissaries and property may receive at those places the protection of the British authorities, and is ready in return to lend his powerful influence to the English in Abyssinia.

This influence in a country so ignorant and superstitious is not to be despised; and the rather, on considering, that whatever changes of chiefs or dynasties may occur, the Aboona will probably be always highly revered, both by the populace and their rulers.

I therefore would recommend his request to the favourable and speedy consideration of your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 141.

Consul Plowden to Lord J. Russell.—(*Received October* 28.)

My Lord, *Hallai, August* 29, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to state that the news of the defeat of Ras Ali by Dejajmatch Kasai, contained in my despatch of the 28th July, is confirmed.

The Ras is now in Debra Tabor, raising fresh troops, and Dejajmatch Kasai has found a new adversary in Godjam, in the person of Dejajmatch Birro, released from his hill fort by the flight of the Ras.

Dejajmatch Oobeay is now preparing to assist the Ras as soon as the rains shall abate.

The whole country beyond Gondar is in arms, and at least a dozen great Chiefs have all secret intentions of aiming at power.

How it will end none can say, but in the meantime there is a scene of wonderful confusion; not only affairs are embarrassed but legislation is almost suspended, and each man's person and property is in imminent peril.

My messenger states that he passed with great difficulty, having been several times seized, stripped, and in danger of his life; that every pass and jungle swarms with brigands, and that the roads are strewed with dead bodies, of whose death no question is asked, even within a mile or two of Debra Tabor.

Till, by the fortune of arms, some order be restored under some one Chief, further negotiations with the Ras must be useless.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 142.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 4, 1853.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 28th of July last,* reporting that the Aboona Salama, or High Priest of Abyssinia, has requested that his emissaries and property may be protected by the British authorities at Massowah and Djeddah, at which places they are subject to maltreatment for the want of some legal protection.

In reply I have to state to you, that I am not aware that there would be any objection or impropriety in your affording protection to the High Priest's followers and property, and I accordingly authorise you to give his agents the benefit of your advice and assistance whenever you can properly do so without committing yourself or your Government.

A similar instruction will be addressed to the British Vice-Consul at Djeddah.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 143.

The Earl of Clarendon to Acting Consul-General Green.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 8, 1853.

I HAVE to acquaint you that I have received a despatch from Mr. Plowden,* Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, in which he informs me that the Aboona Salama, or High Priest of Abyssinia, has requested that his emissaries and property may be protected by the British authorities at Djeddah, at which place it is asserted they are subject to maltreatment by the Egyptian authorities, for the want of some legal protection.

I am not aware that there would be any objection or impropriety in acceding to this request on the part of a high authority of a country in friendly relations with the British Government; and I have therefore to desire that you will instruct Mr. Cole, the British Vice-Consul at Djeddah, to give the High Priest's Agents the benefit of his advice and assistance whenever he can properly do so, without committing himself or his Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

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* No. 140.

No. 144.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received November* 12.)

My Lord, *Massowah, September* 28, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the troops of the Ras Ali have been again defeated by Dejajmatch Kasai.

The Ras has fled to the Gallas, and Dejajmatch Kasai is now in Debra Tabor.

The rainy season being now over, the issue of this contest will soon be known.

If Dejajmatch Kasai obtain a complete mastery over the whole country, as he is a man of talent, there will be some prospect of increasing our intercourse with Abyssinia

Should he, on the contrary, fail now, whether the Ras Ali be reinstated or another, or the land be divided by many Chiefs, there will be small prospect of negotiating with success in Abyssinia for years to come.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 145.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received November* 12.)

My Lord, *Massowah, September* 28, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Shoho tribes near this coast have quarrelled with the Turkish garrison.

The Shohos are Mahometans, Republicans, and independent, paying tribute to no-one, and possess the passes between the Christian country and the sea; they now threaten to stop this road.

The Turks have here but few troops; and these being discontented, many desert into Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 146.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received November* 12.)

My Lord, *Massowah, October* 10, 1853.

THE Shoho tribes in this neighbourhood possessing, as I have mentioned, the passes into Abyssinia, have commenced a system of stoppage and robbery in their territories; they threaten also to attack the villages on the mainland near Massowah.

The Turkish Government here has just sufficient strength to have provoked this useless quarrel, and neither force nor energy sufficient to obtain respect from these turbulent neighbours, who are also independent of the Chiefs of Abyssinia.

Thus every person who quits Massowah for Abyssinia, or even for a few miles, is now left to his own resources for his safety.

These tribes are numerous and subtle, and confident in the strength of their mountain ranges.

I am personally on good terms with them, and have tried to effect an arrangement, but have not succeeded owing to the supineness of the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 147.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received December* 27.)

My Lord, *Massowah, October* 15, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Ras Ali has fled into the Galla provinces, near Shoa, on its northern boundary, where Dejajmatch Kasai has followed him.

In Godjam, to the south, Dejajmatch Birro has collected large forces, and will prove himself a formidable competitor to Dejajmatch Kasai.

Dejajmatch Oobeay, to the north and in Tigré, seems inclined to remain neutral in the contest at present.

There appears to be but little chance for the Ras Ali; in the meantime it remains so uncertain who will finally prevail in the struggle, if any does so entirely, that it must be useless at present to risk any negotiation.

A few months will probably decide all, and if then Dejajmatch Kasai shall be powerful enough to unite the whole country under a vigorous Government, his character will be favourable to our views.

If, on the contrary, he fails, there will be little prospect of doing any good for some time in the interior of the country, which will then present a scene of terrible confusion.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 148.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received December 27.)

My Lord, *Massowah, October* 20, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Dejaj Oobeay, the Chief of Tigré, has several times pressed me to assist him in buying with his own money some muskets and rifles, and that I have as often refused.

His last letter being curious, I inclose a translation of it.

I have often pointed out to Her Majesty's Government that it is not reasonable to expect anything for nothing from an Abyssinian Chief; nor can Dejaj Oobeay understand how on the one hand I request, and even obtain his friendship, and on the other refuse him so slight a request.

Equally impossible is it to explain to the Abyssinians the nature of our relations with the Turkish Government.

Being aware that the only sea-port to his country is in the hands of the Turks, and that fire-arms will not be allowed to pass, he trusts to my influence to effect this for him.

If I do not meet his wishes, and assist him, it is certain that his present good-will will change at the least to indifference; and I think, not without some reason. By the fall of the Ras Ali, Dejaj Oobeay is at present quite independent; how the result of the the future struggle with Dejaj Kasai may change his position, or increase his power, cannot yet be known.

It would be well, however, either to take the necessary pains to reciprocate the friendship we have demanded, or to abandon the idea at once, if it be useless.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 148.

Dejaj Oobeay to Consul Plowden.

(Translation.)

MAY this letter from Dejajmatch Oobeay, King of Ethiopia, reach the Consul Plowden.

What were the terms of our friendship? That I should do what you demand of me, and that you should do what I ask you.

Now, if it be possible, do you go for me to your country; if not, some person in your confidence, who understands guns, should go. I will send Mr. Wurkee with him, on my part I wish to buy guns and pistols of different kinds and of good quality, and rely upon you.

I shall have the money ready after a few months.

1854.

No. 149.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received February* 28, 1854.)

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 21, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Dejaj Kasai has, on the one hand, made an irruption into the dominions of Dejaj Oobeay, near Gondar; and without encountering the latter chief, marched hurriedly towards Godjam, where, Dejaj Birro having assembled a large army, threatened his rear.

Dejaj Oobeay by this movement having been obliged to withdraw his whole army from Tigré; that province is left without any government for the present.

As a natural consequence, all have taken up arms, and the law of the strongest is the only one now in force throughout Abyssinia.

The Ras Ali is reduced to the condition of a rebel in his native province of Edjow, having been even defeated by an inferior chief attached to Dejaj Kasai.

Should this struggle, which now includes all chiefs of consequence in Abyssinia, end in the supremacy of any one, diplomatic relations may perhaps be renewed with a chance of success. This will depend much on the personal character of the fortunate competitor.

While the struggle lasts, it is difficult even to send a messenger from one point to another in the interior.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 150.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received February* 28, 1854.)

My Lord. *Massowah, December* 21, 1853.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 3rd October, 1853,* and shall prepare as soon as is possible the report you require, embodying all the information I possess regarding the interior and the coast.

From my late despatches respecting the position of Ras Ali, your Lordship will see that our Treaty with him is likely to become a nullity, at least with regard to any immediate benefit.

I shall, therefore, seek rather to point out the means for procuring an influence over the people of Abyssinia, than over their very ephemeral governments.

In the meantime, I would point out to your Lordship, that Her Majesty's Government has sent three expeditions to Abyssinia previous to my appointment.

The first, that of Mr. Salt, the time of the Ras Welda Selasee; that of Mr. Coffin, to the Dejaj Sabargardis, both these in Tigré; and, finally, that of Captain Harris, to Shoa.

Some useful information might perhaps be found in the official records of these Missions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 151.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 13.)

My Lord, *Massowah, January* 25, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Ras Ali is still holding out in Edjow, and Dejaj Kasai, in possession of Begemder, Gondar, &c. He continues to increase his forces, and it is uncertain in what quarter he will strike the next blow.

Dejaj Oobeay has been obliged for the present to abandon Tigré, which province is

* No. 137.

much distracted, and partly in the hands of Balguda Areya, the nephew of Sabagardis, and well disposed to English alliance, though I refrain from intercourse with him in the present unsettled state of affairs. As soon as the Ras Ali can find means to send a letter, he will possibly apply to me for assistance in some shape, money, guns, or powder; and I wish for some orders from your Lordship as to the tone I should adopt in my replies.

If he finds that he is to reap no advantage in his adversity, from the Treaty he made in his prosperity, he will hereafter set little value on our amity, should the strange revolutions of this country replace him in power.

Considering that my correspondence with England occupies often many months, I think that Her Majesty's Government should authorise me to expend 100*l.* or 200*l.* for his benefit, if circumstances should occur that render it expedient in my opinion.

Your Lordship may be sure that such authority will not induce me to disburse the public money without I can render a satisfactory reason for it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 152.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received April 13.)

(Extract.) *Massowah, January 26, 1854.*

I HAVE the honour to be in receipt of your despatch of the 4th November, 1853,* authorising protection to the property and emissaries of the Aboona Salama, here and at Djeddah.

No. 153.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

(Extract.) *Foreign Office, April 15, 1854.*

I HAVE received your despatch of the 25th of January last,† and I hereby authorize you to expend a sum of money not exceeding 200*l.* to be applied for the benefit of the person therein mentioned if circumstances should, in your opinion, render such an expenditure expedient.

No. 154.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received April 27.)

My Lord, *Massowah, February 28, 1854.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that a peace has been patched up by Dejajmatch Kasai with Dejajmatch Oobeay, owing to the threatening appearance of Dejajmatch Birro in Godjam with a formidable army.

Dejajmatch Oobeay has thus been enabled to return to Tigré, which is for the present tolerably quiet.

The Ras Ali, taking advantage of the absence of Dejajmatch Kasai in Godjam, has re-appeared at Debra Tabor, trusting to his cavalry for a retreat, in case he should not by some lucky chance regain his power.

Except just now in Tigré, no one in Abyssinia knows whom to call master, and I can only hope that one or two decisive battles will end this confusion and uncertainty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 142. † No. 151.

No. 155.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 13.)

(Extract.) *Massowah, March 14, 1854.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that it is reported to me that Dejajmatch Kasai still makes progress, having defeated his antagonist in Godjam, Birro Gosho; and it is said that the Ras Ali, harassed even in his Galla provinces, has been obliged to take refuge in a sanctuary.

The Sholio tribes have within a few days plundered and slain the Bedouins at places ten or twelve miles distant from Massowah; and were it not for their fear of entangling themselves with me, would ere this have burnt the villages within sight of that Pashalic.

No. 156.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 13.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March 15, 1854.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Bey of Taka, an Egyptian military post, has ravaged a district called Senhaït, or Bogos, about 120 miles in a north-westerly direction from Massowah, and has carried into slavery, it is said, about 300 of the inhabitants.

The principal people of that country have represented to me that they are professing Christians, have always been so, and have never paid tribute to the Egyptian Governor; that they owe allegiance to Dejajmatch Oobeay, but that the confusion of affairs in Abyssinia prevents his affording them protection.

It appears that the Bey, having learnt that Oobeay was in some difficulty, thought it a favourable opportunity to extend the faith of his Prophet, and increase the revenue of his Master; and has accordingly threatened to repeat his invasions constantly until they shall adopt the Mahometan creed and submit to his sway.

They have a church, and a Catholic priest has lately baptized most of their children. The whole population has now fled to the mountains, and the Chiefs have sent to inform me that if within a certain time I can procure them an assurance of peace and protection they will receive it with joy, and act in all matters by my counsel; otherwise, that they have no alternative but to submit to the demands of the Bey in every respect.

They further request me, if possible, to build a Consulate in their territory, with the British flag; to which I have of course replied, that such a step cannot be taken without due deliberation and the orders of my Government.

I purpose immediately to visit that country, and also to have some conference with the Governor of Taka; after which I shall again address your Lordship on this subject.

In the meantime I have written to Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt, requesting him to obtain an order from His Highness the Pasha to prevent any further attacks in that quarter until the matter shall have been considered; and, if possible, to order the restitution of their wives and children to these poor people, who are even willing to pay ransom for them as far as their poverty will permit.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 157.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 13.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March 17, 1854.*

IT is with reluctance that I must again trouble your Lordship with complaints of the Governor of Massowah.

People that work for Europeans have again been flogged and imprisoned; and so much fear has been thereby, and by secret threats of the Pasha, here excited, that I cannot obtain a carpenter to make a box, for grass for my horse, or a trifling repair in my house.

The poor people, who are themselves on very good terms with us, avoid our houses as if we had the plague; and the more wealthy visit us with great reluctance.

After my repeated remonstrances, and the strong letters from Constantinople on this subject, these statements will scarcely appear credible to your Lordship; but they are stric ly true, and can easily be accounted for. First, from the great jealousy that exists of our correspondence with the Abyssinians, private orders are sent to all the Governors here, very different from the public document, and that document is worded with studied ambiguity. Secondly, the Pasha here wields an almost irresponsible power, and has only to hint his will without publicly compromising himself; he can, moreover, obtain with ease the signature of all the inhabitants to any report or statement however false. Thirdly, Mohammed Pasha, who was removed from Massowah, ostensibly on account of his ill-behaviour towards me in similar matters of work-people, is now Governor of the town of Djeddah, a higher appointment; and has received promotion, having in consequence great influence here.

In return for such persecution the Turkish Government cannot even afford us protection. In the Island of Massowah there is no pretence of police; and on the mainland our hands must protect our heads; so that whatever power the Pasha possesses is solely used for our annoyance.

Whether rightly or wrongly I am recognized here as Her Majesty's Consul, and that title should not be subjected to personal indignities.

When obliged, as now, to set out on a distant journey in the Government service, I find it difficult to induce those in charge of my houses and property at Massowah and Moncooloo to remain; they naturally infer that if my presence cannot check such intrigues, my absence will not mend the matter.

That the workmen of any district should be obliged to ask permission of the Governor to receive an order, is sufficiently arbitrary; but the Pasha here demands that the European residents and Consuls should ask his permission to employ them, and state exactly the work to be done; and to insure this he has directed those people not even to report to him the requisitions of an European.

Rather than appear troublesome or discontented I have passed over many insults, and have remonstrated with the Pasha until my remonstrances evidently confirmed him in his arbitrary conduct: but beyond a certain point patience becomes a fault, and as I do not think my demand is unreasonable I trust that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople will obtain such orders as may satisfy the people here that they can work for me when and where they please without risk of flogging and incarceration.

I do not pretend to point out the course to be adopted, but I have found by experience that orders sent to the Pasha of the Hedjaz have produced but little effect here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 158.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 26, 1854.

YOUR despatches to that of the 17th March* inclusive have been received at this office.

With reference to your despatch of the 15th of March last,† in which you report the conduct of the Bey of Taka in ravaging a district in Abyssinia, called Senhait or Bogos, and carrying into captivity a number of the inhabitants who are professing Christians, I have to acquaint you that I have instructed Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt‡ to inform the Viceroy that the British Government cannot remain indifferent to the fate of these Christians, and that they expect that immediate and precise orders will be given to the Bey of Taka to desist from persecuting them, and to set free the people whom he has violently led away into captivity.

I have further to acquaint you that I approve the visit which you propose making to the Governor of Taka in connection with these matters.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

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* No. 157. † No. 156. ‡ No. 166.

No. 159.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 28.)

My Lord, *Mogos, March* 29, 1854.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 15th instant,* I have the honour to inform you that I have arrived in this province, and have examined the principal inhabitants. Their church has been burnt wantonly, their villages destroyed, 340 have been carried into slavery, and the Bey of Taka is daily sending them messages, offering them the choice of the Koran or the sword.

The province is a part of the Christian country of Tigré, pays tribute to Dejajmatch Oobeay, and has never paid any to the Egyptian Government, and its inhabitants declare that they will abandon their houses rather than accept the Mahometan faith.

It is but five years since the district called Halhal, adjoining this, has yielded to similar menaces and attacks.

I trust that the confidence of these poor people in Her Majesty's Government, as represented by me, will not have been misplaced, and that your Lordship will check these insidious approaches of the Egyptian Government towards the conquest of Tigré, and prevent its taking advantage of the unhappy dissensions of the Abyssinians.

I request an order for the restoration of all the people carried away from this province, and forbidding all further attacks by the Governor of Taka, direct or indirect, on the districts of Mensa and Bogos, the latter sometimes called Billayn.

I am about to proceed to Kessala, the residence of the Bey of Taka, to check, if possible, any violence that he may contemplate in the meantime, and on my return I shall probably be able to furnish your Lordship with a rough map for your guidance as to boundaries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 160.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 28.)

My Lord, *Kessala, April* 18, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have seen the Bey of Taka, and have written to him a letter, of which I inclose a copy, relative to the affairs mentioned in my despatch of the 29th ultimo,† from Senhait.

I have as yet received no answer from the Bey; he appears to be a man fanatic in his creed, and who still hopes to propagate that creed by the sword. In conversation, he, like the Governor of Massowah, broaches the idea that Abyssinia is the property of his master the Pasha of Egypt. On what this absurdity is founded I know not; the Abyssinians having more right to Yemen, which they once possessed, than the Turks can have to a country in which they never set foot.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 160.

Consul Plowden to Mahommed Khosroof Bey.

Sir, *Kessala, April* 16, 1854.

THE principal inhabitants of Bogos, a Christian province of Tigré, have represented to me that your troops, with Arabs of the Beni Ameer, have entered their territory, burnt their villages and a church, plundered 1,800 head of cattle and other property, and carried into slavery 340 women and children; they have consequently requested my protection.

As I have reason to know that their statement is true, I have written to my Government and to Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt on the subject, and I now protest against any further act of violence on your part, directly or indirectly affecting

* No. 156. † No. 159.

the Province of Bogos, sometimes called Billayn or Senhait, or any other Christian province of Abyssinia, until the pleasure of our respective Governments shall be known.

Moreover, as the 340 Christians you have carried into slavery may perhaps be required at your hands, if you refuse to give them up to me as I now request you, I make you aware of the responsibility that may attach to you should they not be forthcoming when demanded by higher authority.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 161.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 28.)

My Lord, *Kessala, April 18, 1854.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 29th ultimo,* as I hear that the Bey of Taka has represented that the inhabitants of Bogos are not Christians but idolaters, I have to state that I was received in that Province by at least 5,000 persons, who all declared themselves of that faith, that I saw two churches, one burnt by the troops of Taka, and one entire, in which they revered the Holy Trinity, and which bore the names of St. Michael and St. George; that they believe in the Gospel, though they have none to explain it to them and that they wrote to me the letter of which I inclose a translation.

The Bey of Taka has already succeeded by violence in perverting some adjoining provinces to Islamism. The inhabitants of Bogos now resist, trusting that their appeal to Her Majesty's Government will not be fruitless; and I confidently hope that your Lordship's powerful interference will check the further progress of oppression, and restore to their country and their religion those who have been wantonly carried into slavery. The choicest girls having been conveyed to the harem of the Bey himself, that officer will of course strive to prevent such a restoration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 161.

Letter from the Inhabitants of Bogos requesting the Protection of the British Government from the Egyptian Troops.

(Translation.)

THE address of Bogos to Mr. Plowden, English Consul in Abyssinia.

The Governor of Taka, with the view of forcing us to adopt Mahometanism, has burnt our villages and carried away 340 of our wives and children; he has plundered our cattle, and destroyed our church.

Rather than adopt the Mussulman creed we will abandon our country. Dejajmatch Oobeay is not now in a position to assist us.

We now apply to you; if possible entreating you to remain among us as our father and our protector.

You are the Representative of the Christian English King; if you have power save us from the Turks; give us back our wives and children, and enable us to keep the faith of our fathers. You are our last resource; and above all we would desire that you should here build a house and display your flag.

Signed by eleven of the principal inhabitants of Bogos, and approved by a multitude in my presence.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 159.

No. 162.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 28.)

My Lord, *Kessala, April 20, 1854.*

WITH reference to my last despatches, I have the honour to inform you that after an interview with the Bey, and much hesitation on his part, he has written me an answer to my protest, stating that he will not give up the persons I demanded without orders from Cairo.

In the meantime he permits the sale of those prisoners daily into distant countries, and knows that the rainy season here will soon interrupt all communication; he enjoys the pleasure of having made so many converts to Islamism, and of showing the fanatics of these parts how little weight he attaches to the representations of a Christian Consul; he continues urgently to threaten the inhabitants of Bogos, and trusts that distance, delay, and the sympathy of his superiors, will in any case shelter him from all consequences.

He argues that those people have no religion; that having plundered them before he has a right to plunder them again: that their churches are not churches; and, finally, he calls them "Chistān" instead of Christian, as though the omission of an "r" could change their faith, race and language, and entitle him to sell them into slavery.

He has indeed every reason to debate the cause. The ambition of a soldier, the extension of his creed, the gratification of sensuality and cupidity, the mortification of yielding, and the hope of praise from his superiors who profit in their turn, all urge him to be tenacious of his booty.

I trust that your Lordship, with better grounds, will think fit to support my demands.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 163.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 28.)

My Lord, *Atbara, April 26, 1854.*

THE Governor of Taka having, for obvious reasons, attempted to intercept or delay my last despatches, as will appear by the inclosed statement, I am now obliged with much expense and trouble to send my dragoman with those letters to Khartoom, and have accompanied him on the road thus far.

The naturally violent disposition of the Bey, inflamed by the abject fear of all around him, is now irritated to the highest degree by my remonstrances. I demand compensation for the needless expense I have been put to; it is for Her Majesty's Government to weigh the insult, which savours of the last century, as well as the contempt he has shown for my protest by not attempting to check the sale of the people of Bogos as I demanded until the question should be discussed and decided by our superiors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 163.

Statement.

GIOVANNI KOSSIKA, Greek, agent of the mercantile house of Toma Sawad of Djeddah, under British protection, and resident at Kessala, undertook to forward my despatches viâ Khartoom, where there is no English Consul, and where he has a correspondent.

M. Kossika having addressed my packet to his correspondent, gave it to a "cavass" or messenger of the Pasha of Sennaar, who was in the habit of carrying his letters. This man took charge of them cheerfully, but two days after came at night, the 24th April, to the house of M. Kossika, and there stated that the Governor had called him to ask him why he presumed to carry letters for Franks, demanded to see the packet, which he had not, however, about his person, asked whether it was large, and appeared to contain official despatches, and finally ordered him to produce it the next

morning. The messenger then returned the packet to M. Kossika, as he could not be responsible for its safety, and begged that what he had said might not be reported to the Governor to his detriment. He doubtless told the Bey that we had taken back the letters to send by some other opportunity.

As to obtaining witnesses or signatures to this or any other matter at Kessala, it is next to impossible, as long as the Bey wields the lash at pleasure, with the exception of M. Kossika, who is ready to give his testimony if necessary. Having occasion for a writer to pen a few lines for me in Arabic, the man trembled in every joint for fear that his handwriting should be known.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 164.

Mr. Bruce to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 28.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, June 7, 1854.*

I HAVE the honour to state that the Copts have at length been allowed to elect Daoud to be their Patriarch.

He was originally elected by them for the office, but in consequence of the intrigues of some Abyssinians, the Viceroy objected to his formal institution. The Patriarchate has therefore during the last two years remained vacant.

Soon after my arrival I received through Mr. Plowden letters from the Metropolitan of Abyssinia and the Prince of Tigré, stating that the King of Abyssinia, Ras Ali, had taken no part in the intrigue against Daoud, and that he was acceptable to the Abyssinian Copts, adding that great inconvenience resulted from the want of a Patriarch.

The Prince of Tigré wrote in the same sense to His Highness the Viceroy.

When I mentioned the subject to His Highness, he informed me that he was in daily expectation of the arrival of the messenger he had sent to Ras Ali for the purpose of ascertaining the truth of the affair, and that on his return it should be settled.

The messenger arrived bearing a communication from the Prince who has dethroned Ras Ali, stating that the pretence put forward of opposition on the part of the Abyssinian Prince to the nomination of Daoud was unfounded, and was the work of a few Abyssinian intriguers.

The Viceroy then called together the Bishops to elect a Patriarch, but instead of proceeding in the usual manner, he directed them to be called to the citadel for the purpose of hearing his will. The old bishops, ignorant and timid men, brought from the remote provinces of Egypt, were much alarmed at this course, and it was evident that they would be induced to sacrifice the man whom the Copts had chosen, and appoint one unfit for the office, rather than incur the displeasure of the Pasha by electing a person to whom he had previously objected.

Under these circumstances I sent for the Pasha's interpreter, and suggested to him the propriety of proceeding in this matter in the usual way, and of sending such a letter to the bishops as would satisfy them that the election should be a perfectly free one. I stated to him the interest which Her Majesty's Government took in the maintenance of the ecclesiastical privileges of this ancient branch of the Christian Church, and the injury which would accrue to His Highness's reputation were he to give grounds for asserting that he had interfered with rights which under every former change of dynasty in Egypt had been respected.

The Viceroy, I am glad to say, yielded to these representations, and adopted the course of proceeding I suggested to him through Zeky Bey. Daoud has been in consequence duly elected.

It is generally allowed that he is the most learned and intelligent among the Coptic priesthood, and that he is inclined to promote education among the Coptic population.

His power for good is considerable, for, as Patriarch, he is administrator of the very considerable church property which they still possess, and moreover is arbitrator of their disputes among themselves,

The fitness or incapacity of the Patriarch bears therefore directly on the well-being of the Coptic population, and I do not know any way in which their interests could be so effectually and legitimately served, as by securing them on this occasion in the free exercise of their undoubted right to choose their Patriarch.

No. 165.

Mr. Bruce to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 28.)

My Lord, *Cairo, June* 16, 1854.

I INCLOSE further despatches from Mr. Plowden relative to what has taken place on the southern frontier of Egypt.*

The Governor of Taka has sent a report of the circumstances to the Viceroy, in which he justifies his proceedings on the ground that the inhabitants of Bogos have been in the habit of making incursions on the Egyptian territory.

In reply to my Memorandum, the Pasha has informed me that he will send immediately an officer to investigate the affair in connection with Mr. Plowden, and that he will give orders for the restitution of the women and children taken prisoners.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE.

No. 166.

The Earl of Clarendon to Mr. Bruce.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 30, 1854.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 16th instant,† inclosing despatches from Mr. Consul Plowden respecting the outrage committed by the Bey of Taka upon the Christian community of Bogos, and the obstacles offered by that Chief to the transmission of the correspondence of Her Majesty's Consul.

It appears from your despatch that the Bey of Taka is under the authority of Abbas Pasha, and it is to the Pasha therefore that Her Majesty's Government will apply in the first instance for his correction. Her Majesty's Government are glad to see that at your instigation the Pasha has set on foot an inquiry into the circumstances alleged against the Bey, and has directed that the women and children seized by him from the district of Bogos shall be restored. The Pasha has shown thus far a proper disposition to redress the grievous wrong which the Bey has inflicted upon a Christian community: but the redress will be very inadequate if it stops there.

You will state to the Pasha distinctly that Her Majesty's Government will not acquiesce in any assumption, either on the part of the Porte or on that of himself, of any authority over the independent territories of Abyssinia; and that Her Majesty's Government will watch over the interests of the Christians in that country, and not allow them to be maltreated or oppressed by their Mussulman neighbours.

In the present case, however, not only has the Bey of Taka committed a gross outrage on a people in whom, as Christians, Her Majesty's Government take a lively interest, but he has also insulted the British Government by interfering with the transmission of the correspondence of Her Majesty's Consul; and you will put it to the Pasha whether, for such gross misconduct the mere restitution by the Bey of his captives will be a sufficient atonement, and whether anything short of the removal of the Bey of Taka from his command can adequately mark the sense of Abbas Pasha's displeasure at his proceeding, or the Pasha's sense of what is due to the remonstrances of the British Government.

You will add that Her Majesty's Government prefer to make this appeal to the Pasha himself in the first instance, rather than to apply to the Porte to interpose its authority; but that Her Majesty's Ambassador will be directed to bring the matter to the notice of the Porte, if you should be unable satisfactorily to arrange it with the Pasha.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

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* Nos. 159 to 163.

† No. 165.

No. 167.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 6, 1854.

I HAVE received your despatches from the 29th of March to the 26th of April last,* respecting the outrages committed by the Bey of Taka upon the Christian community of Bogos, and the obstacles offered by that Chief to the transmission of your correspondence.

I approve of the conduct which you have pursued in these matters as reported in those despatches; and I have given such instructions to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Cairo thereupon as Her Majesty's Government trust will enable him to induce the Pasha of Egypt to put a stop to those proceedings and prevent their future recurrence.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 168.

Mr. Bruce to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received August 14.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, July* 30, 1854.

WITH reference to the proceedings of the Bey of Taka, and to your Lordship's despatch dated the 30th ultimo,† I have to remark that Abbas Pasha pursued with reference to it the same system of delay and procrastination of which I had so constantly to complain.

He assured me that an officer, called Omar Bey, had been appointed to proceed to Taka with instructions to remove the Bey, and to review, in concert with Mr. Plowden, the state of the relations with the Abyssinian tribes, so as to put a stop in future to the proceedings complained of. In spite, however, of repeated applications on my part, the departure of Omar Bey was delayed under various pretexts, and he was still in Cairo, waiting for instructions, when the Pasha died. I feel convinced, as I hinted to your Lordship in my despatch inclosing those of Mr. Plowden, that Abbas Pasha approved of the fanatical spirit exhibited by the Bey of Taka, and that the latter, in his enterprises against the Abyssinian Christians, was acting in obedience to the orders of his master. I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship the reply addressed to me by His Highness Said Pasha, as soon as I had an opportunity of bringing the case before him. An express has already left for Upper Egypt with detailed instructions for the Governor-in-Chief of the Soudan, embracing every point requisite for the restitution of the captives and for the settlement of the frontier.

Whatever may be the defects of Said Pasha, he is quite free from the fanaticism and hatred of Christians which distinguished his predecessor.

Inclosure in No. 168.

Mahmoud Bey to Mr. Bruce.

M. l'Agent et Consul-Général, *Cairo, le* 31 *Juillet*, 1854.

JE n'ai pas manqué de mettre sous les yeux du Vice-Roi la communication que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'adresser le 25 de ce mois, relativement aux faits qui se sont passés sur les confins du district de Takka, et je m'empresse de porter à votre connaissance que son Altesse a sur le champ prononcé la destitution de Khosrew Bey, Gouverneur de ce district. En donnant des ordres en conséquence au Gouverneur-Général du Soudan, le Vice-Roi lui a prescrit de réparer autant que possible et de prévenir pour l'avenir des actes aussi contraires aux principes de sage tolérance et d'humanité dont son Altesse a la ferme volonté de faire la règle constante de son administration, dans toute l'étendue des provinces qu'elle est appelée à gouverner.

Son Altesse se plait à penser qu'en faisant connaître cette décision au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique vous voudrez bien vous rendre l'interprête des sentiments dont elle est animée, et dont je suis chargé de vous transmettre l'expression.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) MAHMOUD BEY.

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* Nos. 159 to 163.

† No. 166.

No. 169.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received August 29.)

My Lord, *Kessala, June 2, 1854.*

WITH reference to my last despatch,* I have the honour to inform you that the Pasha of Sennaar has sent an order to the Governor of Taka to suspend the sale of the Christians of Senhait.

In the absence of a British Consulate at Khartoom, the Austrian Consul was so obliging as to present my Dragoman to the Pasha, and further to render him every assistance.

I learn from the Austrian Consul, as well as from my Dragoman who arrived to-day, that both the Pasha and the Consul sent letters to me many days since, under cover to the Bey of Taka, which letters I have not received.

As several posts have arrived in the last few days and more than double the time necessary for the arrival of that packet has elapsed, and as the order to suspend the sale of the prisoners, which I know has reached the Bey, was sent by the same courier, I may fairly believe that the Governor has seized my correspondence.

I offer these facts as a correlative proof of the statement inclosed in my despatch of the 26th April last.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 170.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received August 29.)

My Lord, *Kessala, June 3, 1854.*

I HAVE the honour to state that the sale of the Christian prisoners having been suspended as mentioned in my last despatch, they are now treated with barbarity by their owners to make them change their faith.

I have seen some of these unfortunates; their tears and entreaties pierce my heart: they declare that death is preferable to their present lot, and one, I know, has only been restrained by force from suicide.

Their despair is increased by the knowledge of my departure this evening for Massowah; and their ignorance is unable to find hope for the future in the sympathy of our too distant country, or the release that may be slowly obtained from the Pasha of Egypt.

I need say little more, I think, about this civilized Governor; his own words depict his character. To my Dragoman he said, "I would rather be put to death by my master than deliver up these slaves to become again Christians; and, moreover, it is very far from Kessala to Cairo." To me, he said, "The Mussulman faith has always been propagated by the sword, and force is the only remedy for savages and unbelievers."

I have done all in my power, as I was indeed bound to do; for had not the people of Senhait put faith in me and the British Government, they might either by submission or purchase, have ransomed most of their relatives. I trust that their reliance will not have been altogether vain.

As it is possible that these despatches may fall into the unscrupulous hands of the Governor, Khosroof Bey, I shall send duplicates from Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 163.

No. 171.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received August* 29.)

My Lord, *Massowah, June* 29, 1854.

THE present position of the contending Abyssinian Chiefs is this.

The Ras Ali has entirely abandoned the contest, and is living in a sanctuary by permission of Dejaj Kasai.

Dejaj Kasai is in Godjam, where Birro Gosho still holds out, but without daring to risk a battle.

Dejaj Oobeay is in Tigré, but through fear has sent a large sum of money to Dejaj Kasai as tribute.

The country is tolerably quiet; I expect shortly to receive letters from the camp of Dejaj Kasai, when I shall be able to furnish fuller information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 172.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received October* 16.)

My Lord, *Massowah, June* 29, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, on the requisition of Dejaj Kasai, the High Priest Aboona Salama, has been permitted by Dejaj Oobeay, to proceed to Gondar, his principal residence, from which city he had been banished by order of Ras Ali eight years since.

On arriving in the vicinity of Gondar, the Aboona learnt that M. de Jacobis, a Bishop of the Roman Catholic persuasion, was there resident and teaching.

The Aboona has, therefore, refused to enter Gondar unless Dejaj Kasai shall order the immediate ejection of M. de Jacobis and his followers.

The sanguinary scenes that occurred in Abyssinia during a similar struggle in the reign of the Emperor Socinios, whose traditions still excite horror in that country, ended in the complete triumph of the Copts; but 300 years have not it appears exhausted the proverbial patience of the Church of Rome.

I shall watch the affair as closely as possible, but the rainy season is about to set in, and what I know of the unyielding character of the Aboona, and the fearless enthusiasm of M. de Jacobis, causes me some uneasiness.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 173.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received October* 16.)

My Lord, *Massowah, June* 30, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to state that the Pasha of Massowah has written a letter to Dejajmatch Oobeay, setting forth that the salt plains in the Taltal district, 100 miles from Massowah, and whence the Abyssinians have procured salt from time immemorial, are the property and territory of his Master the Sultan.

His claim, even if true, would be utterly ridiculous, as he cannot even preserve order in those provinces that are submitted to his rule.

This letter was sent to me by Dejajmatch Oobeay, to whom it was addressed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 174.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received October* 16.)

My Lord, *Massowah, June* 30, 1854.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 17th March last,* I have the honour to represent that the Pasha continues his vexatious conduct therein detailed

The Pasha of Egypt was so obliging as to grant permission to my Secretary for some hundred weight of lead, on the application of Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt, and for my private use.

The Pasha of Massowah has seized this, on the somewhat curious pretext of the existence of war.

This fresh insult is part of a system now adopted by the Pasha to blind the eyes of the population here; the French Consul and others have been insulted, and have obtained no satisfaction. The Pasha represents the assistance afforded to his Government as being the result of obedience on the part of England and France to an order of the Sublime Porte, and has himself composed a prayer to be read in the mosque for the destruction of all Christians, and the universal dominion upon earth of the Ottomans.

We have not here to contend with the pardonable ignorance of the lower orders, but with the deliberate hostility of the almost irresponsible Governor.

And what Government. On my return from Kessala, the instant I entered the districts nominally subject to Turkey, constant alarms and quarrels occurred, and people might be seen running to arms in every direction as soon as my party appeared on the road. I could only obtain water, and insure safety, by my being well armed, and having many personal friends amongst those tribes. In Massowah itself, constant incendiary fires are occurring, and as there is no police whatever, and no attempt is ever made to discover the offender or check the crime, we are obliged to keep watch all night in our houses.

I think it reasonable to demand that this Pasha be either dismissed or better instructed in his duty towards Europeans: and I request an order, distinctly worded, if possible, to the effect that my property of every description shall pass freely under all circumstances; and that I shall be at liberty to employ workmen for any purpose, and particularly at my house and garden in Moncooloo on the main land, withouts ubmitting to the indignity of an inspection and permission from the Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 175.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received October* 16.)

My Lord, *Massowah, July* 1, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to state that Dejajmatch Oobeay, having entrusted a sum of money to an agent for the purchase of some fowling-pieces and rifles for his own use, has written to me for my assistance.

The number of guns cannot be more than eight or ten, but as the Pasha of Massowah will certainly take the occasion of mortifying me by seizing them, I have to request a distinct order for the passage of these arms, and of any other personal property of Dejajmatch Oobeay.

It is owing to the respect of Dejajmatch Oobeay for Her Majesty, and to my representations, that he has scrupulously abstained from any warlike expedition in the neighbourhood of Massowah; otherwise, though he could not effect, perhaps, a permanent conquest, it would be easy for him to coerce the Pasha into accordance with his requests.

I have advocated this policy from humanity, to save the border tribes from the consequences of an invasion, unprovoked by them, but from which they are the principal sufferers; their Turkish Governor and soldiers shutting themselves up in their stone fortress or island, on the first alarm.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 157.

No. 176.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received October 16.)

My Lord, *Massowah, July 2, 1854.*

WITH reference to my despatches of the 17th March and the 30th June,* I have the honour to present the following facts :—

That having occasion to repair an oven and a well, on the ground that I have now occupied at Moncooloo on the mainland for seven years, the workmen and masons refused their labour on the usual ground of fear of the Pasha; that I then submitted to the indignity of sending to the Pasha my Secretary to demand the use of those workmen, and received for reply that he, the Pasha, would not permit me to place one stone upon another without a special order from Constantinople. I have, therefore, been obliged to dismiss my gardeners, and to ruin a garden which I raised in a sandy desert, and have cultivated at an expense of at least 500*l.*, and confess myself forced to yield after a patience of seven years' duration, to the persevering enmity of every successive Governor of Massowah.

The Ambassador of Her Britannic Majesty has procured many and stringent orders to the Pasha of Hedjaz on the subject of my complaints, these orders might have been forgeries for all the effect they have produced here.

The Pasha of Massowah knows well that when he forces me to quit this slave depôt of Turkey, the only title the place merits, the other Europeans here will probably follow my example, and he may then pursue his course of misgovernment, bribery, and oppression, without a witness or a check; but it is scarcely possible that he would so unremittingly pursue that object, had the orders I mention been given in good faith by the Turkish Vizier.

After so many years of impunity the Pasha may safely laugh, as he does, at any expression of displeasure by a French or English Consul; but I trust that Her Majesty's Government will consider that my labours and my journies in so impracticable a country as Abyssinia, isolated from my countrymen, deprived of every comfort, and without any assistant, are in themselves not trivial; and that if I am to endure besides, unsupported, an unwearying enmity in my absence, as in my presence, amounting to a tyranny that interferes in my domestic arrangements, on the one hand, I cannot possibly be regarded with that respect due to my official position, nor perform my duties efficiently; on the other hand, my patience must at last give way under such odds.

If what I state appears incredible or exaggerated, I have only to say that I am prepared to prove, not only every word contained in my despatches, but a great deal more with which I have been disinclined to weary Her Majesty's Government.

If I feel more than usual the insults now offered me, your Lordship will consider that I have just returned from a fatiguing and perilous journey, in which I suffered both in mind and body; and without a moment's repose am obliged to encounter all these vexations from a Governor, whose sole duty is to befriend and support me, unless he can show good cause for a contrary course.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 177.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received October 16.)

My Lord, *Massowah, July 10, 1854.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Birro Gosho, the Godjam Chief, has been defeated and taken prisoner by Dejaj Kassai.

Ras Ali being now out of the question, Dejaj Oobeay, in Tigré, remains the only rival of Kasai, and he will probably be disposed of after the rainy season.

If Dejaj Kasai succeeds in his bold attempt to destroy the military oligarchy and to restore the deposed monarchs of Gondar, there will still be some hope for Abyssinia; he has already, I believe, sent to the King of Shoa, ordering him to come to Gondar to do homage to his lawful Sovereign.

Still, however he may improve the internal condition of the country and re-organize its Government, a hazardous and doubtful attempt, the main difficulty of the want of a sea-port will remain insurmountable by any Abyssinian Ruler; and, unless that want is

* Nos. 157 and 174.

supplied by us, Abyssinia will ever remain isolated from the rest of the world, nor will any Embassy or Consulate produce any profitable or lasting effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 178.

Memorandum by Mr. Norris.

THE Island of Massowah is held by the Turks, who also claim a paramount right over the coast line opposite. It is situated on the north side of Massowah Bay, of which there is a chart in Salt's Travels, page 209, but a better one in the East India Company's large chart of the Red Sea. A few miles to the south is Annesley Bay, on the side of which are ruins believed by some to be the Adulis or ancient port of Abyssinia, though D'Anville places this at Arkiko in Massowah Bay. No part of Abyssinia comes down nearer to the sea than forty miles distance, the interval being filled by Shohos and Bazortas, who are not unfriendly to travellers. All Abyssinia, except the south-east part, called the Kingdom of Shoa, is in a state of constant internal war, every nominally subordinate Governor being really independent, and each making war upon the others. The Governor of Gondar, where the nominal King resides, changes the King whenever he chooses, and it seems very doubtful if a restoration of an ancient line be possible. When Salt was in Abyssinia there were living eight deposed monarchs of Gondar. The more regular state of Shoa, whose King, mentioned in Mr. Plowden's letter, has been friendly to European travellers, has, within these twenty years, drawn attention to the harbour of Tajurrah, outside the Red Sea, opposite Aden, which has good anchorage, except in the south-west monsoon. Tajurrah is about 200 miles from Shoa, but there are no political difficulties in the way, the inhabitants being friendly; they are either Danakil or Somanlis. Surgeon Kirk published a detailed account of his journey to Abyssinia from Tajurrah, in vol. xiv of the Geographical Society's Journal, page 221. In consequence of the anarchical state of the other provinces of Abyssinia, Shoa is now or has been paramount; the capital is Ankobar.

Salt has some details in his Appendix on the trade of Abyssinia through Zeyla, which is, I believe, Tajurrah. Rüppel, who was in Abyssinia about eighteen years ago, gives a statement of the trade through Massowah; he mentions slaves, ivory, wax, coffee, hides, as the chief exports. He computes the total annual value to be above 40,000*l.* sterling, but more than a half is in slaves. There is a good deal of cloth imported from India.

Massowah harbour is easy of access, and will hold in safety, according to Salt, fifty ships. No sea of consequence, because the entrance is narrow.

E. N.

No. 179.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received October 16.)

My Lord, *Massowah, July 10, 1854.*

I HAVE to request your Lordship's permission to visit England during some months of the next year, and to leave my post in January or February next for that purpose.

I write thus early as I shall probably not receive the reply till November or December next.

I beg to recommend that my Secretary, Mr. Barroni, remain in charge here, until I receive your Lordship's final orders respecting this Consulate, which I trust I shall do in person, after my Report, forming Inclosure 1 in my despatch of the 9th July, 1854,* shall have been considered.

Mr. Barroni's knowledge of all that has occurred at this Consulate, and of the interior of the country, will enable him to furnish me with intelligible reports of all that happens during my absence, and will compensate for his slightly imperfect knowledge of English.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 184.

No. 180.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 26, 1854.

I IN reply to your despatch of the 10th of July last,* I have to inform you that I accede to your request for leave of absence to visit England during some months of next year; and that I approve of your leaving Mr. Barroni in charge of Her Majesty's Consulate during your absence, until otherwise directed

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 181.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.†

My Lord, *Foreign Office, October* 26, 1854.

I TRANSMIT, for your Excellency's information, copies of three despatches from Mr. Consul Plowden,‡ detailing the injuries and insults offered to him by the Governor of Massowah, and requesting that reparation may be afforded to him for the vexations and loss caused him by this Pasha's conduct.

His proceedings, indeed, as reported by Mr. Plowden, appear to be positively hostile to Her Majesty's Agent, instead of being characterized by the courtesy and kindness which are due to the officer of a friendly Power.

I have to instruct your Excellency to make known to the Turkish Government these continued complaints of Mr. Plowden, and to request the Porte to take steps for the dismissal of the Pasha of Massowah, or to cause the most peremptory orders to be sent to him to treat the British Consul in a becoming manner, and to afford him redress on the various matters of complaint which he sets forth in his despatches.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 182.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 28, 1854.

I HAVE received your despatches of the 30th of June and of the 1st and 2nd of July;‡ and I have to acquaint you that instructions have been sent to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople and to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt to press for the recall of the Governor of Massowah, or that the most peremptory orders should be sent him to treat you in a becoming manner, and to afford you redress on the various matters of complaint set forth in your despatches.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 183.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 1, 1854.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 10th of July last,§ I should be glad to be informed in what way you consider that the want of a sea-port in Abyssinia could be supplied by England; what port you would suggest; and what measures should be taken by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

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* No. 179. † A similar despatch was addressed to Mr. Bruce. ‡ Nos. 174, 175, and 176.
§ No. 177.

No. 184.

*Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received November 2.)**

My Lord, *Massowah, July 9, 1854.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a Report containing some information on Abyssinia, as directed in your Lordship's despatch of October 3, 1853.†

I have endeavoured to give your Lordship a sketch of the laws, customs, government, and position of Abyssinia, with a short account of its neighbours.

I trust that this Report may assist your Lordship in deciding clearly the course to be pursued with reference to Abyssinia.

Struggling with the difficulties of the Abyssinian character and institutions; baffled by their ignorance, and more by the want of any supreme authority; obliged by my position to be recognized as a friend to the Abyssinian nation, yet forced by geographical circumstances to reside partly at a Turkish port, where the Governor necessarily regards me with suspicion and hatred, as one seducing from him the allegiance of his slaves; I can scarcely convey to your Lordship an idea of the difficulties I have had to contend with.

I enclose also a map which gives a rough notion of the northern frontier of Abyssinia.

The course of several of the rivers therein laid down will not be found in any other map, and have been hitherto the subject of much discussion amongst geographers. Your Lordship may depend upon the general accuracy of the map, though I do not pretend to astronomical exactness.

Both the map and the report are compiled entirely from my personal observations.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 184.

*Report.**

NORTHERN ABYSSINIA is a State isolated from the sea and from the civilize world by surrounding tribes of savages, and is fast lapsing from its former condition as Christian realm, governed by one absolute Sovereign, into sub-divisions of small tribes, that will hereafter retain probably little of religion or civilization.

It is separated also from its kindred province of Shoa by strong and fierce races called Galla, who are independent, notwithstanding the boastful title of King of the Gallas assumed by Sahela Selassie and his successor, whose actual dominions do not equal a fifth part of the Galla territory.

The country that I name Northern Abyssinia, and which is inhabited by professing Christians, is about 400 miles in length from north to south, inclining westerly, and 300 in its greatest breadth, which is from N.N.W. to S.S.E., that is, from the neighbourhood of Massowah to the town of Ayjubay in Godjam, and from Wayhaynee, the limits of the Egyptian dominion in that quarter, to the borders of Effat, belonging to Shoa.

Its north-western and western boundary is formed by the Pashalic of Sennaar; partly on the west and to the south-west vast forests, frequented by wild beasts, or hot plains inhabited by negro races, exclude Abyssinia from the navigable part of the Blue Nile. To the south, that river, an impetuous torrent, forms its boundary, almost its safety, from the Gallas—excellent horsemen, whose delight is war. To the east and south-east the Gallas of Borona, Wallo, Worahaimano, and Worrakallo, separate it from Shoa. The three last are the stronghold of Islamism; and these are again barred from the sea by the savage Adaiel, by whose hordes, led by Mahommed Grayne, Abyssinia was nearly destroyed, when saved by Portugal and the introduction of firearms. To the eastward again, more northerly, other tribes of Gallas called Areya and Azobo still interpose between Abyssinia and the sea-coast: and to the north-east and north various tribes with various tongues, Taltals, Danakil, Shihos, Hababs, &c., everywhere seclude that realm, and join the dominions of Abbas Pasha, in the tribes of the Beni-Ameer, ruled by the Pasha of Taka.

A circle is thus completed that must somewhere be broken through, either by the Abyssinians themselves, had they the power, or by that nation desiring a free intercourse with them.

The tribes I have last mentioned, that seclude Abyssinia from the Red Sea, occupy a strip of land along its coast of 70 to 100 miles in breadth; and it is here that the Turkish Government has occupied several points, of which mention shall be made hereafter: and

* Laid before Parliament, 1866. † No. 137.

although these tribes were formerly Abyssinians, and still, in many places, as at Massowah, speak the ancient Ethiopic tongue, as they are now completely separated, I shall not include them in an account of Christian Abyssinia in its present limits.

Setting aside, therefore, this border along the sea, Abyssinia is a range of vast table-lands and fantastic mountains, alternating and varying in elevation from 4,000 to 14,000 feet above the sea level. Deep valleys, the beds of the larger rivers, intersect this in various directions; but these streams, however circuitous their course, almost all finally join the Blue Nile, or Abäi, as it is termed by the Abyssinians. These are nowhere navigable; and a few mountain torrents only, and when swollen by the rains, find their way to the Red Sea. The abrupt and high ranges from which these torrents descend are seen from the coast at the distance of eighty miles inland, and mark everywhere, as far north as the 16th degree of latitude, the confines of the Christian country.

The climate, on all the high land, is salubrious; but the valleys, at certain seasons, are rendered dangerous by fevers, particularly the low countries bordering on Sennaar, and these valleys produce the richest crops of grain. The tropical rains fall plentifully at the same season with those of Bengal, from June to September, and the soil extremely fertile might, from the variety of temperature at the different elevations, produce almost every article of human consumption. Two large inland lakes exist: the one near Gondar, called Tana, the other, in the province of Tehluderee, called Haik. The former is sixty miles in length, studded with islands, and abounds in excellent fish; singular to say the crocodile, that is found in most of the large rivers of Abyssinia, does not infest this lake, which swarms however with hippopotami. The Blue Nile takes its rise a short distance from this, and after forcing its way through the waters of the lake at one corner, forms nearly a circle round Godjam, the southern province of this country.

The flat and overflowed lands round the Lake Tana, are kept as pasture for cattle, or partially sown with grain; but they are well adapted for the cultivation of rice, or sugar-canes, which both grow wild; or of indigo, which has thriven in Shoa.

The cold plains of Waggera and Godjam, and the lofty mountains of Semen, where the blackberry, the hawthorn, and the fir, now usurp a great part of the soil, are fitted for all the productions of northern latitudes. The more temperate provinces would probably be favourable to the growth of pepper, spices, and coffee, which last has already been planted at Korata; and even the coast, and hottest districts, might give crops of cotton of fine quality. Barley, wheat, peas, grain, beans, maize, Indian corn, millet, linseed, saffron, oats, and some kinds of grain unknown to us, are cultivated with little trouble; a small oblong potato, called "dennich," and the root of a very nourishing banana, the ansett, form a great part of the food of some districts.

In the present confusion and supineness not a fiftieth part of the surface is, I suppose, cultivated; while such is the bounty of nature that Edjow, and other provinces, produce two crops per annum on the same ground.

Fruit trees, the plum, the orange, the lemon, and the peach, grow wild in the jungle; the vines are luxuriant, and the quality of the wine excellent; numerous streams everywhere irrigate and adorn this agreeable land, whose rich meadows, lowing herds, sparkling waters, golden harvest, and shady trees, often present a scene of European beauty to the traveller.

Gold and copper exist, and iron is found in great abundance; plains of sulphur and various salts, in the province now occupied by the Taltals, supply all Abyssinia with those commodities; and other wealth may lie hid in that volcanic tract. A search for coal would, elsewhere, be probably successful; but to describe the mineral and natural riches of this country, should be the task of one better qualified for the investigation.

It is a country that combines mineral resources, a delightful climate, and tropical luxuriance, with so much general salubrity, that no waste of European life need be apprehended from frequenting it.

The temperature of the moderate elevations is very regular, in some places scarcely varying ten degrees throughout the year. Mineral and hot springs abound. All the colder provinces, particularly the Galla, are favourable to horse-breeding; sheep, goats, and cattle, thrive throughout the country; the mulberry has been grown; the potato, lately introduced, flourishes; and food is, in general, found too abundantly, as it is found almost without labour.

But while nature has done so much, human energy, or skill, has done nothing. The utter want of roads and bridges—the stagnant, or lawless, nature of the social system—the obstinate attachment to ancient customs—the multitude of rulers, indifferent to everything but their personal enjoyment—the constant wars, and consequent insecurity of life and property—are fast ruining a country of whose beauty and fertility its inhabitants may, with some reason, boast.

The divisions of language in Christian Abyssinia are two, Tigré and Amharic. The former, a slight corruption from the ancient Geez, itself derived from Hebrew and Arabic; and the latter, in my opinion, a distinct language, into which have crept many words from the former. The Amharic is now the written language of the country, the Geez character being used, with some additions. The Tigré dialect is spoken in the province of Tigré, bounded by the River Takazzee, flowing from the south-south-east to north-north-west, and with some variations all along the sea-coast from Massowah, inclusive, to the port of Aggeek. The Amharic, by the rest of Abyssinia, from the Takazzee to the Abäai; and also in the province of Shoa. In Tigré I include the tribe called Agow, that inhabit a district at the source of the Takazzee, anciently called the Kingdom of Lasta, whose origin I cannot divine, and whose language is totally different; and in the Amhara, the Agows of Damot, whose language is half Galla.

The manners of the Amhara are pleasing; their features are generally of the European or Asiatic, that is, Arab caste, and they are remarkably quick and intelligent. Their standard of morality is very low; sensual pleasures, as intoxication, are gratified without scruple and without shame: in general, the interests or convenience of the moment are the only rule of conduct; want of tact and ill-temper the only crimes in his code. Two phases in the Christian doctrine that suit his careless temper are much insisted on: "that this world is fleet and valueless," and "that the indulgence of the Creator is infinite," the one to justify his insouciance, the other as removing all check to his follies and enjoyments. Crimes are seldom committed wantonly, but all considerations yield generally to those of interest, in prince or people. They have a great contempt for other nations, and scarcely know, or do not care, if any exist or not; the tribes on their borders they regard as created for the breathing fields of Abyssinian valour; hardly believing that the rain falls, or the sun shines, on other lands, they are persuaded that the world beyond the sea is a succession of barren deserts. The most common question to an European is whether corn grows in his country, and sometimes whether there are women: yet are they manly, generous, usually humane and indulgent, always polite, and seldom coarse. I attribute their faults to ignorance, their virtues to a kindly nature. Except tillage of the ground their pride renders them adverse to labour; but the women are exceedingly industrious.

The people of Tigré are somewhat different in character: with more of the obstinacy of their Jewish blood they are ruder and vainer than the Amhara, noisy, talkative, and quarrelsome. Though nearer the sea they are even more ignorant of other nations; they despise all the human race but themselves, and generally each man all existing but himself. On the whole, I think them inferior to the Amhara, but they are more laborious, and more trustworthy individually, though politically treacherous.

The Agows have a peculiar character as well as language; they are sterner, harsher, and more resolute than the other Abyssinians, and are proverbial for dissimulation and hardness of heart, as well as extreme selfishness. They permit no interference of the other races in their government or internal policy and laws. They all speak the Tigré and Amharic as well as their own language. They are always governed by a chief of their own race, whose laws, though severe on themselves, are just and even encouraging towards strangers. They acknowledge, as feudal superior, the Ras of Begemeder, since the fall of the Empress of Gondar.

The inhabitants of each province in Abyssinia have some peculiar traits; as warlike, and Kalagoozia are famous for union, Tigré Central for the contrary; some are Godjam some cowardly, some faithful, and some treacherous, and so on.

In some respects they are a happy people. They possess in their own land all the necessaries and many of the luxuries of life in profusion; they have great freedom of speech and action, and are always gay, systematically, as by constitution. Their conversation, often sensible, is always witty. A practical philosophy leads them to prefer laughter to tears; the tragedy and the comedy of life are received alike with indifference or a joke. Misfortunes and death are generally met with fortitude. It is hard to convince them that they will benefit either by our science or our wealth.

The most curious point in their character is that no one is expected to feel ashamed of any crime or vice; and whereas in other countries men in committing serious crimes are morbidly excited, in Abyssinia they are perpetrated with indifference, and generally recounted, sometimes by the individual himself, certainly by others, with gaiety and laughter. In the same way, females are rarely gross or immodest outwardly; seeing that they need in no way be ashamed of the freest intercourse with the other sex. I have never yet been able to discover what an Abyssinian could be ashamed of, except a solecism in what he considers good manners, or the neglect of some superstitious form of social observance. They are peculiarly sensitive, however, to ridicule and abuse, whether true

or untrue; and half the time of an Abyssinian master is passed in deciding disputes on such subjects. Some traits, though apparently of slight consequence, are often very irksome to a stranger; for instance, every man above the lowest rank has a door-keeper, whose duty it is to examine who should be admitted, and when. The insolence of this officer rises in proportion to the rank of his master. The primitive ante-chamber is a court in the open air, without seats, often muddy, always filthy; and as the porter will contrive to keep you waiting, even against his master's orders, this system is most disagreeable to an European. Further, you wait amongst a crowd; and it is pointed out to you that the brothers or sons of the King are there in the same position.

Sometimes the order comes to clear the court, when sticks are used without distinction of persons. The Chiefs affect a trifling and childish manner, to the great annoyance of a white man, who has, perhaps, some important affairs to speak on, and who, from his more energetic feelings, thinks them of greater importance than they are. I will not dwell on these matters, but the difficulties they raise are not trifling, nor easy to vanquish.

The Abyssinians are superstitious; they believe in the efficacy of amulets; of writings in jargon mixed with Scripture; in the charms of Mussulmans to control the hail and the rain; in spirits of the forest and the river; in omens; in fortune-tellers; and in devils that may be cast out by spells from their human victim, quoting the authority of the New Testament for their belief; to these they attribute epilepsy, and other incurable diseases.

One absurdity has, however, led to the death of many innocent individuals; all workers in iron, and some others, are supposed to convert themselves into hyænas, and to prey invisibly on their enemies; and many have been slaughtered in this belief. It is not worth while to enter upon a full account of this singular idea, which is universal and tenacious, and has its parallel in the "loup-garou" of France, and the "wehr-wolf" of Germany.

Gambling appears to be unknown, but they are constantly betting, not, however, to gain money, as the judge of the forfeit receives it from the loser, the winner having thus punished his adversary. This is a fruitful source of revenue to the Chiefs.

In their houses they are dirty, and generally in their domestic habits; though cleanly in person when their means will permit.

Save the door-keeping I have mentioned, much freedom exists in their society; in one room a beggar jostles a Chief, and a dirty rag presses against the white turban of a priest; or a thief, perhaps in chains, is seated next to an honest man; nay, the latter will make way for the former, with much politeness, if an older man than himself. So indulgent are they, that even a madman is never put under restraint, and rarely excluded, though perhaps dangerous. Visiting is unceasing amongst the middle classes, and hospitality is offered, with indiscriminate profusion, according to the means of the proprietor.

In Abyssinian society no repugnance is even shown to those afflicted with apparent and loathsome disease; and no man forfeits his position by any crime. Theft is, in many provinces, regarded as an honourable employment; highway robbery as quite excusable, even if accompanied by homicide; rape is venial; and adultery regards only the husband. This has probably been the national character for many ages; and now that misrule and anarchy are superadded, the Abyssinians are unconsciously retrograding to a savage state, and losing all the advantages they may have acquired from the adoption of Christianity. Yet they still nourish the delusion that they are a nation, as when their kings marched armies into the Holy Land, and governed Arabia; while their fleets traded to India, and their African dominions were bounded by the White Nile, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean.

They have in general an aversion to change in their religious observances, laws, and customs; their laws are, however, nearly forgotten, and their manners are changing yearly. This, which is characteristic of the race, is a great obstacle to improvement. Neither the idea of progress nor the word exists; for all absurdities and abuses, even for injustice, the reason "it has always been so" is held sufficient, even when the error is admitted. In consequence, as nothing can be stationary, their whole institutions are degenerating.

They are very quick of apprehension and subtle of speech, and as from childhood they are accustomed to select phrases that may be agreeable to the person they are addressing, or useful to themselves, are always specious, and sometimes eloquent; it is very difficult for a stranger to arrive at the truth by questions.

They are fond of litigation, and most of them skilled in the quibbles and proverbs that are essential to success in any dispute. It is the favourite sport of boys and children.

and the smallest difference of opinion furnishes matter for a long and sometimes expensive law-suit. The obstinacy in trifles is a mark, perhaps, of their Jewish blood. Notwithstanding the abundance of food in Abyssinia, nothing is more difficult, or occupies more time, than to provide for the daily wants of an establishment. A Chief can obtain anything at once, and often without payment, where a stranger, infinitely richer, would, without his friendship and assistance, run the risk of starving. Nothing can be obtained by money except at a market, and often at a very great distance. Shops are unknown, and almost all trades must be practised in each household. Water must be carried for household purposes from a distant brook, corn must be converted into flour, cookery must be prepared, bread baked, and beer brewed, in every establishment according to its numbers, and to no office of domestic utility will a man put his hand for any amount of hire. On a journey where no markets can be found all necessaries must be carried at least to the next large town, involving a very inconvenient amount of baggage.

The Abyssinians, indeed, demand hospitality at each village, and take up their quarters without ceremony, often having to fight for the accommodation.

The personal baggage of a merchant is equal in bulk to his goods. In more dangerous times, when baggage is a serious impediment, this billeting system becomes an imperative necessity for all travellers. On a campaign, the country people having fled from their homes on the approach of an army, money is entirely useless, and the king must either supply the stranger in his camp, which he cannot always do, or the latter has the alternatives of starvation and foraging. Grass is abundant in the country; but some local potentate or band of villagers must in general be propitiated before beasts are allowed to feed, and this cannot always be done by money; nor is the European character usually disposed to the other resource of flattery. An irritable man should not visit Abyssinia.

The greater part of the time of all classes is occupied in eating and drinking. The instant any guest is received, no matter at what hour, he must be fed, and is not allowed to refuse; mead is always produced, or beer, for they love not dry talking, be it at daylight or at midnight. The profusion at their meals, and the large numbers of retainers and daily guests that are fed by men of rank and wealth, bear a resemblance to the customs of our Saxon ancestors. The parallel may perhaps hold good in other points. The gates are open in the evening to all who demand food and shelter in the name of friendship or religion: rich and poor are seated at one table; in the house of a great Chief public singers chant the legends of their heroes, or receive guerdon for reciting impromptu stanzas in praise of their host and his guests; nor does the frequent intoxication weaken the likeness. Feasts are instituted a certain number of days after death, being a point of honour with the relatives of the deceased, and encouraged by the priests, who are guests by privilege, and who live principally by these general banquets; numerous oxen are slaughtered, and for two or three days the streets reel with drunkenness, the white turbans of the pastors being conspicuous. The rejoicings at each wedding furnish equally good cheer, and as it is not difficult to obtain admission, these festivities are a great resource to the scribes and all the poorer classess. I believe the truth of the remark made to me by an Abyssinian who had visited Rome, "that while the rich in Europe could live more luxuriously, there was no country like Abyssinia for the poor;" but he did not perceive that this arose from the scantiness of population, the richness of the soil, and the smallness of their towns.

From constant exercise the Abyssinians have great powers of memory; though a written language exists, they seldom hold correspondence, and when a letter is written, it is never signed, sealed, or dated; easy as a forgery would be, I have never heard of an instance. All affairs are conducted verbally; and at a distance by messengers, These messages are usually delivered with fidelity, and the character of the herald is considered sacred.

In the relations of parent and child the Abyssinians are kind and indulgent. The children are obliged by law to share their means with their aged parents, and generally do so voluntarily. No distinction is made between legitimate and illegitimate children, and all share alike on the decease of their father. Marriage is a civil contract between the parties, dissolved at pleasure, and it is usual in old age only to take the Sacrament together in the church, thereby pledging themselves to fidelity and monogamy. The people of Tigré are less lax than the Amharas, amongst whom women are regarded as toys, without the trouble of secluding them in a harem.

Friendship is measured by gifts. Each Chief begs from his compeer; nay, from his own dependant. Nothing will so much strike a stranger in Abyssinia as their custom of asking without reserve, without shame, for anything they may fancy. They are, however, ready to make compensation; they may be offended at a refusal of their request; equally

so, if the return be not accepted. They cannot imagine that this is not the custom all over the world. If an Abyssinian returns a gift and says, "I require nothing but your friendship," the phrase is studiously polite, and means your gift is not of sufficient value. They treat all strangers in the same way. The Chiefs beg without ceremony, but in return bestow their friendship, which is necessary, and sometimes more than the value of the gift in their country produce. To specify the minutiæ of this custom, practised by high and low, rich and poor, would be fatiguing. An embassy to or from a foreign prince, is a mere calculation of value exchanged. The poor make presents to the rich and powerful, and receive ten times their cost in return, protesting, however, that nothing is further from their desire; nay, so organized is this custom, that if a person bestows a gift on one of equal rank, and does not receive an adequate compensation, he can bring an action against him as though for debt, and will receive damages by law; this is the favourite manner in which they attack the purse of an European, and is a pretty and ingenious way to avoid direct begging. An European envoy to this country must, in the present state of society, exchange presents with the great Chiefs, or be regarded as an object of charity, and it must be done with tact to avoid the imputation of timidity or folly.

The ties of relationship are strong, from mutual interest, as a barrier to the exactions of rapacious Governors and the violence of the soldiery. They count kin to the fiftieth cousinship, and a man with many relatives has much influence. The military Governor is constantly changed, but such a man retains a kind of hereditary power. They do not carry their union to the point of sharing their purse; on the contrary, incessant lawsuits are carried on between the nearest relations for land and property; but in moments of danger they stand by each other like a Highland clan. They muster in thousands to bewail one to whom they refused a loaf while living, and they all unite to avenge his death if by violence.

They retain two institutions of Judaism, and cling to them with obstinacy. The Saturday in Godjam is held of equal sanctity with the Sunday, so that water cannot be drawn, nor wood hewn, from Friday evening to Monday morning. Moreover, many animals are considered unclean, as the hare, the goose, in some districts the wild boar, and some other animals.

There are numberless saints' days in the year, on which no work is done; and in the towns they will not even suffer others to work, which is most irksome to the traveller.

As a nation they have never had any element of progress within themselves, nor do they appear ever to have wished for it. Coinage and architecture in solid masonry have never been attempted, though the Ptolemies set them the example of both, as shown by the remains of Axûm, and the gold and copper coins found in those ruins to this day. The Portuguese introduced the art of brick-burning, and built towers and bridges of excellent workmanship; no person in Abyssinia can now make mortar. No purely national antiquities of any kind exist. Their Kings and their people 2,000 years ago, must have passed their lives as now, seeking only for daily splendour or enjoyment, and indifferent to the perpetuation of their memory by any monument.

Though difficult to persuade, no people would be more docile under slight coercion. As soon as a Chief of firmness governs in any district, quiet and order prevail to a surprising extent without any police. The word of the Chief suffices to produce this tranquillity; but it cannot last long, as, on his death or removal, the means of disorder are unfortunately in every hand. To a foreign conquest little resistance would be offered; they are too unimaginative to dream of patriotism; yet had they any national spirit, the rugged nature of their mountain passes would offer many difficulties to an invading army. This spirit, which is entirely wanting, was supplied in their contests with the Mahomedans by fanatical excitement, and in warring with native barbarians, by the hopes of plunder.

Individually they are brave, but in masses, being without discipline, are hesitating, and little to be feared. Having no coinage of their own, the only money that passes current in Abyssinia is the German crown of Maria Theresa. This is changed in Tigré into pieces of cloth of various lengths, fabricated from cotton of the country or of India; and in the Amhara into blocks of salt, varying in number at each market place. This salt is cut in the plains of the Taltal, near the Red Sea, and transported far into the interior; it becomes very valuable in the Galla provinces, where eight small pieces are sometimes exchanged for a dollar, and a hundred will purchase a slave. Gold, which under their Emperors was used as currency, by weight, and was abundant, according to tradition, has now almost disappeared. The ruler of Shoa sent some pounds of fine gold to the Court of Gondar, moulded in the shape of a mule, in token of fealty. This custom was continued till the last forty years.

The whole dress of the people is of white cotton cloths, spun and wove in the country,

nor do they consider a foreigner as dressed at all unless he throws one of their white mantles over his own apparel. It illustrates curiously the character of this nation, so vain and stubborn in trifles, to see the servants of even a well-dressed European follow him almost with shame, and the rest of the populace regarding him with laughter or sneers, nor is this a small matter nor a trifling difficulty. The first impression does much, and ridicule is harder to vanquish than persecution. Socrates, in our modern attire, would scarcely be respected in Abyssinia.

Could difficulties of other kinds be overcome, the disposition of the Abyssinians is on the whole favourable to the establishment of relations, commercial or political. Many of them are liberal, kind, intelligent, hospitable, comprehending and desiring justice, and above all, with no repulsive feelings towards us on the score of religion, except those excited purposely by the priests. If they are lax in morality, it is more from ignorance than a vicious nature; if they cannot always practise the justice they admire, it is for want of a strong hand on the justice-seat; if they are indolent, it is because little is to be now gained by labour; if vain and conceited, from being in contact with nations inferior to themselves in arts and arms.

Commerce cannot thrive while there is no efficient protection to property, and while their merchants are treated as enemies or regarded as slaves on the coast. Whether they would change for the better or the worse, under the influence of extended trade and European civilization, is a problem that time alone can solve; but a man of liberal mind, while he regrets their anarchy, their ignorance, their fanaticism, and their vanity, may find something to admire in the individual character, under so many disadvantages.

There are no castes in Abyssinia, but the people may be divided into four classes—military, sacerdotal, agricultural, and mercantile: the number that cannot be included in these is insignificant—a few workmen, as tanners, saddlers, and blacksmiths, disproportioned even to the wants of the community, and some idlers who live by the produce of their farms.

The military is the most numerous and powerful. All men, save the priests, are armed, it is true; but those who follow arms as a profession, and roam from the standard of one chief to another, are easily distinguished, though they have no uniform, by their air of military license. The regular armies, or masses of men assembled under chiefs, are numerous, and throughout the country must amount to at least 200,000, and, as their system renders a large following necessary, half a million of idlers prey upon the rest. These troops consist of horsemen, armed with lance, shields, and swords, footmen caparisoned in like manner, and match-lock men; they have no artillery. In some provinces, as in Edjo, every man capable of bearing arms is a soldier—at least on his own land, where he fights and ploughs alternately. Here is also found the institution of the tournament somewhat simplified. Once or twice a week, by mutual accord, the youth of the country, with any strangers that wish it, meet at some river, on foot or horseback, to fight *à l'outrance*, but also with much chivalrous courtesy. Female singers, in shrill recitative, stimulate them to deeds of valour, and offer their charms as a reward to the bravest.

A constant enmity exists between the military and the population in general. Wages being very irregular, the former indemnify themselves often by indiscriminate plunder. As each chief retains his power by the strength of his army only, the soldiers know their own value, and change masters without ceremony; moreover, any fortunate soldier may hope to rise to the highest dignities. A chief, after a reverse, or even should his adversary obtain a high reputation among the men, is in much danger of being deserted by his army. Certain bands of soldiers are placed under officers appointed by the most powerful chiefs, whom for distinction I shall call Ras, and these act as his guards and messengers. There is no attempt at discipline or exercises; the names of the men are never registered; their numbers are scarcely ever known. These troops are generally favoured, as they are relied on to suppress any mutiny by the rest. Besides these, the Ras, having distributed his territories amongst his followers, they raise forces according to their rank and revenue and follow their feudal chief. With rare exceptions, such appointments are not hereditary—indeed, one man seldom retains one long—but are conferred on any fortunate favourite or soldier. The will of the Ras can in a moment deprive any chief of all his power, even of his private property, when, with one or two followers, he becomes a hanger-on at the camp, awaiting with patience some glimpse of royal favour, or, if of a more fiery temper, will probably throw himself into some wild district where he has family influence, and set his master at defiance.

The army thus composed is directed in its general movements by the Ras. On a march no order is observed; the whole mass presses on to the next camp, baggage and

women, horse and foot, in indiscriminate confusion. At a precipitous pass or narrow ford many accidents happen. In the order of camping some regularity is observed—the tent of the Ras being in the centre, and advanced and rear guards occupying the front and rear. The Ras also holds a council of war, and a plan of attack is laid down, and followed up, as far as regards the position of the forces of each chief. But, that done, every man fights much as he pleases: the footmen advance or stand still as their courage leads them; the horsemen charge in large or small numbers when and where they think fit; the matchlock-men take advantage of the ground, and fire when they please; and each man when he has killed an enemy shouts his war-cry, and displays his trophies, instead of fighting. Plundering begins on the first trifling advantage, and it is often very difficult to discover on which side is the victory. This desultory manner of fighting does not prevent considerable loss of life. The soldiers, when the campaign is ended, are dismissed to roam about their respective districts, arms in hand, exacting from the peasantry until again summoned to the field; in return, the country people slay remorselessly all fugitives of either side from a field of battle.

The chiefs keep more or less discipline amongst their troops when on the march or in quarters, according to their personal character. When provisions become scarce in the camp, some district is ordered for plunder, and the soldiers are very expert in discovering hidden stores.

The military despise all other classes save the priesthood. They love splendour of dress in battle, and some of their costume is rich and tasteful.

In the intervals of international quarrels the troops are kept in good humour by expeditions againt the nearest tribes of barbarians—not generally with any views of permanent conquest, but only in search of spoil, and that the soldier may revel in bloody trophies (the foreskins of the Philistines), the height of his ambition. These trophies are equally sought for in the battles of Christian against Christian, and I am uncertain if it be an ancient custom or introduced only by the Gallas, but incline to the latter opinion. After an engagement, these disgusting tokens of success are heaped before the tent of the king.

The soldiers seldom receive regular pay, but rewards are distributed to the bravest, and the more fortunate receive appointments from their respective chiefs. On a campaign they are fed by a tax in corn on the friendly provinces that are occupied, and which, as the soldiers are the tax-gatherers, is soon doubled, or by general plunder.

A silk shirt bestowed by the Ras is the distinction of the Abyssinian nobility, and this belongs only to the military class. Once bestowed, the honour is for life. The highest rank in this nobility is that of Dejajmatch, who is entitled to beat drums before him in the battle, to inflict all punishment save death, and often this also, and who governs one or two provinces almost independently. "Kainajmatch" and "Gerajmatch" are slightly inferior; then come the "Feetwarari," or chief of advanced guards, with some other titles not worth inquiring into, and then the crowd of "possessors of shirts," who may govern from ten to thirty villages, when the Ras pleases to bestow his favour. All this system is the relics of some complicated, but exact institutions of the Empire of Abyssinia, wherein, the Emperor being the fountain of all honour, every great officer of the household had a title, and with that title a particular province or district. Since the divisions of the kingdom have taken place, the Abyssinians themselves have found it impossible to preserve the rules, and have neglected or forgotten the scrupulous ceremonials of the Court of Gondar. While the lances of the Galla have robbed Abyssinia of its fairest provinces, their manners and customs are superseding all its ancient institutions.

There is something of a chivalrous tone in their international warfare, apart from one savage practice that I have mentioned. An interchange of civilities constantly takes place between hostile camps—messengers are respected and prisoners generally well treated, if of any rank, even with courtesy. So polite are they, that a chief will send news to his adversary, if not in the field, of the defeat of his army, and the messenger will receive a handsome douceur. Cruelty and brutality are rare; after a battle, as before, all is good humour and laughter, and the vanquished generally share the feast with their victors. No violence is offered to women that are captured, and even the ransom is usually fixed with amenity. Severities are sometimes practised towards those who are regarded as rebels; but in general an Abyssinian conqueror is merciful. With barbarians, indeed, as the Shankallas or Taltals, the word is, kill; but herein they have persuaded themselves that they only exercise an undoubted privilege of Christianity.

To retain the affection of the Abyssinian soldier, nothing is necessary but profuse generosity; his heart is in his stomach, and the chief that slaughters many oxen daily and pours out mead in torrents is the god of his idolatry. Each meal in a camp resembles a feast, and many festivals must also be held, to which all are admitted almost indis-

criminately. At these carousals, when gorged with raw meat, and excited by huge draughts of mead, they recite their own warlike deeds, make the most vaunting promises of future heroism, and often obtain rich gifts in such moments from their superiors. Though all are armed and intoxication is general, accidents or quarrels seldom occur. These great banquets are the life of the soldier, and their barbarous plenty and military license is not unimposing.

Not being accustomed to rely on each other, they are absurdly subject to panics. I have seen a whole army running at night from a single man, who charged into the camp, shouting his war-cry. Disciplined, they would make good soldiers.

They have no distinctive dress, but different ways of plaiting their hair to denote the number of men each has killed with his own hand. Certain ornaments are also permitted only to men of great personal bravery. The slaughter of each dangerous beast of the forest is equivalent to a fixed number of human lives; and those who have never killed are not permitted the distinguished privilege of plaistering their heads with fresh butter.

All the servants of a Chief are soldiers; the terms become synonymous in a camp; and the proudest Chief is termed the servant of his feudal superior, and is ready whenever they meet to perform for him any menial office. In general they are proud, mutinous, and insubordinate; frequent fights occur in the camp of the Ras between rival bodies of soldiers, though a little severity would soon ensure obedience. On a late occasion his guards on a field of battle, instead of marching forward, lay down on the ground, alleging that they had been insufficiently fed for some months. The Ras (Ali), with unwonted energy, led a charge of cavalry over them as they lay.

The soldiers of Tigré are almost all foot, and their matchlock-men are very skilful and brave.

The Galla regiments of the interior are fine horsemen, and with discipline would be a formidable cavalry. As it is they face fire well, and like the Parthians, dispersing themselves in flight, suddenly wheel round and inclose a rash pursuer. They have a fine breed of horses. The horse and weapons of the soldiers, whether given him by his Chief or purchased by himself, are his own property. All who can procure them ride mules on the march, the horses being always led on the road. Each soldier that can afford it keeps a lad to carry his shield, a donkey for his provisions, and a small tent, and a wife to bring him water, make him bread, and wash his feet after a march. As he is entitled to a monthly allowance of corn for each of these attendants, besides extracting all he can from the peasantry, and feasting often in his general's tent, or wherever else the doorkeeper is his friend, it may be seen that his condition is not disagreeable; and in fact it is the most attractive style of life that the country affords. A common soldier with a good reputation for courage is everywhere respected; he is flattered and caressed by many Chiefs, who all strive to secure his services; his name is sung in ballads, and he considers himself with reason as equal to the proudest in the land. Such a man will enter the tent of any Chief on the day of festival, assert his right to the finest portions of meat, and demand the strongest mead; not only without reproof, but with a cordial reception. And it is the passion for such individual distinction, leading to immediate and solid benefit, with the certainty that any one of them may by good fortune arrive at the highest rank, and command where he obeyed, that inspires a love for war in the Abyssinian breast. At the same time the pride engendered by this Republican soldiering, induces a fiery impatience of control, and an ambition that leads to unceasing rebellions and distraction.

The great Chiefs have generally much dignity of manner, and some of them might be models of tact and polite suavity, particularly those who have any pride of ancestry; but engrossed with the sensual pleasures afforded by their wealth and power, and uncertain how long they may enjoy them, they never dream of improving the condition of their subjects, though often just and indulgent in their rule, as far as the paramount necessity of conciliating their armies will permit.

The Turkish troops have a great dread of the Abyssinians; though it is probable that 5,000 disciplined soldiers would beat them anywhere in the field, and 10,000 suffice for a permanent occupation of the country. The Abyssinians are convinced that no other nation can compare with them in war. One Chief named Kasai has lately introduced some improvements into his army, which I shall notice in another place.

While the nobility of the country is entirely military, there is a kind of middle class, composed of the more influential proprietors: these, however, from the exigencies of the times are also warlike, and must protect their homes and their ploughs, often by the lance and the sword. The most powerful of these are found in the deep valleys of the Nile, the Takazzee, and other large rivers. These rivers form vast clefts in the face of the country throughout their course, of several miles in width, at the bottom of which, at a depth often of 3,000 feet, they plough their way betwixt high and precipitous walls of rock.

The valleys thus formed are intersected by rugged watercourses, whose torrents are unfordable in the rainy season. The soil is most productive, and the parts not cultivated are clothed with almost impenetrable jungle. The paths that conduct the traveller through these regions descend along the face of several ranges of precipices, over masses of rock, and frequently through passes that a hundred men might make good against an army.

From these peculiarities that present conversely the difficulties of a mountain territory, the character of the inhabitants is brave and independent, and, led by some great proprietor, they often defy all the efforts of the military Chieftains. This proprietor is usually a large cultivator, and possesses numerous cattle; he is judge of the district by common consent, and without appeal. The elders, however, always give him their advice; and as he does not pretend to any superiority, save that of wealth and courage, and is always simple in his habits, there exists a real liberty and equality throughout the society, with the advantage of union under an acknowledged head, in moments of danger. Under his orders the youth of the district make predatory expeditions against the Gallas or other neighbouring nations, or prosecute their endless blood-feuds with some adjacent Christian clan. These agricultural lords are of great importance to the military Rulers, who finding it difficult to seduce or force them to submission, flatter and caress them into an occasional contribution; but their valleys being rich depôts of corn, when provisions become scarce, one of them is marked out for plunder, and by secresy and surprise the attempt is sometimes richly successful, though often the troops are overwhelmed and cut to pieces while toiling up the steep and gloomy passes and thorny forests, by the equally well-armed and more active peasants. They generally also receive the "shirt" I have mentioned, or robe of silk, to give them military rank, and attach them to the party of some Chief. Occasionally they will follow him to war, but rarely on any distant expedition. They are rich, hospitable to a proverb, proud, and manly, and usually skilled in the chase, as these provinces afford ample hunting-grounds, abounding in large game.

The peasants of these districts enjoying a genial climate, live almost in the open air, and though hardy in youth soon grow old: they manifest the same impatience of restraint and love of liberty as mountaineers in other lands.

There are also rich proprietors on the plains and high lands, with family influence and some wealth; but these, from their constant contact with the soldiery, who despise and insult them, supply the want of strength by politic wiles, and have not the manliness and simplicity of their compeers of the low country.

The cultivators of the soil—the small farmers and peasantry—though struggling with many difficulties, form a numerous class. In spite of bad government, military oppression, and the constanst devastations of war, they bear directly or indirectly the whole burden of taxation and the large standing armies. Though seldom wealthy, they are rarely in distress, and appear attached to their way of life. Soldiery are constantly quartered on them, except in some districts that always turn out *en masse* to resist, and where the troops dare not venture.

Villages may be seen everywhere in Abyssinia perched on hills, hidden in most inconvenient hollows, and far from water. There are two good reasons for this: in the valleys the borders of the streams are infected with malaria; and on the plain, if they are too easy of access, they are nightly infested by crowds who demand or exact hospitality. On any frequented high road many a ruined hamlet may be seen, deserted by its inhabitants on this account.

In seasons of war and anarchy an influential countryman becomes more valuable as a friend than any chief; and can, through the ties of relationship, forward goods and messengers in safety to a distance, when a soldier dare not quit his camp. These are generally entrusted with the collection of revenue, and are often made responsible for it; they are a kind of zemindars.

A whole province of cultivators, in times when the military are engaged elsewhere, will meet by accord, and some thousands of them will attack another province, destroying, burning, and bequeathing feuds to distant generations. In their culture they would be laborious, were it not for the priestly device of Saints' days, which forces the whole population to be idle for a third of the year. They plough with oxen, and weed with some care; they leave their fields fallow or change the crop as experience or rather tradition has taught them; and dig, where they cannot plough, the sides of almost precipitous mountains. The most productive crops are obtained on the ground most covered with stones, which they are careful not to remove. During the rainy season a rich verdure clothes every part of Abyssinia that has any prospect of reaping the harvest in tranquillity. Irrigation is practised wherever necessary, the numerous rivulets rendering it an easy task. No fences are ever made; and during the night, when the corn is ripening, boys with slings keep up a constant warfare with the wild boar, the addax, and

the porcupine; in some districts large fires are necessary to scare the herds of elephants, and everywhere the watcher is placed on a high platform, to be in safety from the hyæna and the lion. In general they are intelligent, but ruder than the soldier.

From their present industry, I think that in this matter of cultivation they might improve, if they had a more peaceful Government and some security for property, and could be persuaded that men may improve upon their fathers—that it is better to cross a river by a bridge than to wade through a dangerous torrent; or that a mill is preferable for grinding corn to a slave girl. The fields in the neighbourhood of the towns, where military license is in some degree checked by the priests and the ravages of war are less felt, are highly cultivated; land there sells at a good price, and is eagerly sought, showing that the sweets of tranquil labour are at least appreciated. If, however, the Government were not strong as well as peaceful, even tranquillity might have its dangers, especially in Tigré. As soon as the country people gain large profits, and mead or beer inflames their blood, the violence and pride of their disposition lead them to aim at power, and, without regard to their means, to attack und disorganize society. They express this "inflation" by one word in their own language, which serves as the apology for almost every act of folly, and the inhabitants of Tigré have become a proverb in this respect. I am tempted to give one anecdote to illustrate the phrase:— A few years since seven men of Hamazayn, with no other following, marched through one hundred miles of country to Adowah, to overturn the existing powers and establish their own sovereignty, shouting war-cries and invoking the assistance of the Virgin. This is an extreme case, but describes well enough the disposition of this curious people. Each man considers himself as born to great destinies, and the smallest spark sets fire to his ambition. This is now owing to the long-continued weakness of the Government and the absence of any body of proprietors who are interested in keeping order. Here almost every one thinks he has something to gain by anarchy.

The prosperous or adverse condition of a village depends almost entirely upon the rapacity or moderation of its immediate chief; and the ryots of a harsh master would soon leave him to contemplate empty fields, but for a law that empowers him to seize them and force them to cultivate or to give security for their share of all imposts. The villages are further interested in preventing desertion, as, though only three inhabitants should remain, they must pay the whole sum at which the village was originally assessed. The imposts are numerous, but vary according to the traditionary customs of each village. They pay a certain portion in kind to the Ras, or other great chief, and sometimes a regular tax in money; besides this they must furnish oxen to plough the King's lands: their immediate governor then takes his share in kind of every grain—say a fifth, and feeds besides a certain number of soldiers at the expense of each householder; he has rights to oxen, sheep, and goats, butter, honey, and every other requisite for subsistence; he must be received with joy and feasting by his subjects whenever he visits them, and can demand from them contributions on fifty pretexts—he is going on a campaign, or returning from one; he has lost a horse, or married a wife; his property has been consumed by fire, or he has lost his all in battle; or the sacred duty of a funeral banquet cannot be fulfilled without their aid,

There is in each village one hereditary officer, that cannot be displaced on any pretence; and it is this institution that alone preserves some appearance of order, in the absence of all written documents, amidst the whirl of revolutions, and the rapid succession of dynasties and governors. This humble officer takes one-tenth of all that he collects for his chief. When the latter is changed, he informs his successor what his left of the last year's revenues, of the boundaries of his land, of the amount of imposts, of his various privileges, and all the little secrets of the community, so that in a short time the new governor is as much at home as the old one. The amount of traditional knowledge and memory of these persons is often extraordinary. The boundaries that he has to define are very simple; a brook, a bush, a stone, mark the limits of a village; but when their neighbours' fields, as often happens, are interlaced, it is a complicated task, and gives rise to endless litigation, often to violence. In forest or plain, covered only with grass and jungle, and here and there a heap of ruins, should a village be rebuilt and cultivation resumed, some such ancient peasant is soon found, who demands his post, and points out from memory the boundaries; the descendants of the former inhabitants are sought out under his directions, and under a lenient governor all is restored to its former condition, When land or houses are sold numerous little children are called to receive a handful of peas. and are useful afterwards as witnesses from these juvenile recollections.

Though the feudal power of the military chiefs is so great, it may be doubted if the

influence of the priesthood be not more important. That body holds in chains the mind of the people, moulds at will customs, morals, and all the social ties, which have consequently remained almost unchanged, amidst the change of dynasties, the ruinous shocks of international war, and the gradual crumbling away of a wide and Christian empire.

The spirit of Protestantism, or free inquiry, is not more welcome in Abysinnia than in other primitive churches; but from the less eager spirit of its people, it has not been found necessary to check it by any penalties. Going to the fountain-head they teach but one book to the children of the laity, "The Psalms of David," and without forbidding other learning, discourage it, confining it as much as possible to the clergy and the scribes. Their great numbers, the almost superstitious reverence of the multitude, and the practice of confession and absolution, have enabled the priests to pursue this system with success.

All the larger towns are entirely under their control, and being cities of refuge, sacred even from the Ras, are filled with dissolute and dangerous characters.

This institution is probably a remnant of their Mosaic law, and gives them great power over the bodies, as the ceremony of confession, and the dreadful thunder of excommunication, do over the imagination of an ignorant race.

The Christianity professed and taught in Abysinnia is much materialized. The religion that is elsewhere the companion of progress, is here made the stumbling-block to improvement; stress, for the most part, being only laid on its ceremonies, and many being added that in no way belong to it.

Though they detest the Church of Rome, and indeed despise all save their own, quarrelling even with the Alexandrian from which they receive their Aboona, or High-Priest, through their love of contradiction, they may be thought to have taken some good lessons from the former, on the means of retaining the population in blind submission.

All church service is conducted in the Geez tongue, unknown, save to the learned. The Psalms are also in that language, and the pupil, while encouraged to read them, is persuaded that he should not seek to understand them, but that he fulfils a high duty by gabbling over a number of them daily. No one, save the priest himself, is ever instructed in the Gospel, in any tongue. Great adoration is paid to the Virgin Mary, and to numberless saints and angels. Their churches are filled with pictures, to which, when unveiled, the multitude bows with reverence. Fasting is rigidly insisted on, sometimes, however, compounded for by money. These fasts embrace nearly two-thirds of the year, and most of those who keep them are convinced that they will be weighed against their sins, though this doctrine is not officially taught. So much do they attach importance to this and other outward forms, that a man of Hamazayn will slay his near relative, and, returning home calmly, will be horror-stricken should his wife have ground flour on a saint's day, or prepared his meal before the hours of fasting have expired.

The churches are very numerous, and each church is itself an object of devotion, as it is firmly believed that the saint whose name it bears actually resides in its sanctuary. The stones are kissed with awe, and offerings are deposited, which the priests receive, vows are registered and prayers are made, with equal fervour, to the Virgin, our Saviour, or some traditional martyr of the Abyssinian Church, from which they expect immediate benefit in this world, as well as salvation in the next. Miracles, I need scarcely say, are not unfrequent, and certain spots of peculiar sanctity perform them almost daily. Whenever offerings slacken, and the numbers that kneel at the shrine decrease, a picture rolls its eyes, a leper is cleansed, or the blind are restored to sight.

Great respect is paid to all who wear the white turban—the mark of priesthood; they are always addressed as "father," and as superiors in the second person plural, even by chiefs of the highest rank. Any person dying without having chosen a father confessor is denied Christian burial, and so jealous are the priests of this great means of power that they extend the rule to strangers. The confessors of the great men are usually indigent, and they are permitted to compound for their frailties by the endowing of a new church, or handsome gifts to an old one; nor are monasteries wanting to complete the resemblance to the Roman-Catholic Church, and to the middle ages, where every immorality is practised; nor solitary hermits, who dwell in gloomy forests, feeding on roots, and exposed to ferocious animals, and who are sometimes as sincere as they are useless. Nunneries alone are absent from the picture, though vows of celibacy are sometimes taken, if rarely kept save at an advanced age.

Christianity is reduced to the simple form of obedience to the priest. The Gospel is forbidden in our translations into the modern Amharic tongue, nor is there one man in ten thousand who knows the commonest precepts of his religion. If some few moral ideas are not denied, they are never inculcated or insisted on, and absolution can always be obtained for money. So blindly devoted is the Abyssinian laity to these astute fathers

that even the almost daily spectacle of their drunkenness, excesses, and immorality,—nay, the knowledge that the confessional means "seduction made easy," excites no feeling of disgust and astonishment.

Thus it is not wonderful if lying, sexual intercourse, intoxication, or manslaughter are regarded as venial—things that might be considered curious as the daily occupation of professing Christians, were it not for the ignorance in which they are studiously retained under meshes too cunningly woven to be burst by any efforts of their own. Their present immorality does not argue a bad nature in the Abyssinian; on the contrary, I am astonished that good and moral men are still found; and it is certain that Christianity, even thus debased, has hitherto saved them from the wantonness of crime and excess of cruelty that stains the records of almost all African races, and of some in other quarters of the globe. It is necessary for the strangers in Abyssinia to propitiate the Church, or at least to be very careful how he attacks it in his conversation. Should an outcry be raised on such points as his want of respect for the priests, his not fasting, his eating with Mahomedans—which is regarded with horror—or the like, he will find it difficult to resist the storm, though the Abyssinian persecutor is generally content with banishment It was by these means that the English protestant Mission was unceremoniously ejected, when it was found that it was introducing the New Testament to notice in the Amhara language, and announcing truths dangerous to priestcraft.

One-third of the lands was originally set apart for the Church, but this portion is now much reduced, though its share is still large.

The native head of the Abyssinian Church is called the "Tchegee," and resides at Gondar, his house being a place of peculiar sanctity; but the bishop, called "Aboona," who receives a reverence almost amounting to worship, is always a Copt. He is sent by the Patriarch of Alexandria on consideration of some thousand dollars collected and forwarded by the Abyssinians for his journey. The present Aboona is said to be the 118th, and is named Salama. His chief residence should also be at Gondar, but there have been fierce disputes in the Abyssinian Church, and the gifts of Sahela Selassie, of Shoa, prevailed on the Ras Ali to banish the Aboona, who has since been living near Adowah, where he has still large possessions. All churches must be consecrated, all priests and deacons ordained by him; crowds of pilgrims are always waiting in his courts, sometimes intermixed with men of rank, some to obtain a blessing or to be assoiled from deadly sin, a great number to be made deacons. Worn with a journey of perhaps months, priests are there in flauntiug red garments, carrying a mysterious box, wherein is kept the "Holy of Holies" of each Church, like the Ark of the Covenant, waiting for the blessing of the Aboona, which is equivalent to the consecration of that church. His sentence of excommunication is much dreaded, and he has great influence in all the political or warlike movements in the country. His residence is an inviolable sanctuary.

From time to time the Church of Rome has made great efforts to induce the Abyssinians to recognise the Pope of Rome as their spiritual head. The Jesuits at one time having nearly succeeded, and having lighted up the flames of civil war in the time of the Emperor Socinios, failed at last, and were massacred or banished. At this time the struggle is renewed by several Missions, under three bishops, to gain a footing in this territory.

The Aboona by interdict, and, when that fails, by inducing the chief to expel these intruders, carries on a war with them with various success. As to his prestige, they oppose money. These Missions are under the protection of France.

Even the Aboona, influential as he is, finds it difficult to assert his authority over the banded priests when they differ on any doctrinal point, nor dares he announce a truth that may oppose any strong national prejudice. Should he say that a Christian is permitted to eat what he pleases, he would raise a storm from which his sacred character would scarcely protect him. Priests are permitted to marry one wife, but not a second time, except the Aboona and Tchegee, who should lead a life of rigid celibacy.

The only interference of the chiefs in church government is in the appointment of a civil officer in each town, who settles all disputes, orders church ceremonials, and receives large profits. He must have some learning, and is called "Alika."

The priests have no pay; but the profits on the land attached to each church are divided in proportion to their several dignities. Then the father confessors extract what they can, according to the wealth of their patients. The pious bestow rich offerings for their spiritual welfare, and the laity are mulcted on the occasions of births, christenings, marriages, deaths, registers of sale and purchase, burials, and the like; so that, besides their continual feasting at the public expense, they are usually well stocked with money, and, from their numbers, have been compared by the Abyssinians to locusts.

It is just, however to say that they have preserved the Christian faith, impure indeed, but still alive, in the midst of foreign invasion, domestic degradation and the extinction of

Government, and that it is under their protection that agriculture flourishes and villages are built where deserts would else be seen. What learning exists has also been preserved by them from utter extinction. But as they become themselves daily more corrupt, society more disorganized, and the law more inefficient, church and people will be lost in utter barbarism, unless Providence have preserved those embers of civilization to be cherished into life by some more generous and powerful nation.

Their learning is limited almost to the books of the Old and New Testaments, into which some are admitted that we consider apocryphal; besides these, there are some monkish legends, a code of laws, and the chronicles of their kings, containing in a mass of rubbish a few sentences worthy of notice. All these books, written by monks with much labour, were formerly eagerly sought for; but are now neglected, almost forgotten. The art of painting is nearly lost; and ornamental missals may now be found very cheap, as there are scarcely any purchasers; the number of persons that can read and write is diminishing daily, and the code of laws is becoming a mystery to the most learned. There are about four hundred works in the country, of which eighty-one form the Bible.

Numbers of Abyssinian priests and monks visit Jerusalem yearly, and it may be deemed singular that these, receiving much kindness at the hands of Europeans, do not awaken their countrymen to some knoweldge of the world beyond, and some better feeling towards their fellow Christians than contempt or indifference.

It is one of the difficulties of an Envoy, that while the Turk regards his intercourse with a jealous eye, and the fanatic Mahomedan hates him as the friend of the Christians, the Abyssinian too generally regards him as a man without religion, that is, without those outward forms that he is taught as more important than either morality, truth, or humility. These pilgrims generally disclaim the reception of any kindness, and declare that Franks have no religion. They all eat meat of any kind on their journies; but are most fanatic on their return against intercourse with the Mussulman, and fervently deny having tasted the abhorred flesh of his shambles, declaring that what is killed by an European is also contaminating, his Christianity being most impure.

Yet these monks have faith, and energy in their faith, though ill-directed; for 1,500 years numbers have worshipped at the tomb of the Saviour, have braved persecution, and devoted themselves to certain death. Many of them now risk their lives to visit some forgotten shrine, once a church belonging to their fathers, and the centre of population and culture, now a few shapeless stones in a howling wilderness, the lair of wild beasts, and surrounded for many a weary day's journey by hostile tribes of Arabs or negroes, who slay the pilgrim that they may not return home with unbloody hands.

Scribes or "deftaras" are often more learned than the priests, and equally take advantage of the general ignorance. Their principal gain is by writing amulets, and charms against every disease, almost against death; it is believed that some of these men, by their spells, can invoke demons and spirits from the waters, they being careful to nourish the delusion by juggling exhibitions from time to time. They also profess medicine, and as they do not much analyse the effects of their drugs, many an unfortunate falls a victim to some poisonous plant administered as a love philtre. Most of them are hangers-on of the different churches; they are generally cunning, debauched, and mischief-makers.

Jews are still found in some numbers, and though despised are not persecuted; this may be owing to their poverty. They know nothing of the Hebrew tongue; but some read the Mosaic books in the Geez, and are as scrupulous in their ceremonials as their brethren elsewhere. They are the best masons in the country. They have no peculiar physiognomy.

The Koomants, found only in the neighbourhood of Gondar, are acknowledged by neither Christian, Mussulman, nor Jew; and have a bastard creed, a compound of all three. They are skilful carpenters, and supply all Gondar with wood. They are despised; but being very courageous, and having lately shown an inclining towards Christianity, it is not improbable that their distinctions will soon disappear: many even now have ceased a practice which was the chief separating cause. They hung heavy weights in the lobe of the ear of the girls, who were thereby excluded from any chance of marriage with Christians.

The Wytos are a small class, who live by hunting the hippopotamus; they eat the flesh, and sell the hide and teeth. They call themselves Mahomedans; but are not recognised by the other followers of that creed. They principally reside near Lake Tānā, and are a very handsome race. They are regarded with as much aversion as the Jews. But all these classes are permitted the free exercise of their own religious faith.

There are many Mahomedans in Abyssinia, and in all large large towns they have a separate quarter, with mosques and public prayers. From the advantage that their commerce in slaves gives them over their Christian competitors, the Mussulman traders

are the most wealthy, and are, therefore, generally appointed to the high post of Negadeh Ras, or collector of all customs, literally "head of merchants." To enforce their authority these keep large bodies of armed men, and confidently predict the final triumph of the faith of the Prophet in Abyssinia. The Abyssinian Mussulmans, as distinguished from the Galla, are all traders, they will not eat meat killed by Christians, and are frequently their superiors in morality and intelligence. They live on terms of equality, good humour, and friendship with the Christians, openly defend their creed and receive any proselyte that offers, and do not appear to think that the restrictions in the Koran respecting strong drinks apply to them at all. Mahomedans and Christians do not intermarry. One cannot but admire the toleration of this people, though it does not extend to other Christian sects; however, no one can be molested on account of his opinions, and a small concession will always mollify the church. There is no distinction in dress between those who profess different creeds, and all are subject to the same law.

The Mahomedans, like the Christians, do not in general seclude their women; and the latter maintain in general the important privilege of displaying their charms. This formerly was done by females of all ranks and religions; but lately, to imitate the great chiefs, who secluded their wives from jealousy, the custom of a harem is being gradually adopted in the towns and by the wealthy. I may add here that, in spite of the prevalence of Christianity, and the abundance of its professing teachers, Mussulmans are not alone in the doctrine of plurality, almost every man keeping as many handmaidens as his means will permit.

The mercantile community are not very numerous, and are looked on with much contempt by the military, but patronized by the chiefs, whom they conciliate by rare presents, in addition to the duties they pay. The Mahomedans of Abyssinian extraction, not Galla, follow rarely any other pursuit, and three-fourths of the trade are in their hands; of wealthy Christian merchants, there are scarcely twenty in the whole country. The rich caravans travel in large numbers, and well-armed; and are as well used to hard fights as the soldiery, especially those who reach Enarea. They have no traits which distinguish them from any other clase of the community; and the merchant must stuff his followers with meat and mead like the military chief, paying, in addition, regular wages.

The countries richest in commercial produce are the Galla provinces of Enara, Djimma, and those adjacent. They abound in ivory, zibbad, excellent coffee, wax, and spices; gold is found in the sands; and these districts are accustomed to trade with the Abyssinian caravans. Their products find one outlet through Shoa and the Adaiel, eastward into the Indian Ocean, at the port of Zeyla; another through Abyssinia, by various channels, northward, and passing either through Gondar and Sennaar, to Egypt, or through Adowah and Massowah, into the Red Sea. A third route is frequented by the traders who, following the course of the White Nile, also reach Khartoom, and there meet the caravan from Gondar.

The caravans to the Red Sea are swelled on the route by small parties, with the produce of Abyssinia—wax, coffee of an inferior quality, ivory, buffaloes' horns, hides, ghee, honey, and mules. The list may appear limited, but little inducement is offered to the trader. either by his own unsettled and oppressive Government, or by Turkish apathy on the coast; and provinces are left desert that are capable of growing many valuable articles for commercial purposes, while those that exist are but half known, and the quantity of those in use might be multiplied fifty-fold by encouragement. Amongst the products of Abyssinia, not considered as of value at present, I may mention aloes, aniseed, castor-oil, senna, ebony, gum, hippopotamus' teeth, saffron, and sulphur.

Pepper and other spices are now imported from India, while there are numerous districts fit for their growth between the Red Sea and Enarea. The quantity of coffee might be immensely increased under a tolerable Government. Among the nomad tribes on the coast, an extensive trade in hides, salt-meat, and horns, might be created. Should means of destruction become more generally known, the quantity of ivory would be much increased. Gold and copper veins might be found. The valuable zibbad, now monopolized by the King of Enarea, might be reared all over Abyssinia, where, though the cat exists in a wild state, no one has ever thought of domesticating it, which would be an innovation.

Cotton cloth is the universal and only dress of the country, and cotton is imported from Cutch, while Abyssinia should be capable of producing largely for exportation of a much superior quality. Besides the tropical rains, the means of irrigation are everywhere abundant; while the excellent quality of the soil, and the mildness of the climate, would render that resource unnecessary for most plantations. Owing to bad government,

fertile lands near the sea have been abandoned to flocks and herds for a breadth of 100 miles between the coast and Abyssinia; and plains of sulphur at 70 or 80 miles from Massowah are unknown to the Turkish Governor, that article being imported in small quantities from beyond the sea.

Everything is transported on horses, mules, or donkeys; and the large caravans, moving very slowly, are often a year from Enarea to Massowah, a distance by the road of about 750 miles. The slowness of their progress is owing partly to the natural difficulties of a rugged and mountainous country, without roads, but still more to the embarrassing institutions of the tribes or nations through which they pass. The despots of the monarchical Gallas, as Enarea—where, as I have said, the richest produce is found, and which town is the great mart of this part of Africa—must be propitiated by presents and flattery. The Slave Trade is a great source of revenue to those Kings; and for this reason the Christian merchants seldom transact business so far in the interior, leaving those wealthy reservoirs to the Moslem traders in human flesh, through whose influence all that part of the country is gradually adopting the Mahometan creed.

Enarea is frequented by traders from Zanzibar and Tajoora, from Massowah and Khartoom, from Darfoor and Khoordoofān, and, it is said, even from Darsalā and Timbuctoo; but even the frequenters of that depôt seem to know little of any tribes on the Equator. Constant as are the wars between tribe and tribe, the merchants are protected by all, and escorted to the limits of each province, where they are received under a temporary truce by their friends in the other. Should there be an intervening wilderness, the trader must trust to his own weapons and a stout heart.

When the caravans having left the dominions of the King of Enarea, on the road for Massowah, which most concerns us at present, enter the territories of republican Gallas, not only each tribe, but each influential individual, and each one who has a hut on the line of march, must be paid and caressed. As the best way of effecting this, the merchants camp on the frontier of each district, under the protection of some influential inhabitant, and there make their bargain with all those who have claims along the line of road. These claims being all settled, which may occupy a month or six weeks, they make a stretch into the next district, and with each tribe the same operation must be repeated. This system continues until they reach Basso, the southern province of Abyssinia on that road. To reach this halting place they must cross the River Abbai, or Blue Nile, though which valley is the most dangerous part of their progress. This wilderness, a hunting-ground for wild beasts, hot and desolate, contrasts strongly with the fertile crops of Gooderoo that they are leaving, and the fresh pastures of Godjam that they hope to reach—a hope not always realized. Hundreds of Galla horse lay hidden in the long grass and thorny thickets, apprised by numerous scouts of the numbers and quality of the approaching caravan. The Abyssinian Chief of Basso, it is true, furnishes a strong escort, but not unfrequently convoy and caravan are cut off almost to a man, and that fatal spot, yearly the scene of deadly combats, is dreaded by the merchant, and rouses all the energy of the traveller. Such are some of the labours and dangers of the traders to Enarea.

After reaching Basso, the trading depôt being named Ayjubay, they are in comparative safety; but the perils they have passed are almost preferable to the endless vexations and exactions of the Abyssinian institutions.

The system of customs is in fact a struggle betwixt the merchants on the one hand, and on the other, the Negadeh Rases, who farm the duties in the large towns, and numerous small military governors, who exact what they can at other posts—this system leading necessarily to loss of time, smuggling, and often bloodshed.

A Negadeh Ras, or chief of merchants, is appointed in six towns of Abyssinia—Ayjubay, Derrita, Gondar, Sokota, Doobaruk, and Adowah. In five of these the officer is a Mahometan; at Doobaruk, somewhat inferior in importance, a Christian. Paying fixed sums to the great chiefs, they are permitted to screw all they can out of merchants, and keep in their pay large bodies of armed men to enforce their severe regulations. They are also obliged to do feudal service for the chief when called upon. Each Negadeh Ras establishes numerous minor posts, where the merchants are harassed for small sums, and with the military claimants they must compound as they best can. The right of pasturage and trespasses are fruitful sources of contention and delay. It is true that the richer traders are generally on good terms with the chiefs by constant presents and flattery, and escape pretty easily from his followers; but those on a small scale are plundered unmercifully, and their whole property sometimes confiscated on the plea of smuggling, true or false. All are despised by the military, and for fear of future consequences are obliged to receive nightly in their houses insolent and riotous soldiers, who, even when receiving hospitality, scarcely deign to disguise their contempt. They are also in constant fear of being claimed by the chiefs to extort money. In the desert parts of the country, if any rebels or robbers

are in force, they have not unfrequently to fight in defence of their goods in Abyssinia, as amongst the Gallas; and the merchants from the province of Walkait, bordering on Sennaar, have another danger to encounter; bands of negroes, called Shankalla, in bodies of 500 and 1,000 often occupy the road in ambush, and sometimes succeed in surprising and slaughtering an entire caravan. This feud is uninterrupted, and no quarter is ever given. When the merchant has settled for his vexatious tolls, and averted with success all human enemies, he has also to encounter the difficulties of raging floods, precipitous mountains, frightful roads and wild beasts that destroy his mules. Their situation would be much bettered, were Abyssinia under one master, instead of being ground by so many chiefs, each of whom frames despotic laws in his own province, and often makes the forced friendship of a merchant for his rival, or the compulsory exactions of a rebel whom he himself cannot subdue, a pretext for a heavy fine. The frontier provinces of Tigré towards the sea, Kalagoozai and Hamazayn, are now disorderly republics, save a tribute forced on them by the arms and the fortune of Oobeay, and will probably soon entirely detach themselves from the shaking fabric of Abyssinian society; and here there is no law or protection for the trader, save such moderation as self-interest may teach the villagers on the road. Combats are not unfrequent; but as it is known that the caravans will fight to the death in behalf of their property, being generally all they possess, even the most rapacious are afraid to push matters to extremity. The merchants also make friends of the most influential proprietors. On arriving amidst the Shoho tribes, between these provinces and the coast through which they must pass to reach Massowah, they suffer great extortions under pretence of guides and permission to pass through this territory, inhabited by Mahometans, who acknowledge no sovereign, either Turk or Christian, and amongst whom each man claims a share of the booty. Having scrambled through these valleys, the produce of Enarea at last arrives once in the year at Massowah, where the merchants, if Christian, were formerly subject to insult, violence, and injustice, but of late years, if not encouraged, have at least been treated with decency and moderation; a result to which I may without vanity, believe myself to have contributed.

A caravan at each halt makes a camp near some spring or river. The packages are piled up to the height of four or five feet, with spaces left at intervals; the long sticks with which they drive the mules are thrown across these to form a roof, and soft hides are laid over all, making a series of waterproof cabins, in which the wealthy nestle among their goods; the followers erect temporary huts all round, and in the centre the mules are tied at night. Numbers of young men are sent to cut grass; others to trade with the nearest villagers for supplies. Strict watch is kept all night by the light of large wood fires. At daylight they resume their journey, and a caravan of 200 or 300 mules will be off in less than half-an-hour. The small traders, who carry goods from market to market, disperse themselves at night in the villages amongst their friends; as also do those who carry salt. Great numbers of men are employed in this important commerce, salt being the current money of the kingdom, and found only in the Taltal district, not very far from Massowah. Small blocks are cut of eight inches in length, and slung over the back of a donkey to the number of 150 or more; being first brought by camels from the arid salt plains into Tigré. Hides are placed over as a protection from the rain, and these traders then hurry with great speed to every market in the kingdom, and young girls may be seen on journeys of several hundred miles, carrying sixty pieces on their backs, to work out a dowry for themselves. The salt, having to pay constant toll, becomes rapidly more dear, and while in Tigré 200 pieces can be obtained for a dollar, in Godjam thirty are considered a high rate; and in the Galla provinces salt is one of the chief luxuries of life.

The manufactures in request in Abyssynia are almost all British; red cloth, calico, silks and velvets of all kinds, printed cottons, &c., are all imported from Bombay, as well as red and blue Indian bunting, raw silks, Surat tobacco, and Indian manufactured silks. English sabres and fire-arms are much in request, but are prohibited by the blockade of the Turks at Massowah. Matchlocks only were admired formerly, but of late years percussion guns are in great demand. In all things they cry out for English goods. Some kinds of Egyptian cloth sell in large quantities, and also American drill. Trieste sends glassware and beads, which are required principally for the slave-dealers; and the frankincense of Arabia supplies the Abyssinian churches. I have already furnished an exact list of the exports and imports of Massowah.*

It is unnecessary to dwell at present upon the probability of developing the commercial resources of the Gallas. That they possess them in abundance unknown to themselves, is certain, but their most important districts are so distant from the coast, that no European merchant could risk in person so hazardous a journey. Nothing but the establishment of a firm government and an enlightened system in Abyssinia, can much

* No. 132.

influence the condition of those tribes. The Abyssinian merchants will, however, communicate whatever impulse they may receive from the coast, and push on into the furthest provinces with increased vigour. The Abyssinians are greedy of gain, and a desire for European luxuries already exists. The stimulus of capital and protection on the coast would soon cause a great change in their domestic policy, convert their grass wildernesses and thorny forests into thriving plantations, and create as large a commerce as can exist in a country where water carriage is hopeless, and even the introduction of waggons must be the task of years, owing to national prejudice, rugged elevations, abrupt valleys, and the utter absence of roads and bridges.

The ancient form of Government in Abyssinia was a despotic monarchy, with many Persian forms and Jewish institutions. This, while powerful, was preferable to the present state of lawless violence, and afforded an appearance of unity, however ill the law may have been executed, as appears by their records. Long before its fall, the inroads of the Mahomedans on the coast of the Red Sea, and of the Gallas on the southern and eastern boundaries, had much reduced the ancient limits of the Empire; and the royal family has ceased to be regarded with respect or fear, even in the few provinces that their arms could still defend.

This monarchy was finally overthrown by Ras Michael of Tigré, shortly after the visit of Bruce to Gondar; and that Ras was next attacked and defeated by the Gallas, under pretence of avenging the Emperor. The son of Ras Michael having been afterwards slain in battle by the Mahomedans from Edjo and Warrahaimano, in the general confusion that ensued, a young man of no note from the former province, named Gooksa, seized the province of Begemder, and received from the deposed but still recognised "Ahtee," or Emperor, the title of Ras. Here the power of the Church was felt, and though by the aid of Mussulman sabres he had overthrown Christian forces, and felt himself strong enough to portion out the country amongst his followers, and to contemn the royal shadow at Gondar, he was obliged to profess the Christian faith, not daring to risk the holy war that would otherwise have been kindled by the priests.

He then became virtual ruler of Abyssinia, as far as subtlety and force could confirm his title; but in the north, Tigré acknowledged only its native princes, and Godjam, in the south, kept him occupied in constant wars with various fortune. From that time, nearly seventy years, this Galla dynasty has held Begemder, and, if not acknowledged sovereigns, were the most powerful of the pretenders. It is owing to this revolution, and the consequent number of claimants for power, none of whom have succeeded in establishing a permanent and hereditary authority, that relations with Abyssinia have been since so difficult and fruitless.

Ras Ali, the grandson of Gooksa, having received tribute and professed allegiance from the other chiefs, including him of Tigré, became the sole Ras. Nevertheless, all men having arms in their hands and many leaders heading large armies, the whole period of his reign the Ras was in the saddle, and his palace was his tent; being engaged in pursuing those who fled into impregnable mountain strongholds or pathless wildernesses, or in striking down others who withstood his arms in open fight, during a period of twenty-two years. Before proceeding to a sketch of late events, which have hurled the Ras from his throne, I will endeavour to give some outline of his career, the manner of government, and the administration of justice, since the fall of the Gondar monarchy.

Ras Ali has, during his reign, overcome three powerful cabals of the northern and southern chiefs combined. During the government of Ras Gooksa, the Ras Welda Selasee, in Tigré (to whom an embassy was sent by England), and Ras Gibree, in Semen, were independent. Oobeay, the grandson of Ras Gibree, slew Dejaj Sabagardis, the successor of Ras Welda Selasee, who also contemplated a strict alliance with us; and after that victory, conquered Tigré, which province he has held in subjection for twenty years. Although Dejaj Oobeay became, by this acquisition of territory, a formidable rival, after several severe struggles, he was forced to recognise Ras Ali as his chief, to pay him tribute yearly, and to send a quota of troops as feudal service. All others being apparently vanquished, the chief of Godjam, Dejaj Birro, alone held out unconquered through the whole period of Ras Ali's power. After repeated victories over the troops sent against him, an overwhelming force, headed by the Ras in person, drove him for refuge to his mountain, where he remained shut up for five years. During this period was my mission, and while the Ras might thus be said to be, in one way or other, complete master of Abyssinia. But this mastery, however proud a position for himself, secured by a turbulent and licentious army, was necessarily factitious: and the numerous bands of Gallas, his relatives, brought by him to sustain his precarious power, with the difficulty of feeding the immense army he kept up, in no way added to the security of property and the tranquillity of the land. Indeed, he had many troubles even in his camp; for the great chiefs, though from fear,

and yet chafing at the obligation, they rendered him feudal service, still asserted almost sovereign rights in their own provinces; and many of them who claimed descent from the royalty of Gondar, or whose ancestors had held high offices under the Empire, considered themselves, with some reason, his equals. Others, again, of inferior pretensions, plundered the country, or exacted contributions in proportion to their force. The Ras, could all his vassals be united, might have mustered at one time 50,000 men of all arms; and his rival, Oobeay, 30,000; yet many a petty adventurer, their equal in birth perhaps, with only 500 or 1,000 followers, trusting to the strength of his mountains or valleys and his local influence, continually braves these rulers; and though, after much bloodshed, many of them have been reduced to obedience, enough are always under arms to render the roads unsafe without a military force, or the escort of a strong caravan of merchants. It may easily be conceived that each chief, in proportion to his importance, deals pretty much as he pleases with travellers or merchants on his own ground; and in these matters the Ras is too powerless or too careless to interfere, inasmuch as it is easy to provoke a rebellion amongst a soldiery that regard inaction as a penalty and war as a delight. Little vigour is shown in suppressing these outbreaks, the Ras generally caring little if his own supplies are not cut off, or his revenues seriously diminished. He generally makes terms with his rebellious vassals, preferring policy to force.

The feudal sovereignty of the Ras having been established by the sword, and depending at any time on the issue of a battle, in appointing a "Dejajmatch," or Governor of a province, he is obliged to be attentive to the claims of the great families, who, from their hereditary influence, must be either rulers or rebels in their respective districts; the doubtful alternative of destroying them he was always too merciful to adopt. These chiefs follow him to war, and give him a portion of their revenues; they bestow on their retainers, districts and villages as they please; and the pay of each is the revenue he can extract from these allotments.

The Ras reserves for himself a number of provinces, to provide for his household officers and troops. The soldiers are paid an uncertain sum of money occasionally, and have a monthly allowance of corn. This corn is sometimes measured out from the Ras's granaries; but more often a half-plundering license to quarter themselves in the reserved provinces is given. This is not always patiently acquiesced in, and bloody struggles ensue, in which the peasantry sometimes succeed in expelling the soldiery; the weakness of the Ras, generally, obliging him to overlook such an affair.

The petty household of a chief who has three or four villages, is an exact imitation, on a ludicrous scale, of that of one who musters at a word 5,000 horse. He has all officers, and no servants; his "king's mouth," his major-domo, his grand butler, his chief of commissariat, his jester, his master of the horse, and so forth; this, with an establishment of perhaps thirty persons, each system revolving round its sun or candle. Yet, as every military man who is courageous or well connected may hope with reason to reach the highest grade, they practise state without thinking themselves absurd. The Ras is truly, only the most powerful of a number of competitors; several of those who acknowledge him as a feudal superior, maintaining their right to judge without appeal. It is one favourable trait in this long rivalry, that poison, or assassination, have rarely, if ever, been resorted to; their warfare being open, often chivalrous.

The chiefs are generally so far just as the paramount need of feeding and conciliating their armies will permit; and, of course, where their whims and personal interests are not concerned. But though the judgment may be just, the poor do not often profit by it. Almost all the subordinate governors being rapacious, justice must be sought at the fountain-head; and then, with the distance they have to travel, over the worst roads, the net-work of retainers and favourites about the great man, who render it difficult to obtain admission, and the local influence of the chief against whose decision they appeal—they seldom return home without, in some shape, repenting their success. Still it gives them pleasure to succeed; nor is there any nation that so delights in litigation—a proof that, while under a badly organised military oligarchy, they are obliged to trust often to arms for their defence, they would yield easy obedience to the law when administered with vigour and regularity. It is not an uninteresting sight to witness the Ras's Court filled with suitors of all classes; the multitude in attendance seated on the grass; no one excluded; and the highest noble, the meanest peasant, standing, pleading on equal terms before his judges or himself, and using entire liberty of speech. But this well intended impartiality is nullified by the manner of procuring testimony.

The first step in every cause is to call on both parties to find security. These securities must be persons whom the judge is certain of being able to seize if necessary. If the charge be serious they must be persons of property, and are liable both for the appearance of their principals, and for the sentence whatever that may be. This custom

obtains both in civil and criminal law. In default of such security, each party is chained by the wrist; an additional expense, as the chains must be hired, and the jailor, that is, the person to whom he is chained, paid a sum fixed by law. This bail is the prop of Abyssinian society; no commercial or market transfer takes place without it. In this manner is insured the payment of debt or interest, and of the king's revenue. The Abyssinian judge or creditor cares nothing for the principal in a cause; the bail is seized, and in self-defence produces his man; and it is an honourable trait that the principal rarely absconds. A friend will thus become security in cases of murder, though rendering himself thereby liable to suffer death, or to pay the price of blood—to them a fortune.

After both parties have given security, the plaintiff only is allowed to produce his witnesses; the defendant can, when they are called by name, admit or reject their evidence; in almost every case great indulgence being shown in this respect. The plaintiff stating then that he can produce witnesses for his statement, demands a "travelling judge." This judge is furnished by the Ras, usually a common soldier of his guards, on rare occasions an officer. His duty is to collect testimony orally, wherever the question may have arisen, perhaps three hundred miles distant. The parties travel with him, mostly on foot, chained, if they have not furnished bail, over this extent of ground, and on his return, he reports from memory all the evidence he has collected by examination of the witnesses of the plaintiff; the defendant may cross-examine these witnesses. The report is generally faithful. The parties are then severally demanded if it be true, and if they assent, final judgment is given; if they differ, or the chief finds anything suspicious in the case, or if he wishes for more information thereon, they must all start again, and are sometimes thus kept travelling a year or more.

It is clear what advantage the rich has over the poor, by bribery or endurance. As for false witnesses it varies in different provinces; in some scarcely known, in others proverbial. If the defendant can expose any flaw in his antagonist's argument or evidence, even if accidental, he triumphs at once. An Abyssinian suit is much more a trial of wordy skill than an elucidation of the truth, and the reason is obvious, from the system of Daignanet judgment in all tribunals save the highest. This is the sum paid by the losing party to the judge, whether military or civil, and large according to the importance of the case. This is occasionally a safeguard to the poor, inasmuch as it is the interest of the judge to decide against the one that can afford to pay, when other reasons, such as fear or bribery, do not outweigh this. The sum is arbitrary; and the only check upon their rapacity is the fear that if too exacting, the country people will cease to dispute, or will decide all cases before elders or friends. Moreover the judge has certain perquisites, varying as usual in each province; on each slip of the tongue, on each oath that is taken on the gospel, nay, even should excitement cause a movement of the hand or a change of position during the pleadings; besides this, his retainers gain by messages, by bribery, and many other ways; it is therefore obviously his interest that each case should endure as long as possible, even if he be disposed to give a just decision in the end.

There being no police, it may seem curious how any offender is brought to justice, but in ordinary cases this is easy, although a daring and decided criminal has generally little difficulty in escaping. In a strong case, as [illegible] of public manslaughter, the bystanders will seize the homicide, not to give a pretext to the chief for levying heavy fines on the village or district and deliver him over to the authorities, and so on with other serious and criminal cases. In small affairs, such as a sudden dispute on the high road, the meeting of an absconded debtor, or any civil matter, the first decent person to be found is obliged to act as a temporary judge, if adjured by the "death of the chief" paramount. He must then place the accused in bonds, which is done by tying his cloth to that of his accuser, and escort or send them to the nearest magistrate, who, should the accused demand it, must in like manner forward him to his immediate master or chief, where the case is first heard, the plantiff having right of appeal; the law in this being however highly favourable to the defendant, the plaintiff not being always disposed for a long journey.

Their code of laws is a bad translation from the code of Justinian; three parts of it being occupied with church affairs and regulations, and a small portion only with the civil and criminal law, this latter being also much mixed up with the institutions of the Pentateuch. Bad as it is there are probably not twenty persons in the country that are conversant with it; and some singular judgments are given on its authority, much after the fashion of the "Sortes Virgilianæ." Though it is consulted with much ceremony, and considered a sacred volume, law is in fact simplified to the will of the chief. Still the fact of there being a written law has assisted in retarding the degradation of the people.

Usury is permitted according to the agreement of the parties, but is checked in practice, and as no ill results from the merciful nature of the law for debt, it is generally ruled that a debtor shall pay small sums according to his means, and he cannot be kept in

durance when he has nothing. Affairs of this kind, however, are generally on so small a scale that they are settled by arbitration.

The institution of elders that I have alluded to is not perhaps conducive to discipline, but in the existing uncertainty of the law is well worthy of notice, and agreeable to witness. The decision of these elders cannot be reversed by any judge, as both parties solemnly agree that it shall be final; it costs them nothing, and such arbitration is seldom refused, even by the most testy, urged as it generally is in the most good-tempered manner.

Their mediation can be employed in every case where blood has not been drawn. Should any of these men be by on the commencement of a dispute, they separate the angry, and after patient investigation give their opinion, and decide the amount of compensation. The decision is usually considered sufficient, and it is a point of honour for the triumphant party not to receive the fine awarded. The conclusion is that the disputants should demand pardon of each other, and accord a mutual forgiveness, which is generally cordial and hearty. This system would scarcely succeed amidst the complicated interests of civilized society, or with the enduring energy of European passions, but it is to me a redeeming trait in the Abyssinian character. It prevents crime and tumult more than their military law; it carries out the precepts of the Gospel; and I cannot believe that the nation practising it merits no better name than savage. Wife and husband, father and son, brother and sister, are either reconciled in this way, or, if that be found impossible, separated with amenity; and the custom being bowed to by the highest equally with the lowest, the asperities caused by the inefficiency of the law are much softened. These peacemakers are not appointed by any Government, but by common consent: the influential and wealthy inhabitant, the good tempered, the most moral, and particularly the aged, take the office on themselves. This custom, though universally accepted by the Abyssinians, Christian and Mahomedan, is of more weight in the Amhara country than in Tigré, owing to the greater good temper and good sense of the former people.

The office of a judge is rather to settle and profit by disputes brought before him than to punish offences against the law. In case of murder, for instance, unless the victim has some relative, who acting as accuser seizes the homicide himself, proves the crime, and is ready to slay him with his own hand, the culprit will be untouched; justice furnishing neither accuser nor executioner. The said relative may also compound the matter for money at his pleasure, the judge receiving a similar sum. Add to this the numerous means of escape by joining the first band of robbers, or any rebel chief, or taking sanctuary in the nearest church, and the insecurity to life is easily accounted for.

In the absence of police, should you seize a robber with your own hand, and in so doing inflict on him a fatal injury, however flagrant may have been his guilt, the relatives of the man, everywhere save in Godjam, will demand from justice the right to put you to death in cold blood, so rigidly is the Mosaic law of "blood for blood" interpreted, save when the rare good sense of some chief induces him to interpose an arbitrary veto.

Insufficient and embarrassing as are the Abyssinian laws, it would be well if even these were always observed. No sooner has a chief turned his back on a distant expedition, than the whole population seizes the occasion for settling private grudges, whilst those who have no particular quarrel amuse themselves by indiscriminate robbery, or by making incursions against weaker barbarians by a republican levy. These disorders may cease on the return of the chief, but inquiry is seldom made, or punishment inflicted. Even in times of comparative tranquillity travellers are obliged to be well armed to insure their safety; and in periods of disturbance the roads are in a state of blockade save to large parties of armed merchants.

Strangers, of any nation or creed, are freely permitted to settle in Abyssinia, and to purchase land or houses. They have the same rights as other inhabitants, being also subject to the same liabilities. The Abyssinians in general and the chiefs are more jealous of those who pass through their country than of those who remain in it; but if Europeans were to settle in any numbers it is probable that fear would induce suspicion. It is this theoretical equality of all foreigners in the eye of the law, as well as of Abyssinians of all grades with each other, that renders it difficult for the mass to understand the immunities of a Consul or other officer: though the chiefs comprehend it, when they choose to lay aside their affectation of superiority. In most cases there is nothing that delights the Abyssinian more than to assert his equality with the white stranger, and to bring him before a court of justice; the latter being, however, sure of a lenient, often of a most favourable, construction.

The great chiefs inflict the punishment of death, but rarely, except in cases of repeated opposition or rebellion. More frequently the hands and feet are lopped off, or eyes, tongues, or ears mutilated. Dangerous political opponents are chained, often for life,

in a mountain fort, but chains are in no case considered as a punishment, but merely as used for security. The most frequent penalty, used indiscriminately towards all ranks and classes of the community, is flogging; this is performed with the ox-whip, and is very severe, but no disgrace is attached to its infliction.

The wasteful government of a military oligarchy, the incessant struggles for mastery, and uncertain tenure of all power, the careless sensuality of the chiefs, the wretched administration of the law, the utter decay of learning, and the selfish corruption of the priesthood, have ruined a nation that has suffered little from national convulsions or foreign conquest. Individuals are found who feel that their nationality is lost, that internal feuds are fast dissolving them into petty tribes as savage as their neighbours, and that their chiefs, still claiming the high-sounding title of kings, are no better than powerful robbers. But it is to be feared that this decay cannot be checked by any efforts of their own, and that the boast of the Mahomedan, who points at a few remaining Christian provinces for his, will be verified.

Dejaj Oobeay, governing Tigré and all the provinces to the north of Gondar, in independent state, save a yearly tribute to the Ras Ali, and the latter being apparently lord paramount of Abyssinia, having blockaded his last enemy in a mountain stronghold in the south of Godjam during five years, and reduced him to extremity, matters appeared to have some chance of a pacific settlement under one ruler, when an unforeseen and sudden storm destroyed these hopes and plunged the land once more into a confusion as great as had followed the dethronement of the royal dynasty.

A chief, named Kasai, having great family influence in the provinces bordering on Sennaar, forced his way by the sword into some notoriety, and married the daughter of the Ras Ali. Of a proud and impatient spirit, after alternate rebellion and submission, and having defeated in numerous battles all the troops that were sent against him, he at last threw off all mask and openly defied the Ras Ali and his adherents. Having in some measure disciplined his troops, for the first time in this country, by the assistance of a few Turkish soldiers, he suddenly appeared after extraordinary forced marches, in the neighbourhood of the Ras' blockading camp, and fairly challenged him to the combat on the plains of Godjam, favourable as they are for cavalry, the Ras's pride.

A pitched battle took place, in which the Ras was completely defeated and barely escaped, hotly pursued by his adversary. In a second battle he was entirely driven from the territories conquered by Gooksa, and forced to take refuge in his natal province of Edjo. Dejaj Oobeay, in the north, had not even gained time to collect his troops, when Kasai threatened him with his whole force, and obliged him to fly to his hill-fort in great fear. The victory, however, obtained by Kasai over the Ras had set free the daring chieftan Birro, son of Gosho, from his mountain, and the latter, to add to the complication, enemy as he was of the Ras, had a still more deadly feud with Kasai, on account of his father's death, slain in battle by the latter.

Kasai, therefore, patched up a temporary peace with Oobeay, and hurried to meet this formidable rival; since when all parties have feared to enter into decisive conflict. A chief of the Tigré dynasty, Balgud Areya, had taken advantage of the confusion to raise the standard of revolt against Oobeay, but the return of this latter has for the present repressed any serious disturbances. Affairs now stand in a singular position; the Ras Ali has returned to Debra Tabor, but without any power beyond the range of his foragers. Dejaj Kasai and Dejaj Birro threaten each other in Godjam with large armies, not having yet dared the encounter; and Dejaj Oobeay has re-occupied Tigré, after having seen by how feeble a grasp he holds his power. Numerous other chiefs have all their faculties on the alert to seize any chance that may offer, and it is difficult to say in whose hands the reins of power may finally remain. In the meantime it is certain that the roads are unsafe, commerce checked, justice paralysed, and diplomatic relations impossible; and it would be idle to hope that the anarchy consequent on these events will soon cease.

Some notice of the character of the four principal competitors in the present struggle may be useful hereafter.

Ras Ali is a humane man, very vain, too indulgent, but intelligent, agreeable in his manners, brave, averse to change, and of a very whimsical character, affecting, and I believe feeling, great indifference to most things, including his own power. He is very difficult to lead, as he has no prominent passion to work upon, and will admire no idea that does not appear at least to emanate from himself. He does not care for flattery, is not ambitious, has no pride, is indifferent to reputation, and can by no means be excited to anger. Good-natured selfishness is his principal characteristic.

Dejaj Oobeay is acute, inflated with pride, far-seeing and ambitious, disagreeable and overbearing in manner, but straightforward and decided in business. He is cowardly in person, but morally brave, very observing, grave, cruel when he deems it necessary, but

not wantonly, and liberal. He is much more feared than the Ras, but, being proud and susceptible, is far more easy to deal with, some caution being however necessary, as, when roused, he is capable of any extremities.

Dejaj Birro, of Godjam, is the most remarkable, perhaps, of these chiefs; as proud as Lucifer, of surprising talent and penetration, daring, patient, resolute; he has a wonderful command over men's minds for love or fear; he is cruel, reserved in public matters, yet personally gay, noble in appearance, profusely generous, and fond of splendour. His untaught intellect may vie with a high European standard, and had his lot been cast in Tigré, where he might have had communication with us, he would perhaps have been the regenerator of his country. With but a small province, he has preserved his independence, but there his efforts must end, and all his abilities be consumed in ceaseless wars and harassing intrigues, both the delight of his fertile and brilliant mind. His father, Gosho, who lately fell in battle, had well earned the title of "Father of the white men," by his conduct towards the few that enjoyed his society, or were obliged to his unbounded kindness.

Dejaj Kasai is vigorous and subtle, daring to a fault, and perhaps more disposed to innovation than any. He has abolished in his army the practice of mutilating dead bodies, taught his soldiers some discipline, makes war without baggage or camp followers, and encourages foreigners. Though proud, his manner is all humility, he is severe, liberal, and usually just, but breaks out now and then into unaccountable acts of violence, which indicate a somewhat unsettled temperament; he commences enterprises with more vigour than he pursues them, and is much under the influence of prophets and fortune-tellers.

Should any one of these four chiefs attain supreme power, I do not think that he will have the courage to attempt that radical change in their feudal system which must precede all reform, all hopes of order, or of useful foreign alliance. Upon the whole Dejaj Kasai would be, I think, the most desirable.

The Slave Trade is carried on by the Mahometans alone. Christians buy for domestic purposes, but are not permitted to sell, and the penalty of death by hanging is affixed to the act of selling a Christian child. Slaves, so-called in Abyssinia, are of two races, Gallas and Shankallas. In Egypt and Turkey, the Abyssinians themselves are ranked in the same category. The Gallas are the most valued, the boys for their intelligence, and the girls for their beauty. The Gallas are sold by their despotic kings in the territories of Enarea and Djimma; but amongst the republican Gallas no trade is carried on, save when poverty accepts the gold of the merchant, and even this is unheard of amongst the proud Gallas of Azobo, though so near to Massowah. Female prisoners, taken in their constant raids, are also sold, the male being never spared on those occasions. The Shankallas are all taken by predatory expeditions, and on such occasions the soldiers are sometimes, though rarely, permitted by an Abyssinian chief to sell their booty.

The Gallas seem to adopt the religion of Islam with a fierce avidity, and look back to their own country with an affected contempt, too proud to acknowledge their love for the beautiful land they may no more hope to see. It is singular to see how readily they agree with those who have torn them from their homes, and how they hate the Christian who has never harmed them.

The Shankallas are generally indifferent as to their creed, and very susceptible of kind treatment. They look back with longing to their own land, and often women, as well as men, effect the most hazardous escapes. They seldom become fanatical in the new faith imposed on them. All slaves that are brought to the Red Sea are usually well treated on the road, and the only cruelty practised is when a brutal master, for love of gain, prepares some unfortunate boys to guard the Turkish seraglios, tripling their market value. Those who follow the course of the White Nile, or by Gondar to Khartoom, through countries where water is scarce, undergo great hardships, and perish in numbers. The Gallas being purchased for a few beads in the interior, this traffic is very lucrative.

The Abyssinians are very sensitive to the suspicion of being born of, or descended from what they are pleased to call a slave, having a shrewd idea of the absurdity of such an appellation from themselves: and since the conquest of Begemder by Ras Gooksa, the Gallas of Edjo and Worrahaimano have been counted as citizens; these, moreover, having fully adopted the Mahomedan faith, and performing duly their pilgrimage to Mecca, are excepted by the dealers.

These latter, however, never omit an opportunity of stealing infants of any creed: and near the coast a regular trade is in this manner carried on by means of the Shohos, who declare that it is lawful for them thus to supply the market, the custom having been bequeathed to them by their fathers.

A firman by the Sultan Abd-el-Medjid was lately publicly read in Massowah, for form's sake, whereby the sale or reception of stolen Christian children was prohibited; as a matter of course, the Consuls were not informed of this, and equally of course, no steps being taken to enforce the order, it was disobeyed the same day, and totally forgotten in three.

The most important of the other races that occupy this portion of Africa is the Galla. These Gallas have, at different periods, for some hundred years past, seized upon the most fertile provinces of the ancient Empire of Abyssinia, and have spread themselves from the Red Sea and the Blue Nile to the Equator. They are divided into numerous tribes, having the one common characteristic of being undaunted horsemen. So strong is this propensity, that the tribe of Azobo Gallas, who occupy a territory between Tigré and the Red Sea, purchase horses from the colder provinces of Worrahaimano and Wallo and mount 10,000 horse, in a district unfavourable to the existence of the animal, and where it is never bred.

Could these tribes, fifty or sixty in number, unite, nothing could withstand their numbers and impetuosity, and they would trample under foot, like a Scythian host, all the land as far as Khartoom; but, occupied as they are by intestine wars, there is little probability of such a torrent, unless a chief should arise amongst them like Mohamed Gryne, that famous warrior, who led the armies of Adaiel, renowned for strength and swiftness of foot, even to the vicinity of Gondar; and would 350 years since, have extinguished the Abyssinian name and faith, but for the timely succour of Portuguese skill and valour.

The southernmost provinces of the Galla, Enarea, Djimma, Goma, and others, are governed despotically by their several chiefs, and supply, by arbitrary coercion, slaves for the Turkish market. The tribes bordering on Abyssinia are nearly all Republics of the purest description, and do not engage in that Traffic. South of those Gallas are the Kingdoms of Djindjero, Kaffa, and Worata, each having a different language. The people of Djindjero are uncouth in feature, and rude in manners. This province was probably the boundary of the Portuguese trade from Melinda; and the report is prevalent amongst the Gallas that cannibalism is still practised in those parts, as it certainly is by their neighbours on the confines of Zanzibar. They are said to be very numerous and brave; they have something of the Malay feature; they are Pagans, but little is known of their habits or ceremonies.

Kaffa is a wealthy and fertile kingdom; the inhabitants are proud and handsome; the women often fair and very beautiful—even in slavery they are remarkable for independence and hauteur. They still retain a recollection and traces of the Christian faith, and still venerate the ruins of their churches. The Galla with whom they are incessantly at war call them, in derision, "Sydama," originally signifying Christian; and it appears that, being a numerous and warlike tribe, when abandoned by the receding limits of Abyssinian dominion, they must have been strong enough to repel the tide of Galla invasion. It is said, moreover, that they ardently desire priests and instruction in their ancient faith—forgotten, save by name. It is to this point that a special mission of the Church of Rome is now directed; and they hope, with some reason, to establish a hierarchy in that distant land. So little intelligence can be obtained of any tribes to the southward of these, that I am tempted to believe that towards the Equator there must be large tracts of uninhabited mountains and impenetrable forests.

The province of Worata is south-west from Enarea, and extends, I believe, to the White Nile, about the point where the expeditions of Mohamed Ali stopped, and where there is a large mart for traders from Sennaar. This route is, however, practicable only for the Arabs of Sennaar, who are fever-proof, and are received as brethren by the fierce nations that line the banks of the great river.

The despots of Enarea, &c., govern their tribes with absolute sway; life and death are in their will; and when in want of money, they cut off the heads of some of their poorer subjects, and sell the whole family into slavery. The King of Enarea monopolizes the breed of the civet-cat, possessing about 3,000, and is thus very wealthy. Feasting, hunting, and war are the occupations of the King and his nobles; while the rich crops, produced with little labour, and the abundance of pasture, combine to cheapen all the necessaries and some of the luxuries of life, and diffuse an air of general prosperity throughout the country.

The Gallas of a district named Follo pay a heavy tax to the King of Djimma, for permission to purchase boys, and prepare them as eunuchs for the Turkish harems; the Gallas in general looking on this practice with disgust, and being seldom guilty of it, though very lucrative.

It is in the immense forests on the banks of the Deedaysa—a larger tributary of the White Nile than even the Abbai—that the finest ivory is found. Herds of buffaloes abound; and there the black panther, the fiercest and most beautiful of animals, is slain for his skin, highly prized, even where most abundant.

Amongst the Republican Gallas, taxes are unknown; and each man is lord of his hut and the plot of ground before it, inherited from his ancestors; he acknowledges no law; owes no military service; and in a general assembly, held in the open air, each one, with his horse's bridle on his arm, and scouts watching for the enemy, may freely offer his opinion. Fighting is his delight and daily occupation; and scenes recounted of the Trojan war may be seen daily enacted, apart the luxuries of gold and chariots, amongst a race not deficient in chivalric courage. Every man who can afford to buy a horse is a warrior; and each warrior armed, sallies forth daily to protect his crops or his cattle. When the cry resounds that the enemy is in sight, those who have lingered at home fling themselves into the saddle, and gallop to the contest, with more or less speed, according to their love of honour or their fear of death.

The Gallas are noble in appearance, more grave and thoughtful than the Abyssinian, eloquent, strong, and generally handsome; with the pride of a nation of warriors, but very courteous and amenable to reason. Their women are not concealed, and mix freely in society; they are often beautiful—almost always graceful; liberal of their smiles and favours to the brave, and scorning the coward. I have heard that those tribes to the southward are more chaste than these republicans, but I much doubt if they anywhere attach a particular value to the exercise of that virtue. Each Galla takes as many wives as he can afford to keep. Their features, when unmixed with other races, are European. They have no religion, but, without being conscious of it, retain some forms of Christianity, as fasting once in the year, observing the feast of the Cross, and others. They perform also some rude pagan rites, and have a superstitious veneration for certain large trees, to which they sacrifice animals. One word serves for God and sky; and while they believe that a Supreme Being created them and the world, and orders everything according to His will, they have not the least idea of the immortality of the soul, or any credence of a future state. In the monarchical provinces the faith of Mahomed has made much progress, and the Roman Catholics are making a vigorous effort to plant the religion of Christ amongst those other Gallas who are on their road to Kaffa. As these races have, as yet, no priesthood to blind them, and no strong prejudices to render them deaf, the chances of success are considerable.

Smiling as is the climate and fertile the soil of Christian Abyssinia, nature has been still more bountiful to the Gallas. Green meadows, rich cultivation, troops of horses and brood mares, lofty trees at intervals with magnificent spreading foliage, gentle undulations of hill and dale, a serene air unpolluted save in Enarea by large towns, cleanly and picturesque huts studding the whole landscape, and a salubrity proved by the aspect of both sexes—such are some of the features of these charming lands; and many a scene of pastoral beauty, of bright streams and lowing herds, is daily defaced by the trampling hoofs of charging horse, and the bloodshed of combats where no quarter is given, and no result obtained.

The southern bank of the immense valley of the Nile is in the hands of the Gallas, and divided throughout its length into many districts; the difficult passes and steep precipices present an inverse resemblance to a strong mountain country. The inhabitants are usually at peace with the Abyssinian lowlanders immediately opposite, and at feud with all others. The Christianity and paganism of the two races are becoming gradually blended; their languages are spoken indifferently; markets are weekly frequented on either side the river; intermarriage is common, and these relatives and neighbours alternately hold revelry and meet in mortal fight. Through the bottom of this valley (an isolated kingdom) the Abbai forces a tumultuous passage, receiving many tributaries from either side, till it swells with its flood the White Nile at Khartoom. The bed of the river is from 2,000 to 3,000 feet below the level of Godjam; the soil is singularly productive, though the ravages of fever balance the advantage.

All the Gallas speak the same language with slight variations; it is unwritten, and bears no resemblance to Ethiopic, Amharic, or any tongue with which I am acquainted; it is soft and pleasing in sound, but limited.

Following the course of the Abbai northwards from the Enarea caravan road, which passes through the province of Gooderoo opposite to Basso on the Abyssinian side, are the provinces of Horro, Amoro, and Shinna.

The Amoro Gallas are the most distinguished of all this race for courage, stature, ferocity, and hatred of the Christian name. The commerce with this district is carried on entirely by Mahomedans; though nearly all the principal families of Damot and Agow-

middur (where is the source of the Blue Nile discovered by Bruce), acknowledge their origin from this tribe, and are now under Christian rule.

The Shinna Gallas do not come in contact with the Abyssinians, the Abbai taking there a westerly slope; a large extent of plain intervenes, occupied by negro races called Shankalla, and the Galla tribes cease in that direction. Further along the course of the Blue Nile, mingled with these Shankalla, are found the Shageyas, who submitted, after many a bloody struggle, to the discipline of the Egyptian armies: and the unconquered Shiloks, who still defy them, and who, if description be true, must be one of the handsomest and finest of African races. I may notice here that there is a rumour amongst the Gallas and others that a white race exists somewhere in the interior; I do not think it at all unlikely that the report has some foundation.

Passing from Gooderoo eastward, and then northward along the banks of the Abbai, the provinces of Kootai, Jarso, and some others, are still republicans; and the horsemen of Jarso, calculated at 20,000, have set at defiance every effort of the Abyssinian rulers to impose even a slight tribute. The King of Shoa is, however, making large strides in that direction from the eastward, and is much feared by the Gallas in general. On the eastern boundary of Godjam, the Abbai still dividing them, is the vast territory of the Borona Gallas; their chief, Ali Wedajoo, has established nearly a despotic authority, and with his numerous cavalry keeps at bay the King of Shoa, and meets on equal terms the armies of Northern Abyssinia. The Boronas are Pagans, and call themselves Christians, though in what their faith consists it would be difficult to say. Their northern frontier is occupied by the most formidable of the Galla races, the Wallo. Here brown heaths and chilling fogs mark an elevation of 12,000 or 13,000 feet above the sea-level, and the hardy mountaineers, who have engrafted the faith of Islam and the fanaticism of its followers on their native ferocity, wage pitiless war with the King of Shoa and Borona Gallas, the Abyssinians of the province Amhara, and the Gallas of Worrahaimano and Worrakallo, their northern boundary. They have placed themselves under five or six chiefs, distinguished for valour or sagacity, and in case of a formidable invasion sometimes unite their forces.

In general, however, they are always fighting with each other; or, as one told me, it is their daily meal. There is still much freedom in their institutions, and their chiefs dare not attempt any arbitrary act. Here, as amongst the Arabs, are found men who have sworn never to fly, and who often suffer a cruel death at the hands of the Shoa Christians, as merciless as they are cowardly, when taken on the field. Though bloodthirsty, they are honest and hospitable in the extreme, but should never be tempted by the sight of fire-arms, for which they have an uncontrollable desire.

The Gallas of Worrahaimano, Worrakallo, and Edjo are all Mahomedans, though some Abyssinian Christians still retain their lands here, as in the monastery in an island of the Lake Haik, in the province of Tehuladerree. The present Ras of Begemeder having sprung from these tribes, they have become in a measure incorporated with the Abyssinians, and all speak the Amharic language. Their singular tournaments I have elsewhere mentioned. North-east of these follow the Areya Gallas; and northernmost of all the Gallas of Azobo, betwixt the provinces of Inderta and Wojjerat, in Tigré, and the Red Sea, from which tribe they are only divided by the tribe called Danakil. These Gallas are constantly at feud with the inhabitants of Tigré, whose chiefs have in vain attempted to subdue them. They are republican, and have a similar character to all the others, though almost isolated. They have not yet become Mahomedan.

From the Shinna Gallas, west of Damot, to the Gallas of Azobo, east of Tigré, this race sweeps round Abyssinia in an unbroken semicircle, dividing it from its cognate kingdom of Shoa, and waging with its inhabitants at all points continual war. Had it not been for the introduction of fire-arms by the Portuguese, the whole country would long since have been overrun by them, and as they are now beginning to appreciate and adopt those weapons, it is not improbable that they will soon succeed in overwhelming the Abyssinians—a conquest necessarily followed by the introduction of the Mahomedan faith. The Chiefs of Worrahaimano were at one time in correspondence with Mahomed Ali to this end, and now repeat the assurances of the Governor of Massowah, that troops will soon be sent by his master the Sultan, to take possession of Abyssinia, his lawful inheritance.

I have stated that a line of country some seventy miles in breadth or more, separates Christian Abyssinia from the Red Sea, being occupied by more barbarous tribes, and reaching from the Gallas of Azobo to the dominions of Abbas Pasha, north-westerly from Massowah.

The northerly neighbours of the Azobo are the Taltals, lying east of the district of

Agamee, in Tigré. They are nomades, as all that I have now to describe, and call themselves Mahomedans, though their creed is far from orthodox, and I do not suppose there is one that can read the Koran. It is certain that by their unceasing feud with the Abyssinians, they have acquired a strong hatred of Christians. They eat little or no corn, and never sow; living on milk and the flesh of goats and oxen. These are generally thriving, as they have the benefit of two rainy seasons, and luxuriant pasturage nearly all the year round. The rains of Abyssinia extend to within fifty or sixty miles of the sea in the months of June to September, and the rains of the coast are variable till the end of March, from October or November. They are unacquainted with horses, and are remarkable for bodily vigour and speed of foot. In this province are the plains of salt and sulphur that supply all Abyssinia: the road from thence to the sea is nearly a level plain, and the direct port is Amphylla. This was the road that Mr. Salt proposed to open. It was traversed at great risk by an Englishman, Mr. Coffin, who still lives in Abyssinia, and by him alone. The English Government had, I believe, consented, when the death of the Ras Welda Selasee, and subsequently that of Mr. Salt, prevented the further progress of the affair, which was afterwards lost sight of. Mr. Coffin performed this journey, I believe, forty-five years ago.

The Taltals are now treacherous and bloodthirsty, even towards each other; to strangers implacable and dangerous. They are hospitable from pride and custom; but a hospitable reception by no means insures the life of the guest: and when a Taltal enters the hut of his relative he lays his sabre across his knee, and places his spear and shield ready for his grasp. I attribute something of this fierce character to the heating nature of their diet; and it may be generally observed amongst the tribes who eat no bread. They are impatient of all yoke, and live independent of all law, with here and there a man possessing, like the ancient patriarchs, some influence from age and wealth in flocks and cattle, or in youth from sagacity and daring. These people scarcely know the value of money, and the Turkish Government at Massowah of course makes no attempt to encourage any communication. They are therefore totally ignorant of the world without, save the nearest districts of Abyssinia, but under better management would no doubt crowd to the market of Massowah, which is now often unfurnished with the necessaries of life; and their province would soon be as safe to visit as any other part of the country. Their sulphur should form a valuable article for trade, and their territory might be highly cultivated, and would afford much produce for export, besides bread for the inhabitants. Many years since a small body of Turkish troops were defeated and destroyed to a man by the Taltals of Kherto; having ventured to advance inland from the port of Amphylla. The attempt has never been renewed, and they have no garrison at that place.

The Danakil, who extend along the sea coast for a hundred miles or more, speak a dialect of the Taltal language, and have much the same character, being only poorer, less vigorous, and less courageous than their neighbours of the mountain. Not many years since both these tribes purchased stolen Christian boys, and sacrificed them in some superstitious rite. And although one of their chiefs assured me that this practice was discontinued, I doubt him much. Camels are bred in great numbers here, and the cattle and sheep of the Danakil are also numerous and in good condition, but never appear at the Massowah market, though within six hours' sail of a dull craft. Ostriches abound, but are little hunted, firearms being totally unknown. Elephants are plentiful, but are only killed by a few Abyssinian hunters, and in small numbers. The wild asses are numerous on the coast, and the zebra is said to exist in the interior, as well as the rhinoceros. The wild ass is sometimes taken in pits, his flesh being highly prized by the Arabs of Yemen as medicinal food.

The salt lake of Boorree, near the coast, formed of a filtered deposit at a lower level than the sea, furnishes that article for consumption to the Shihos, and some provinces of Tigré, but it is not used as a circulating medium.

To the northward of the Taltals is the powerful tribe of Shiho, now divided into two branches, called Assoworta and Tora. Through their territories pass all the roads now in use from Abyssinia to Massowah. Their language is said to bear a close affinity to that of the Adaiel, and there are in it many words of Galla origin. Partly through fear of their Abyssinian neighbour, and partly for the love of gain, acquired by being on the direct road for commerce, they suffer merchants or travellers to pass in safety, furnishing guides for a payment proportioned to the wealth of the caravan. The road for fifty miles is in their undisputed possession, and includes lofty mountains and narrow defiles, that only require firearms to render them formidable; but though these Shohos are constantly at Massowah, and see the Abyssinian merchants purchase those matchlocks whose force they have often felt, but one instance is I think known of one of this tribe possessing a

musket. The mortal fear of innovation afflicts them like all Abyssinian race, so they invest their money in cows, living miserably that many of these may be slaughtered at their death, and devoured by a weeping assembly upon their tombs. They are scrupulous Mussulmans, not even touching any intoxicating liquor. In keeping faith they are more scrupulous than the Taltals, and a guide who requires and gives the oath of good companionship may be perfectly relied on. Though thieves by profession elsewhere, they seldom steal in their own district; but they are very pestilent beggars, their begging not being confined to those in distress, but practised by the whole tribe, the most wealthy being the most pertinacious, saying it is a right they have inherited from their fathers. They are annoying, but not dangerous, except if any one attempts to pass through their country without a guide, when he will be lucky if he escapes with the loss of his property.

The name of merchant is a scandalous reproach amongst them, and till very lately, agriculturist also. For the last few years they have been attempting to cultivate barley with success; a wonderful step, still limited to a few individuals. They always eat bread when they can obtain it, exchanging the salt of Boorree for the maize of Kalagoozai; with which province of Tigré they are usually on very good terms. This is a matter of mutual interest, as the cattle of the two districts thus enjoy the benefit of the double rainy season. They are constantly at war with the Taltals with various success. They also live in a republican fashion, with certain elders elected by themselves to settle disputes, and as the pay of the guides goes into a common purse, these elders receive a large portion. Owing to the influence that riches must always secure, these elections generally fall on the same families, and the office has thus become almost hereditary; but they are obliged to be very careful in exerting their power, and the rest of the tribe lose no occasion of wordily asserting their equality, nor allow any interference in their private affairs.

The Shohos are kidnappers by profession, and avow it openly. Hundreds of Christian children are stolen by them every year; when they can, they sell them secretly at Massowah, if not, they are disposed of at Zeyla, from whence they are sent to Amphylla, and smuggled across to Yemen, if not purchased by the Taltals. Sometimes they are kept until they forget their origin and religion, or become too resigned to demand any change, and are then sold at Massowah as Gallas. These tribes still have a respect for the Naibs of Arkeeko, who kept them in some order, till their own power was destroyed by the Turks, who have substituted nothing in its place. Zeyla is a large village about three hours' journey inland from the ancient sea-port of Adoolis, a city probably founded by one of the Ptolemies, opposite the Island of Dissee, purchased by Lord Valentia. The ruins of Adoolis are visible. The proper pronunciation of Zeyla may be written thus in the German, "Zühla." Its inhabitants pay a small sum occasionally to the Turks, perhaps a hundred dollars, when threatened, and are then left to smuggle and govern themselves as they please. The Shohos have no camels, and are not so rich as the Taltals, being also less fierce and intractable.

On the plains betwixt the Shohos and the sea are the Bedouins; their name is somewhat used as a term of contempt, as though one should say the "wanderers" or "miserables." These tribes, though unwarlike, are numerous; but as all their many enemies are superior to them in force, and as they have no strongholds for retreat in their level country, resignation or flight are their first and last resource under all difficulties. These, like the flying-fish, are preyed on by all. Paying a small revenue to the Turkish Pasha, who, after extorting what he can from their poverty, does not pretend to protect them, plundered or slain by the Abyssinian chiefs whenever leisure or the prospect of booty invites them, and frequently beholding their flocks and herds harried by the Shohos, or the peasants of Hamazayn, they have little repose and no profit. Their days are few and evil, being passed in poverty, degradation, and toil; and when old they are sent by their younger relatives to guard the goats or camels, until death finds them at the task. To these evils they oppose a patient stupidity worthy of their own camels, and the fatalism of their creed; they have moreover by nature so gay a temperament, that dance and song are for ever resounding through their villages. They are not ashamed to work, and are far more useful than all their conceited neighbours.

This race is the only one in these parts willing to submit to any government, and demanding only protection and tranquillity; acknowledging at once Turk, Naib, or Abyssinian, king or kaiser, as they may offer; they not unfrequently add a sigh in wishing for the mild equity of the English, having in spite of Turkish jealousy, heard fabulous tales of the splendour of Aden under our rule.

With the exception of some villages on the coast that serve as a rendezvous for the small traders who supply the Island of Massowah with provisions, and whose inhabitants supply by their camels wood, grass, and other necessaries, they are in general a wandering

race, camping wherever pasturage is to be found, and stretching as far as Hamazayn when permitted. The constant exactions of the Turks, if they have impoverished, have at least rendered them mild; and I scarcely think that, had they as much courage and independence as the adjacent tribes, they would be much better; as it is they are inoffensive and invaluable as a labouring class.

The language of the Bedouins, as of the natives of Massowah, is a corruption from the ancient Geez, with a large infusion of Arabic. Infanticide is common among them, and spoken of with indifference. The Turkish Pasha of course does not interfere, as his revenues are not affected. The practice is confined, I believe, to their illegitimate children.

Passing on to the northward from the Shohos and Bedouins, we arrive at the last relics of the ancient sway of Abyssinia; shattered and separated from that realm and each other, the tribes of Memsa, Senhāit, Hallal, Māira (a corruption from Mary or Mariam), the Hābāb and their subdivisions. All these tribes are shepherds within their own limits, eat not bread, do not cultivate the ground except in Senhāit, are all robbers beyond their own district, and of course are constantly at war with each other.

They are far more wealthy than the Bedouins, possessing numerous camels, herds, and flocks that whiten all the ground. The soil, generally adapted for the richest produce, is left barren from the insecure tenure of all property, and the fact that Senhāit is almost yearly plundered from the attraction of its harvest, is not calculated to stimulate the rest to husbandry. These tribes not having felt directly the pressure or blessing of a Mahomedan government, and being abandoned and regarded as savages fit only to be despoiled by their brethren of Abyssinia, their religion partakes of the indefinite character of their position; their language is, however, perhaps the purest dialect of the Geez now spoken, not excepting Tigré. They call themselves almost indifferently Christians or Mahomedans, have no scruples regarding their butcher, do not fast for either party, and a Christian may be found bearing the name of Ali, a reputed Mussulman that of George or Paul. A half-ruined church still appears here and there, seeming singularly out of place, but no priest capable of reading or who knows anything of the faith he possesses. In some districts, as Māira, the Koran having slightly the ascendant, Sheiks and Fokeras predominate, and doubtless the latter will win the day; as the Abyssinian armies regularly ravage and slay their weaker brethren, who are consequently beginning to hate the name of Christianity, which they only see accompanied by fire and sword.

Of all these tribes, the three families of Hābāb are the most powerful and warlike; their territory extends all along the coast, from the confines of the Bedouins, about eighty or ninety miles north of Massowah, to Aggeek, which is the boundary between the Sultan and the Pasha of Egypt. The breadth of this province, from the coast to the river Ansubba, is about sixty or eighty miles, and embraces a great variety of climate and elevation. The tribes of Hallal and Māira occupy a bold range of mountains that stretches out to the northward like a spur from Hamazayn, between the deep valleys of Ansubba and Barka. Memsa, Biddapl, and other small districts, are nearer to Abyssinia, and are remorselessly plundered by all parties.

The province of Billayn on the western bank of the Ansubba, comprises the districts of Bogos, Senhāit, Mugari, Beejook, Halhal, and others; its inhabitants speak the language of the Agows of Lasta; but no tradition is preserved respecting the period or the manner of their separation from the present tribe.

This province may be considered as the frontier of Modern Abyssinia in this direction; but the race of Beni Ameer, that occupies all the low countries and the whole length of the torrent Barka, is also undeniably of Tigré origin, though called Arab by the Egyptian Governors of Taka.

The Beni Ameers do not know a word of Arabic, but speak a dialect of the Geez. Having no mountains to retire to, and being thus exposed to all attacks, they have adopted the Mussulman creed, and now pay tribute to Egypt. They, still, however, think themselves entitled to the privilege of private war, and make expeditions against the Christians of Billayn.

Halhal, the northernmost district of Billayn, has been on several occasions ravaged by the Egyptian troops, the villages destroyed, and the women and children sold into slavery; unassisted by their natural ruler the chief of Tigré, and having no refuge, it is now five years since they declared themselves Mahomedans. The divisions of Bogos, Senhāit, Beejook, and all the others nearer Hamazayn, still hold out, after having been twice plundered; the details of the last expedition have been furnished in my despatches.*

* Nos. 156, 158, 159, 160, 161, and 162.

They are still resolute to retain the religion of their fathers; and with our assistance the boundary of Mussulman invasion may at least be fixed here.

On the eastern bank of the Ansubba, opposite to Maira, the district called Aseguddee Bukla is now possessed by the Hābābs. This was anciently the seat of an Abyssinian Governor, whose sway extended to Souakin, and heaps of ruin still exist, but without any inscriptions or other data.

The Hababs as I have said are converted, and are nominally ruled by the Pasha of Massowah; but are in reality quite independent.

Several chiefs of these tribes have said to me that they would gladly resume their ancient creed were they assured of protection by the occupation of Massowah by a Christian Power. All parties and all religions in this part of Africa unite in their cordial detestation of the Taka.

To the southward, and on the same spur of mountains, adjoining to Hamazayn, the province of Memsa is exposed to the same dangers as Bogos. On the one hand, the troops of Massowah are close at hand; on the other, the River Ansubba affords an easy access to those of Turks.

Unless we interfere, this district will soon be sent from the Christian community; Dejaj Oobeay being unable to defend these distant outskirts of his dominions. If assured of protection, a few intelligent teachers might soon infuse sounder moral notions into the breasts of the rising generation, and no strong prejudices or associations of cunning priests would here obstruct their efforts as in Abyssinia Central.

Memsa is so elevated as to produce excellent wheat and barley. In Bogos, maize, Indian corn, and tobacco are cultivated with success; under better auspices its surface might be covered with vines; and it would produce coffee and spices, the climate being even and temperate. Though the mountains at a distance appear abrupt, excellent levels for roads are everywhere found. Wood and water are abundant. What hidden mineral wealth may exist I am incompetent to say. There were two churches in Bogos, one of which has lately been burnt by the Turks; but no officiating priests. An ancient church, dedicated to the Trinity, still exists on the grand mountain of Tsad Amba, the "White Mountain." This rises square and massive from the valley of Barka, and on the summit reside some monks, who alone possess the secret of the ascent; all the roads being overgrown with jungle, and the path in one spot passing, it is said, over a rocking and narrow slab that bridges a fissure of immense depth.

The mountain of Devra Sinai, in Memsa, less rugged and more lofty, is also the site of pious devotion and the abode of several anchorites. Here bright and ample fountains water large meadows of pasture, and are sheltered by enormous masses of stone. In one of these stones, forty feet in diameter, two chambers have been hewn and adapted to the purposes of a church; the holes in the rocks around shelter the hermit from the weather, or are filled with the bones of pilgrims. This spot, and, indeed, the greater portion of Memsa, would form a delightful sanatorium for residents at Massowah.

These provinces, like all that have been gradually severed from Abyssinia, have no regulated Government, and have assumed, from the necessities of their position, a resemblance to the Arab Kabyles. Each tribe, or family, is under some influential man, who, though he cannot order summarily, can generally succeed in persuading, and who is usually the richest and most talented of the race. To him is entrusted the power of inflicting such punishments as the obligations of social life have, by common consent, forced them to adopt, but which, however, are rarely necessary: he also, with other elders, decides disputes regarding property, and exercises considerable power, though with no state and a disagreeable amount of vociferation; he also takes care of his own cattle, seldom possessing the luxury of a servant. This latter is, indeed, almost unknown to these simple races, each man depending on the assistance of his children, and regarding them as his truest wealth. One trait is honourable to the inhabitants of Bogos: the highest respect is paid to strangers, not outwardly, but in fact. The Hababs are proverbially treacherous, and the Bani Ameer were certainly so, till restrained by the strong hand of Egypt.

Three hundred men would be sufficient for the government of all these districts.

The people of Māira are of Bedouin race, and claim kin with those near Massowah; other tribes, as those of Barea and Aliguddee, to the westward of Barka, it would be useless for me here to describe. The Hababs have for a long period been, nominally at least, submitted to the Massowah governor; but I think that the restoration of Halhal, so recently conquered, to its former independence, as a part of the Christian province of Billayn, might be demanded, and that province, with Memsa, should be declared a portion of Tigré, under our protection.

The only other race that, on the northern frontier of Abyssinia, intervenes between that country and the Arab tribes subject to Egypt, is the Shankalla, partly of negro origin, or Nubian. These Shankallas possess a large and fine tract of country between the rivers known in Abyssinia as the Murrub and Takazzee, and called by the Arabs El Gasch and Shayteet. Their principal village is on the former torrent, and known as Maidaro or Belga. They have no form of government, each village being quite independent, some elder elected by the rest acting as arbitrator; nor do they even assist each other against a common enemy.

By nature I think they are docile and intelligent; but long-continued enmity and warfare with all the surrounding nations has rendered them as bloodthirsty as the beasts of prey that abound in their dense forests. Their hand is truly against every man. In spite of the incessant attacks of Turks, Arabs, and Abyssinians, they are so prolific and tenacious as to retain their native land, and often do they inflict injuries as great as those they suffer. Patient, strong, and enduring alike of fatigue or hunger, they proceed many days' journey in search of booty or revenge, and often, from their ambush, cut off a whole caravan. No one has yet been able to approach them on terms of friendship; but, in my opinion, they have the elements of a more social existence abundant amongst them. In the Egyptian provinces I found many Abyssinians, whose country and family I knew, that had been sold into slavery by these Shankallahs.

They cultivate the ground and possess cattle and flocks in abundance; they live also in great measure by hunting and on the wild honey that is found in vast quantities. They have in general no idea of trade, but lately have begun to sell ivory through the medium of some neutral Arabs on their frontier, in return receiving chequered calicos and cloths of native manufacture; money is not in use.

On all sides Abyssinia is surrounded by barbarous tribes. The monks who visit Jerusalem conceal or falsify their knowledge of other nations; and the only point at which the merchants can meet with other Christians is at Massowah, during their annual visits, for they are not permitted to cross the sea with their goods, the Turks being also interested in preventing too strict an amity with Europe.

Few Europeans have visited the interior, so that it is not surprising that so vain a nation should have a contempt for the Christian races, equivalent to their ignorance of them. The Turks they utterly dispise, and having the advantage of firearms in their contests with the Gallas and others, they rate themselves as the first, almost the only, nation. In general they have a faint conception that a few white men exist beyond the sea, on a spot of ground not worth mentioning; but they do not believe that kings or kingdoms, fruitful soil or genial climate, are found save in Abyssinia. A few exceptions of intelligent men there certainly are, but these dare not enlighten the rest, and are laughed at if they attempt it.

All, even these, are convinced that as a military power, none can approach them. These traits are, it is true, common enough amongst ignorant races, but they are curious, if we consider that no religious differences separate us, and that the stream of pilgrimage, uninterrupted for fifteen centuries, has brought no fertilizing waters of knowledge to this sterile soil. This shows either singular apathy, impenetrable vanity, or unstained deceit; probably all three in pretty equal proportions.

Europe has almost ignored the existence of Abyssinia. The Abyssinians who formerly ruled Yemen and traded to India, were deprived of their conquests by the immediate successors of Mahomed, and, their own sea-coast being wrested from them, were shut up in their rugged mountains before the progress of arms and civilisation enabled Europeans to inquire into the affairs of distant nations. Since then no great effort has been made to open a communication, save once for the purpose of establishing the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, which disastrously failed, and the Abyssinian, amidst the abundance of his own country, soon forgot the little he ever knew of others.

It is certain that Europeans are at present but little considered in Abyssinia. An individual, by imitation of their manners, by courage, address in warlike exercises, and a perfect knowledge of their language, may gain some influence; but all that is European in manners and dress, often even in ideas, is purely ridiculous in the eyes of this people. For instance, they do not much admire strength of mind or firmness of purpose, even when conjoined with a rare forbearance and suavity. Indeed, the word used by them is also a synonym for obstinate and disagreeable. They admire more a man who yields with courtesy to the entreaties or reasoning of others, whether persuaded or not.

The great difficulty for an European is to steer between too much decision and too much facility. The former will confer on him the appellation of a brute, and general dislike; the latter, of a coward, and general disrespect. They themselves having no pride, though

much vanity, are very apt to estimate what we call manly spirit or resentment as ridiculous haughtiness. A man who loses his temper is at the mercy of the cool and witty Abyssinian, who (at least the Amhara) will probably overwhelm him with polite excuses; think of him, if he takes that trouble at all, as one without sense or good manners, wonder what brought him so far from his own country to get into a passion, and then give orders to admit him no more, unless he hopes to profit largely by him. Directly a white man appears, the chiefs begin to calculate the amount of presents that they may possibly obtain from him, and the best way of extracting them, according to the character of the victim, in divining which they are singularly adroit; and the soldiers, with watery mouths, hope for the day when so rich a booty may become theirs on the highway—a hope which they often express before the party principally concerned. It is no easy task to maintain a dignified position against the combined effects of ridicule, ill-disguised contempt, and unblushing cupidity; and an European envoy, unless strongly supported by a native monarch, can hope to reap little benefit from his mission.

Unhappily the country, a prey to so many masters, offers not this support, and the fall of Ras Ali, who at one time bid fair to obtain a power that might be called sovereign, has again swept away all prospect of stability. Up to the time of Bruce's visit white men were favoured, providing they did not rouse the enmity of the priesthood by daring to shake off the veil of deceit and darkness thrown around the people with so much art; but, though strangers were received well, there was always a reluctance to permit their departure. In later days, the chiefs of Tigré, the Ras Welda Selassie and Dejaj Sabagardis, showed themselves friends of progress, and entered cordially into the views of Mr. Salt. Death, in both instances, prevented a solid friendship, and probably some lasting fruit.

After these Oobeay, a stranger, conquered Tigré, and adopted a contrary policy. When not contemptuous, he has always been indifferent to foreigners, nor would he listen to tales of improvement and innovation. During this period the general idea has been to profit by our purses, and to reject all serious purpose or prospect of future benefit. Sometimes, through incredulity or indifference, more often from a sense of the uncertain duration of their own power, the Ras Ali had good intentions, but sure of nothing beyond his own camp, accustomed to temporize, and govern by policy rather than vigour, he could do little, even in Christian Abyssinia, to assure the position of an Envoy or Consul —nearer the coast, nothing. It is evident that some means must be found, if possible, to furnish the majority of the nation with a more clear idea of the weight of our enmity, the value of our friendship, and the reality of our advances, to render the wild tribes between Abyssinia and the coast amenable to some authority, and to raise the Turkish blockade at Massowah. These results are only to be obtained by a nearer approach, which shall place the Abyssinian in daily contest with the European. It remains to be seen if such approximation be feasible.

As the route viâ Sennaar to Egypt does not concern us at present, though at some not distant period it may, the facilities afforded by the Indian Ocean or the Red Sea must be examined.

The Red Sea, from Suez to the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, is a Turkish lake, and the Turks have possession of every harbour worth mentioning on either shore. On the African coast they have garrisons at Souakin, Aggeek, and Massowah, the only harbours where ships can lie in comfort and safety; some small intervening ports may be found, but these can only shelter Arab boats, and are not worth the consideration of an European Power. I consider the harbour of Portuguese Bay, as it is commonly called, one mile and a-half north from Massowah, as included under that name.

Massowah is, from its position, the natural outlet for Abyssinian commerce in the Red Sea, and the only one.

Amphylla, sixty miles to the southward, is a bad roadstead, and a worse landscape; very unfavourable to shipment of goods, and with little water, and of bad quality. This would otherwise, after some trouble with the fierce tribe of Taltals, be the nearest point to Tigré; and when these were subdued might be rendered the depôt of Abyssinian commerce. But the disadvantages are insurmountable, and the Turkish Government claims the whole coast. Of the arrangement between the British Government and the Ras Welda Selassee respecting Amphylla, proposed by Mr. Salt many years since, and I believe partially agreed upon, the Foreign Office will probably furnish more exact records than my hearsay.

It is my distinct opinion that whoever possesses Massowah can command the whole commerce of Abyssinia and the Gallas, in the Red Sea; Zeyla, in the Indian Ocean, being the only other port worth consideration. but this latter does not bring the European so closely in contact with Christian and friendly tribes.

The Egyptian Government along the northern frontier of Abyssinia at least merits the name, and rules in some order and tranquility, many ferocious and treacherous Arab tribes; but the Turkish Government at Massowah, dependent on Constantinople, of which I have now to speak, is not a Government but a blockade, just sufficient to prevent others from enjoying that which itself cannot pretend to profit by, and to maintain a condition of hopeless stagnation in all the surrounding provinces.

The right of Turkey to Massowah is, so far as ancient conquest can confer it, indisputable; but their right to anything beyond the island is more to be doubted. The Sultan Selim sent his fleets and his armies beyond Bab-el-Mandeb, occupied Massowah, and built a fort at Dohono. Aden also receiving a Turkish garrison. When the Empire grew weaker the troops were withdrawn from all these places; Aden was taken possession of by an Arab Chief, and Massowah by the Naibs or lieutenants, a powerful family, originally dependent on the Emperors of Abyssinia, who, having partially shaken off that yoke after their adoption of the Mahometan faith, were again subjected by the Turks. When these latter withdrew the Naibs became almost sovereign rulers, but were forced to pay a tribute yearly to their powerful neighbours the Chiefs of Tigré. One of these Naibs, to increase his importance, or for some other reason, requested from Djeddah a guard of thirty men, commanded by an Aga; which request was granted with joy. Bruce's account shows that the Naib acted as an independent ruler at the time. Many years afterwards, in consequence of family disputes, an arrangement was entered into with the Pasha of Djeddah, whereby the latter bound himself to pay to the Naib 12,000 dollars per annum, in consideration of which he was allowed to maintain an Aga and sixty men in Massowah, and to receive all the duties paid by the Abyssinian merchants.

The island was thus again ceded to Turkey, the mainland remaining in the hands of the Naib; so much so that when the French appointed an Agent at Massowah, the Naib refused him permission to land, and demanded large sums likewise from all missionaries proceeding to Abyssinia; nor had the Turkish Governor of the island any voice in these matters.

The Naibs, finding their family feuds becoming more entangled, at last adopted the fatal step of demanding a firman from the Pasha of Hadjaz, installing one of their number; this took place nearly twelve years since. During this time also the tribute to Dejaj Oobeay, Chief of Tigré, was fixed at 2,000 dollars a-year; the Naib possessing some villages in that province.

Such was the state of affairs when I returned to England in 1847; during my stay there great changes occurred, which I then pointed out to Her Majesty's Government. Massowah was handed over for a year to Egypt. I have reason to think that there was an understanding for the invasion of certain provinces of Tigré at least; at any rate, Massowah began to rise in importance. Instead of an Aga, with 60 soldiers, who smoked away their time in the island, an energetic governor, with the title of Bey, and 600 good troops, was sent. He immediately refused the payment of 1,000 dollars monthly to the Naib; and when the latter, in return, stopped the water supplies, he attacked and burnt the village of Dohono; built there a fort; and proclaimed that all the country along the sea, and for 40 miles inland, belonged to his master solely; the Pasha of the Hedjaz still receives his title of Pasha of Abyssinia.

Since that time, the Naibs have become null. The government of Massowah was again handed back to Constantinople, and instead of a Bey a Pasha was sent direct from the seat of government; but the change from the vigorous administration of Mahomed Ali was soon felt. The governors from Constantinople, though of high rank, have but one thought, the extraction of money. They have a Naib, whom they pay 30 dollars a-month, and send right and left to demand revenue from the neighbouring tribes; and that done, the country beyond the island is left to its own resources, and to fight its own battles and appoint its own local chiefs. Having destroyed the power of the Naibs, the whole land is without law or security.

The Chief of Tigré, impatient at the loss of his usual tribute (which the Naib could not, and the Turks would not pay), several times ravaged the whole coast, even within sight of Massowah and the Turkish fort, and has only desisted latterly, owing to my representations.

The state of interregnum thus established renders the road between Massowah and Abyssinia Proper disagreeable and dangerous; every man must there protect himself. Under the infliction of Abyssinian confusion and Turkish supineness, these regions have become mostly gloomy forests without settled inhabitants, without law, and without a judge, and haunted by robbers and plunderers from every neighbouring tribe.

Such is the state of the coast; but as the Pasha of Massowah must give some account of the twenty provinces supposed to be submitted to his authority, every few months he

procures the signature of a number of people in Massowah to a paper setting forth that perfect order and tranquillity reign everywhere in the Sultan's extensive possessions in this part of the world. In a manner hitherto believed to be peculiarly Chinese, this despatch is always sent when the neighbourhood is most disturbed, and when marked disorders have occurred in the town.

The internal administration of the laws in Massowah and Dohono, the only spots really in the power of the Pasha, depends of course on the personal character of each Governor.

Under the present one, crimes have been unusually frequent; the town is burnt down three or four times a year: the soldiers have been repeatedly in a state of mutiny, insulting the Pasha to his face with scarcely even a reprimand, and are now restrained only by the firm conduct of their immediate officers; many robberies have occurred, and none have been traced; there is no police; and his justice may be briefly illustrated by his having put in prison a respectable merchant who complained of a burglary, for the reason that it was impossible such a crime could have occurred under his administration, and therefore the complaint must be false.

The greatest jealousy of all Europeans has invariably characterised every Governor; every attempt is made to discourage merchants that wish to settle; and every effort that cunning can suggest has been made to lower the position of the Consuls in the eyes of the natives and the Abyssinians, and to keep up the illusion that still prevails here that the Sultan is Lord of the world.

My late despatches will have shown the annoyance and insults to which we are sometimes subjected. The Abyssinians being in contact with the Turks alone of the white races, and these occupying the only practicable approaches to Abyssinia, the foreign policy of that country resolves itself into three questions: whether it is better that Egypt and Abyssinia should be under one sovereign; whether the Turkish Government should be obliged distinctly to recognise the independence and limits of Abyssinia, and to afford every facility and protection to a transit trade, and to the residence of European and Abyssinian merchants in their territory for that purpose; or whether, and much better, we ourselves should break through this blockade, and by securing a point fit for the free intercourse of the two races, and where European intelligence, wealth, and enterprise might produce their full effect, should throw open these rich and secluded realms to the efforts of the states-man, the merchant, and the philanthropist.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Massowah, July 9, 1854.

No. 185.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received November 2.)

My Lord, *Massowah, August* 28, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the troops of Dejaj Kasai are already in movement towards the territory of Dejaj Oobeay. The latter has announced his intention of giving battle.

As a few weeks must elapse before the competitors meet, I am about to visit Dejaj Oobeay, who, although the rival of the deposed Ras Ali, has always treated me with respect and courtesy. It is important also that I should know the intentions and prospects of the belligerents.

The Shoho tribes, who occupy or terrify the coast between Massowah and Abyssinia, encouraged by the utter imbecility of the present Pasha, the disturbances in Abyssinia, and the absence of the Naib, to whom alone they paid some respect, have now declared their complete independence, and commit daily acts of violence in the immediate neighbourhood of Massowah, nor are there wanting bands of robbers of other tribes, who, unrepressed by even a shadow of authority, render a residence anywhere out of the island insecure, and a journey into the interior somewhat more than difficult.

At the same time that I am thus left to my own resources, and have no protection from any authority even in my own house at three miles distant from Massowah, the Pasha suddenly discovers that it is highly improper for me to import lead for my own use, or gravely informs me that I cannot be permitted to cut wood of a certain thickness, or build an oven on land belonging to His Highness the Sultan. Setting aside the distracted state of Abyssinia itself, I wish to point out the double difficulties of my position here.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 186.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 9, 1854.

WITH reference to your despatches of the 2nd and 3rd of June last,* respecting the proceedings of the Bey of Taka, I transmit to you herewith, for your information, copies of a despatch and its inclosures from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Cairo, dated the 30th of July,† from which you will see, that in consequence of Mr. Bruce's representations, Said Pasha had sent off an express to Upper Egypt, with detailed instructions to the Governor-in-chief of the Soudan, embracing all the points necessary for the restitution of the Christian captives and for the settlement of the frontier.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 187.

Mr. Bruce to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received December 27.)

My Lord, *Cairo, November* 24, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 26th ultimo,‡ inclosing copies of three despatches from Mr. Plowden respecting the conduct observed to him by the Governor of Massowah.

With reference to the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch, I ought to state that the Governor of Massowah is not appointed by, nor is he under the jurisdiction of, the Viceroy of Egypt. He is named by the Government of the Sublime Porte, and is, I believe, to some extent, under the jurisdiction of the Governor of the Hedjaz.

Mr. Barroni, who was lately here, confirmed in every particular the account given by Mr. Plowden of the proceedings of the Governor of Massowah. The Slave Trade is carried on under his auspices, and he treats with undisguised contempt the Firmans against it issued by the Porte, which is totally unable to enforce their observance.

Mr. Barroni, when I asked him how these evils could be remedied, seemed to think that an occasional visit of a ship of war would be of use.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE.

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* Nos. 169 and 170. † No. 168. ‡ No. 181, Note.

1855.

No. 188.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, January* 3, 1855.

YOUR Excellency was instructed by my despatch of the 25th of October last* to represent to the Sublime Porte the conduct of the Governor of Massowah to Mr. Consul Plowden, and to request either his dismissal, or that most peremptory orders should be sent him to treat the British Consul in a becoming manner, and to afford him redress for past injuries, but I have not yet received from your Excellency any report upon this matter.

I have now, however, to transmit to your Excellency a copy of a despatch from Mr. Bruce,† respecting the proceedings of the Governor of Massowah, and to instruct your Excellency to urge the Turkish Government to punish that officer, if they have not already done so, in consequence of your execution of my former instructions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 189.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received January* 16, 1855.)

My Lord. *Adowah, September* 25, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have visited Dejajmatch Oobeay, who is now preparing all his resources for a final struggle with Dejajmatch Kasai.

The latter Chief is in possession of all the country to the west and south of the River Takazze, and a pitched battle will decide early in November between the rivals for supremacy.

The contest is important. Should Kasai be the victor, from his vigorous character, and the bent he has taken towards reform and discipline, I shall then hope that something may be effected for Abyssinia, even in its internal administration by the destruction of the feudal system, the introduction of paid Governors and Judges, the organization of the army, and the disarming of the people; if, on the contrary, Oobeay win the day, his pride, that will not permit him to listen to the counsel of Europeans, will be an effectual barrier to improvement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 190.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received January* 16, 1855.)

My Lord, *Massowah, November* 3, 1854.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 3rd June, 1854,‡ I have the honour to inform you that I learn by private information from the Province of Senhait, that 203 prisoners have been restored to their homes by the orders of the late Abbas Pasha, owing to the energetic representations of Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt.

If any official communications have been addressed to me on this subject, I have not received them, as no vessel from Aden has visited this port for eight months past.

As I imagine that Her Majesty's Consul-General has received your Lordship's instructions relative to this affair, I shall address myself to him for its conclusion, some prisoners being yet missing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

* No. 181. † No. 187.
‡ No. 170.

No. 191.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received February* 12, 1855.)

My Lord, *Massowah, November* 3, 1854.

I HAVE had the honour to inform you that Mahommed Khosroof, Bey of Taka, attempted on several occasions to intercept my letters.

I have now received a letter from M. Kossika, Greek merchant resident at Kessala, wherein he states that an express messenger sent by me to Khartoum, who left Kessala on the 5th or 6th of June, had not returned up to the 10th of August, and records his opinion that his disappearance is owing to the manœuvres of Khosroof Bey.

The distance by dromedary between Kessala and Khartoum is eight days.

The despatches sent by the messenger in question were dated the 2nd and 3rd June, 1854; it will be easy to ascertain if the originals of these arrived at the Foreign Office or only the duplicates that I sent from Massowah.

M. Kossika is now probably in Egypt, and can also be examined by Her Majesty's Consul-General on this subject, and I trust that the Bey of Taka will be punished.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 192.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received February* 12, 1855.)

My Lord, *Massowah, November* 6, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Dejajmatch Kasai has written to me a letter full of expressions of esteem for me and respect for the English nation, and stating that he has by proclamation forbidden, under severe penalties, the exportation of slaves.

The struggle between him and Dejajmatch Oobeay will be decided in a few weeks, and if, as I hope, Kasai become master of Abyssinia, further reforms may be expected from the only man in the country who has ever shown originality of thought or desire for improvement.

It remains for Her Majesty's Government to consider whether it will assist him in his views should he succeed in the present contest, and in establishing on a firm basis the Government that he will have created by a series of hazardous battles.

I shall recall this subject to your Lordship's notice when I hear decisive news, or perhaps after I shall have seen Kasai in person.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 193.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received February* 13, 1855.)

My Lord, *Massowah, November* 28, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Dejajmatch Kasai is to be styled King of Abyssinia, by the ancient title of "Ahtéée" or "Hatze," in the Tigré language.

A peace with Dejajmatch Oobeay is on the *tapis*, on the conditions that he acknowledge Kasai as his liege lord and pay him yearly tribute—a fruitful source of future contention; Oobeay to receive the title of Ras.

The Ras Ali is finally taken prisoner and placed in durance by Dejajmatch Kasai; an expedition is also planned by the latter to reduce the ruler of Shoa to his ancient condition of vassal to the Court of Gondar—there can be little doubt of its success if attempted.

Kasai has forbidden the exportation of slaves under the severest penalties, and proposes to exclude Mahometans from high dignities or emoluments.

He is disposed, I think, to listen to advice, and I hope to be able to visit him when the terms of the accord with Oobeay shall be well defined; nor am I without hope that my counsels, supported as they will be by the Aboona Salama, now all-powerful, may produce some good effect in urging reforms in the interior. As to the affairs of the coast,

I have already freely expressed my opinion that they can only be considered by Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 194.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received February* 13, 1355.)

My Lord, *Massowah, November* 28, 1854.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a protest addressed to the Pasha of Massowah, and signed also by the French Vice-Consul here.

It was addressed to the Pasha as a matter of form, it being certain that no attention would be paid by him to any such representation, and our letter has consequently not even been acknowledged.

The Naib has, with about 150 Turkish soldiers, ravaged and burnt several villages, and a church of Hamasayn, a province not only Christian but more indisputably the property of the ruler of Tigré than Wallachia can be of the Porte, inasmuch as his title reaches as far back as history extends its records.

It will be urged that a petty chief of Hamasayn had lately ravaged some herds, the property of the Shohos, and that the Naib has therefore cause of war: but I submit that, firstly, application should have been made to the superior of that chief, Dejaj Oobeay; secondly, if this were impossible, or redress refused, the Pasha should have taken the orders of his Government, it being no case of defence but of reprisal; and thirdly, in courtesy, some communication should have been made to me as representing Her Majesty's Government in Abyssinia.

It is very inconvenient that the Governor of Massowah should have the power of provoking war at his pleasure; it is absurd that he should meditate, unauthorized, the conquest of distant Christian provinces, while unable to govern his own; and it is shameful that inroads should be authorized by him, more barbarous than the expeditions of those whom he calls barbarians—burning and enslaving.

It is true that this particular case might safely be left to the care of the Abyssinian chiefs as far as reprisals are concerned, and much misery and bloodshed may ensue from this folly of the Pasha.

I have already impressed upon your Lordship the advisability of obtaining from the Sublime Porte a recognition of the independence of the Abyssinian Kingdom; the fixing of the limits of that kingdom will then be equally necessary to prevent such useless quarrels as those now occurring, and which I narrate as an additional reason for serious interference.

Goods from Muscat, the firm ally of England, still pay 12 per cent. duty when brought by British subjects to a Turkish port, but with a shadow more of reason than in this case of Abyssinia, to which no substantial claim can be laid, even of ancient vassalage.

It is my duty to furnish your Lordship with these particulars at once, as it was my duty to place a protest in the hands of the Pasha, lest I should hereafter be taxed with my silence.

I would not, however, advise your Lordship to act immediately in this matter, though it should not be lost sight of, as it stands with our honour to uphold the only Christian State of Asia or Africa that has preserved its independence unaided through fifteen centuries. I should wish first to furnish further information on the consequences of this inroad.

The advantage of some delay is, that the Abyssinian chiefs, so persuaded of their security and superiority, may feel sufficient alarm to appreciate their obligation to us when we do interfere; moreover, as Dejaj Kasai is becoming daily more powerful, I should wish to have his opinion on this and collateral matters previous to a final reference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 194.

Consul Plowden and the French Vice-Consul to the Pasha of Massowah.

Excellence, *Massowah, le* 10 *Décembre,* 1854.

EN vous présentant nos salutations, nous devons vous faire connaître que nous avons appris l'entrée en campagne du Naïb Mohammed, et que d'après vos ordres il s'est dirigé vers le pays d'Hamasayn, à la tête des troupes irrégulières.

Votre Excellence doit savoir qu'une pareille expédition, qui peut entraîner une guerre avec l'Abyssinie, doit nous préoccuper vivement, surtout actuellement où l'alliance intime qui unit l'Angleterre, la France, et la Turquie, fait que nos Gouvernements ont également et mutuellement à s'intéresser à toute éventualité nouvelle de paix ou de guerre.

Comme votre Excellence a cru devoir agir seule et sans nous prévenir, nous nous trouvons dans la nécessité de rejeter sur elle toute la responsabilité d'un acte aussi grave, si cet acte était désapprouvé à Constantinople.

Tout en déplorant votre conduite, Excellence, notre devoir nous oblige de protester fortement contre l'invasion, quelqu'en soit la prétexte, des provinces de Hamasayn, Mensa, Senhait, Bejook, Mugara ou Mogos, ou Billayn, et enfin de toutes celles de l'Abyssinie, avant que nous ayons reçu des réponses de nos Gouvernements respectifs, et de vous notifier qu'aucun de vos soldats, ni de ceux du Naib, ne doit paraître dans ces contrées sans un ordre formel de la Sublime Porte.

Votre Excellence ne peut ignorer que lors même qu'elle aurait de justes motifs de plainte contre les habitants de ces provinces, elle n'a pas le droit d'user de représailles sans un ordre spécial de son Gouvernement.

(Signé) WALTER PLOWDEN,
Her Britannic Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia.

L. C. DE LAYE,
Vice-Consul of France at Massowah.

No. 195.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 13, 1855.)

(Extract.) *Massowah, November* 29, 1854.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 29th June, 1854,* I have the honour to inform you that the Aboona Salama has imprisoned those Abyssinians in Gondar who have adopted the Roman Catholic faith. M. de Jacobis was ordered by Dejajmatch Kasai to leave the country, and refused to obey; he is now under surveillance in Gondar, and has escaped chains and imprisonment through my earnest intercession with the Aboona.

The Church of Rome will hardly complain of this exercise of an undoubted right, and of such an one as it can well appreciate.

While undoubtedly those missionaries who strive to establish the Papal supremacy here are justified in suffering to that end, it is equally clear that there is no cause for the interference of the secular arm; the legitimate defence of Treaties and Agreements being open to their protectors, if they can persuade the Abyssinian Chiefs to sign them.

I have a copy of a letter from M. Jacobis to Dejajmatch Kasai, in reply to the proposition of the latter that the Roman Catholic Bishop should retire from a position which rendered him a torch of discord, and offering him funds for his journey and a compensation in money for his house in Gondar.

As far as I can understand a somewhat obscure style, M. Jacobis states that he intends to remain, on higher authority, viz., the Divine, than that of Dejajmatch Kasai; a reply that may be apostolical but scarcely legal.

No. 196.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 13, 1855.)

My Lord, *Massowah, November* 29, 1854.

THE law apparently not permitting, in any case, at least as it is interpreted at Massowah, that Christians should witness against a Mussulman, a serious inconvenience may arise. European residents here have none but Christian servants in their establish-

* No. 172.

ments; a Mussulman is therefore at liberty to enter and do what he pleases, as conviction is impossible. Nor is this an imaginary case, as I have been more than once troubled by this regulation, if it exists.

Nor is your Lordship to suppose that any exception is made in courtesy or otherwise in regard to Consular officers here; on the contrary, we are continually referred to the Cadi, the Mufti, and the Koran.

Having pointed out this, I wish to remark, in case of any law being passed in Turkey that shall admit Christians of all denominations and nations to witness in a Mahometan Court of Justice, which I hear is probable, that unless the Abyssinian Christians be specially named, no phrase, however comprehensive, will induce the rulers of Massowah to admit their claim to that distinction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 197.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, February* 16, 1855.

I TRANSMIT, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah,* respecting the obstructions to the reception of Christian evidence in the Mahommedan Courts; and I have to instruct your Excellency to take such steps with the Sublime Porte as you may think expedient, in order that the Sultan's Firmans respecting this matter may be obeyed at Massowah.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 198.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 16, 1855.

WITH reference to the contents of your despatch of the 3rd of last November,† I am directed by the Earl of Clarendon to inform you that his Lordship has instructed Mr. Bruce to endeavour to find out Mr. Kossika; and if he should be of opinion, from what Mr. Kossika may tell him, that the charge against the Bey of Taka, of endeavouring to intercept your despatches, is well founded, to represent the matter to the Egyptian Government, and to require that the Bey should be punished.

I am at the same time to state to you that the originals of your despatches of the 2nd and 3rd of June last were duly received in this office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 199.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 16, 1855.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 6th of last November,‡ and to instruct you to express to Dejajmatch Kasai the satisfaction with which Her Majesty's Government have learnt the contents of the letter which he has written you, and more especially the steps which he has taken to prevent the exportation of slaves.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

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* No. 196. † No. 191. ‡ No. 192.

No. 200.

The Earl of Clarendon to Mr. Bruce.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 16, 1855.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah,* relative to some Abyssinian prisoners who had been restored to their homes by orders of the late Abbas Pasha; and I have to instruct you to take such steps as you may think most expedient for procuring the release of the remaining prisoners referred to by Consul Plowden.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 201.

Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received March 28.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 12, 1855.

I AVAIL myself of the present opportunity to forward to your Lordship herewith, in copy, an official note which I have addressed to Aali Pasha on the subject of Mr. Plowden's grievances, and the intolerable proceedings to which his correspondence bears witness on the part of the Turkish functionary intrusted with the Government of Massowah.

I have not shrunk from denouncing the system in the spirit of which it is evident that the Pasha of that island feels himself encouraged to act. Another Vizirial Order, directing him to show a proper degree of respect to Her Majesty's Consul, or the mere substitution of one local functionary for another, will never produce more than a brief mitigation of the evils complained of.

It was absolutely necessary, with a view to radical amendment, that the Porte should perceive the determination of Her Majesty's Government to discountenance that scheme of unprincipled and unwarrantable pretension as to Abyssinia of which so many indications have been given by its authorities in the Red Sea.

The extracts from Mr. Plowden's correspondence, which I have annexed to my official note, present in vivid colours the grievances for which he seeks redress, and the anti-social consequences of the Porte's Abyssinian policy. I have also annexed to the note a joint protest† addressed to the Pasha of Massowah by the French Vice-Consul acting on the occasion in perfect concert with Mr. Plowden.

I have, &c.
(Signed) STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

Inclosure in No. 201.

Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to Aali Pasha.

Pera, March 9, 1855.

THE British Embassy has had, not unfrequently, occasion to bring under consideration the irregular and offensive proceedings of the Pashas of Djeddah and Massowah towards Her Majesty's Consuls residing respectively in those places. Vizirial letters have been transmitted, in consequence, through the Embassy, reminding both functionaries of their duty, and laying strict injunctions upon them never, in levying the Custom-house dues on merchandise, to exact from British subjects more than the amount stipulated by Treaty.

While it appears that at Djeddah the orders of the Porte were attended with some remedial effects, no such improvement has taken place at Massowah, and the Undersigned continues to receive complaints from Her Majesty's Consul in that island. It is evident from Mr. Plowden's Reports, that not only is the Governor insensible to the obligations of Treaty and the sympathies of a common cause, but that his conduct betrays the working of a system adverse to the interests of commerce, however legitimate, and pointed against the development of European intercourse with the neighbouring continent.

The Undersigned, relying upon the Porte's habitual liberality in matters of trade, and more especially of late on those relations of cordial intimacy which unite the two

* No. 190. † See Inclosure in No. 194.

Empires, indulged a sanguine hope that the grievance would yield to verbal representasions, and that he should be spared the pain of investing his remonstrances with a formal and peremptory character. Required by the express commands of his Government to insist on obtaining redress without further delay or hesitation, he now demands for Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah the respect due to his official position, and the removal, once and for ever, of all restraints on the full exercise of his public functions, and on the fair requirements of his personal convenience.

The difficulties which Mr. Plowden has hitherto experienced are alike incompatible with an effective performance of his duties, and with the dignity and just expectations of the British Government. Residing in Massowah for the purpose of communicating, as occasions offer, with Abyssinia and the circumjacent countries, he is entitled to the enjoyment of all privileges secured by the Capitulations and Commercial Treaties to British subjects. He looks also with confidence to the Representatives of the Sultan for those marks of consideration to which the authority of his Sovereign gives him an indisputable right.

Now the Pasha of Massowah, instead of recognizing these claims, or even protecting the British Consul from wrong, displays his contempt by withholding from him the means of self-defence, and persecuting such native workmen as dare to enter his employment for the most innocent and necessary operations. He cannot even repair his house, improve his garden, or render his wells fit for use without entreating the Pasha's permission. His frequent appeals for redress have proved ineffectual, except in one or two cases, where tardy and imperfect orders, reluctantly executed, have been received from Djeddah.

The Pasha's notorious incapacity might excuse him in some degree if his undisguised fanatical malevolence and recklessness of all responsibility did not at the same time proclaim the real causes of his misconduct. He raises hatred against the Sultan's Government by the bigoted and sanguinary violence of his language when speaking of Christians and others who do not profess the Mahometan creed. He betrays the weakness of his Sovereign's authority by armed expeditions which, tracked in blood, terminate in failure; and by ill-timed pretensions, which have neither right to warrant nor force to sustain them.

The Undersigned is unwilling to suppose that the Porte can so far overlook what is due both to herself and to her allies as to persist in keeping such a man in her employment. But the dismissal of a culpable agent, however opportune and even necessary, will be of no real advantage, unless the remedy be applied in a right spirit. The system itself requires to be changed. A greater responsibility must be made to press upon the new Governor. Jealousy of foreign intercourse with Abyssinia must cease to be the mainspring of his policy. He ought to be supplied with a regular force sufficient to maintain his authority in the island. He should not be encouraged to throw brands of discord, productive of slaughter and confusion, among the inhabitants of the neighbouring continent. He must not be supported by the clandestine favour of powerful individuals opposed to the tenour of official documents. The example of his predecessor's dismissal must not be reversed to his conception by a misplaced promotion of the culprit.

As matters now stand, the Porte, by leaving her Agents in a remote island to the free indulgence of their caprices, lays herself open to suspicions which she would, no doubt, repel with indignation. It cannot enter into her views to claim dominion in a country which she has never occupied, to grasp at extension of territory when the administration of what she holds without dispute requires her undistracted solicitude, to menace the independence of other countries when her own is an object of arduous conflict, or to obstruct those channels of commercial intercourse on which so high a price is laid by the most devoted of her allies.

Extracts of Mr. Plowden's correspondence are annexed to this note. They will satisfy the enlightened Ministers of the Porte that Her Majesty's Government have abundant reason to complain, and that the Undersigned, in carrying out their instructions, is entitled to expect that kind of prompt and complete redress which can alone constitute a guaranty for the future. Important rights are sacrificed and legitimate interests are compromised by the present state of things at Massowah. The British Government have endeavoured to obtain its correction without departing from that moderation which characterizes their intercourse with fofeign States, and more particularly with the Ottoman Empire. Far from weakening their title to redress by such forbearance they [redacted]sist with more confidence on the Porte's renunciation of an unjust and offensive policy [redacted]proportion as lapse of time and accumulation of wrong render the grievances com[redacted]d of less tolerable and their consequences more apparent, The Porte has too [redacted]wisdom not to perceive the imprudenee of placing its allies in contradiction with

themselves. If England, for one, withholds no sacrifice required by the present contest on behalf of Turkey, but freely exposes all her national resources to the hazards of war, she cannot be expected to look for ever with indifference on groundless pretensions seconded by unjustifiable proceedings, no less injurious to the dignity and rights of a friendly Government than opposed to the interests of commerce, the sentiments of humanity, and the principle of religious toleration.

The Undersigned, &c. (Signed) STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

No. 202.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March* 29, 1855.

I HAVE to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government entirely approve of the note which you addressed to Aali Pasha, and a copy of which is inclosed in your despatch of the 12th instant,* calling the attention of the Porte to the misconduct of the Government of Massowah, as reported by Mr. Consul Plowden.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 203.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2.)

My Lord, *Massowah, January* 9, 1855.

WITH reference to my despatch of November 28, 1854,† I have the honour to state that I have been obliged to hand in a second protest to the Pasha, as, in utter contempt of the first, his troops have ravaged the Province of Mensa, an undoubted portion of the Abyssinian territory.

I have not yet received any reply from the Pasha, and I know that he is incapable of forming any decision; but any reply from him or his superiors on an isolated case is of small importance.

Unless the independence of Abyssinia is distinctly recognized, and its boundaries on the northern and north-western frontiers clearly defined by the European Powers, such affairs as these will be of constant recurrence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 204.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2.)

My Lord, *Massowah, January* 9, 1855.

WITH reference to the subject of my last despatch, and to my despatch of November 3, 1854,‡ on the affairs of Senhait, I now beg to inclose some extracts from a letter received by me yesterday from that district, which gives a good idea of the state of affairs in those provinces.

I propose to proceed thither to-morrow to make inquiries, to calm the general agitation that prevails, and to send letters from thence to the Governor of Taka, respecting the prisoners still in detention, and requesting him to adopt measures for the safety of my couriers through the Arab tribes; the last states that he with difficulty escaped assassination.

I need scarcely say that my efforts to debar them from what has hitherto been considered lawful pillage, and to check the Slave Trade, are not calculated to make me popular amongst Mahometans of any class.

As no vessel from Aden has touched here since February last, and I have received no letter from the Foreign Office during the whole of the past year, in the absence of instructions, I must act according to the best of my judgment, and rather with reference to the future than the present, that these provinces may not be wrested from Abyssinia until such time as it may please Her Majesty's Government to consider the best means

* No. 201. † No. 194. ‡ No. 190

of providing for their permanent security at least from Mussulman arms; conquest here signifying conversion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 204.

The Père Stella, Catholic Missionary, to Consul Plowden.

(Translation.)
(Extract.) *Mensa, January* 2, 1855.

THE brother of the Naib with fifty armed soldiers has arrived here; all the inhabitants have fled; only one has been arrested. I have protested against the ruin of these poor people, and against the plunder of the soldiers.

The Naib pretends that he has been invited here by Tedros, which, though no reason, is also false. Tedros has not been Chief of the district for four years past, and has moreover sworn that he did not invite the Naib. The inhabitants have declared often that they are Abyssinians, tributary to the Chief of Tigré; that they have never been subject to the Turkish Pasha, and request the interference of the English Consul.

The attack is owing to the intrigues of some Mahometans of Arkeeko, who wish to convert the district, and to the cupidity of the Naib, doubtless urged by the Pasha of Massowah.

The district of Bejook will be next attacked.

The inhabitants have begged me to write to you as their only hope for justice and protection. I also pray you to assist them, and doubt not of your exertions in the cause of humanity and Christianity.

I have striven to unite the tribes of Senhait and Bogos in one town; but they will not listen except to you.

The Chief of Barka, Bayud, prays you to come and establish a peace between him and the inhabitants of Senhait.

Your courier has arrived from Kessala with ten more of the restored prisoners; he suffered much on the road: Mohammed Noor, the Chief of Aliguddee, desired to kill him, and he has discovered that Mahommed Khosroof Bey has given orders to the Diglul, Chief of the Arabs called Beni Amer, to kill you when on your first journey to Yasch.

Your courier found on his journey few friends and many enemies. The Arabs of Barka and of Aliguddee were on the point of starting to ravage Hamazayn, when your messenger obtained an order from Omar Effendi (temporary Governor of Taka), ordering them to desist from that purpose.

For the remainder of the prisoners, &c., you must either come yourself or appoint a vakeel with all speed.

No. 205.

Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 11.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 29, 1855.

INCLOSED herewith is copy of a report addressed to me on the 20th instant by Mr. Pisani. Your Lordship will learn, on perusing it, that orders have been given, on my demand, by the Porte for the transmission to Massowah of the firman respecting the admission of Christian evidence in the Mahometan courts of criminal justice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

Inclosure in No. 205.

Mr. Pisani to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Pera, March* 20, 1855.

HAVING, in conformity with your Excellency's directions, communicated to Aali Pasha Lord Clarendon's despatch of the 16th of February of this year,* as well as

* No. 197.

its inclosure, I urged his Highness to issue the necessary orders for the transmission to Massowah of the Sultan's firman respecting the reception of Christian evidence in the Mahometan courts; and I have now the honour to report that Aali Pasha, in compliance with your Excellency's representations, gave directions to the Under-Secretary of State to prepare a copy of the above-mentioned firman, and also to draw up the instructions to accompany the same. I shall be careful to have the orders of his Highness executed with the least possible delay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ET. PISANI.

No. 206.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, April* 12, 1855.

I HAVE to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve of your having obtained from the Porte the firman referred to in your despatch of the 29th ultimo,* respecting the admission of Christian evidence in the Mahometan courts of criminal justice at Massowah.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 207.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 17, 1855.

I TRANSMIT herewith for your information, a copy of a Report addressed to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe on the 20th ultimo by Mr. Pisani,† by which you will learn that orders have been given by the Porte on his Excellency's application, for the transmission to Massowah of the Firman respecting the admission of Christian evidence in the Mahometan Courts of Criminal Justice.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 208.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 19, 1855.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 9th of January,‡ and to convey to you his Lordship's approval of your intention to proceed to the Senhait country for the purposes stated in your despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 209.

Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received April 25.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 12, 1855.

REFERRING to my last despatch on the subject of Massowah, I have the honour to inclose herewith, for your Lordship's information, the instructions addressed to the newly-appointed Governor of that island, and communicated to me by Safvet Effendi.

The purport of those instructions may perhaps be accepted as good to the extent of their bearing, but they are far from amounting to a frank disavowal of the pretensions attributed to the Porte with respect to Abyssinia; and I doubt whether more than an imperfect and temporary improvement will be the result of my representations.

* No. 205. † Inclosure in No. 205. ‡ No. 204.

It is my intention, however, under the encouragement afforded me by your Lordship's approval of my note, to urge afresh the injustice and impolicy of that course which the Porte has hitherto pursued, and to require a more explicit compliance with the views entertained by Her Majesty's Government.

Should there be reason to apprehend that the Porte thinks only of temporizing, it will remain with your Lordship to consider by what more direct and effective means the grievances, of which Mr. Plowden so justly complains in the interest of humanity, commerce, and religion, can be definitively redressed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

Inclosure in No. 209.

Extracts from the Imperial Instructions addressed to the Kaimakam of Massowah, dated April 8, 1855.

(Translation.)

THE chief article of complaint against the late Kaimakam is the contempt shown by him towards the subjects of friendly Powers residing at Massowah. It is indeed reported that he even publicly forbad the bakers to furnish them with bread, and the labourers to work for Europeans—bold, strange, unprecedented, and insane acts; that lately he neglected to punish some persons who had behaved in a reprehensible manner towards the French Vice-Consul residing at Massowah; that he disregards the representations made by the English and French Consuls, and shows a want of consideration towards them.

Now the relations of firm alliance, concord, and old friendship existing between the Imperial Government and the two Powers in question require that the utmost consideration should be evinced towards their Consular officers; and it is the desire of the Sublime Porte that they should receive every facility in matters of business which may be in accordance with Treaty, and that security and protection should be extended towards the subjects under their jurisdiction. Such was the purport of the Royal instructions and stringent verbal injunctions given to your predecessor on going to his post; but he neglected them, and followed a different course, which led to his recall.

The Kaimakam will therefore be particularly careful to prevent the recurrence of those evils which give rise to these proceedings and complaints on the part of the Consuls and subjects of foreign Powers. Should he act otherwise he shall be held responsible, and he shall not only by recalled, but punished for his bad conduct and administration. Let him keep that well in mind, and behave himself accordingly.

It is reported in an authentic manner that the slave-owners of some of the Christian slaves in Massowah are in the habit of torturing them in various ways to induce them to change their religion, in the hope of selling them, and that the Slave Trade is carried on at the present time at Massowah.

It is in direct opposition to the sublime precepts of the law, and to the equitable sentiments of His Imperial Majesty, that while special instructions have been sent to Massowah also to put a stop to these things, they should continue to be, and more particularly that attempts should be made to compel Christian slaves to change their faith. Such things are strictly forbidden henceforward. No compulsion or importunity is to be used towards any one on account of religious faith. The Effendi will use his best endeavours for preventing altogether the occurrence of such reprehensible acts.

No. 210.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, April 27, 1855.*

I HAVE received your despatch of the 12th of April* inclosing a copy of the instructions given by the Porte to the newly appointed Governor of Massowah; and I have to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government concur with you in opinion as to the nature of those instructions, and approve the course which you propose to pursue regarding the system of government hitherto in force in Massowah.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

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* No. 209.

No. 211.

Mr. Bruce to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received July* 7.)

My dear Lord, *Alexandria, June* 7, 1855.

I INCLOSE a letter from Mr. Barroni, at Massowah, containing late information of some interest respecting Abyssinia.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE.

Inclosure in No. 211.

Mr. Barroni to Mr. Bruce.

Monseigneur, *Massowah, le* 15 *Avril*, 1855.

JE m'empresse de vous faire connaître que l'Abyssinie se trouve conquise par l'homme dont j'ai eu l'honneur de vous parler lorsque je me trouvais au Caire [Dejaj Kasai]. Il s'est fait nommer Empereur et il s'appelle Théodore III. Il demande des instructeurs et des ingénieurs Européens, et il veut faire de l'Abyssinie une nation civilisée. Il aime la nation Anglaise, et comme il est ami de Mr. Plowden, il a montré le désir de le voir pour lui parler de ses projets. Mr. Plowden ensuite de cela partit 29 Mars pour l'Abyssinie, et je n'ai pas aucun doute que l'entrevue qu'il aura avec le nouveau héros Abyssin sera très intéressante et très utile pour l'Abyssinie et pour tous. Aussitôt que je saurai quelque chose de nouveau, je ne perdrai pas un instant pour vous en donner avis.

L'ancien Ibrahim Pacha, Gouverneur de Massowah, qui s'est pendu lui-même, comme Mr. Plowden vous en donna avis,* a été remplacé par un certain Ibrahim Aga, et il paraît que cet homme aie un peu plus d'expérience et de connaissance du monde des autres.

On a respecté enfin, d'après les protestations du Consul Anglais, les provinces de Mensa, Senhait, Beggiuk, &c., mais pour arriver à cela il a fallu beaucoup lutter avec le Gouvernement local, et avec ceux qui sont sous ses ordres.

Les environs de Massowah se trouvent toujours dans le même état de désordre.

A Massowah on continue à permettre l'entrée des enfants volés que l'on vendent comme esclaves, et il paraît que le Gouverneur de Massowah ne connaît ni la prohibition de l'esclavage faite par l'Empereur de l'Abyssinie, ni non plus la prohibition faite par son Souverain il y a quelques mois.

Il y a deux jours que je me suis fait rendre une fille de sept ans, volée par les Shohos, et vendue à Massowah pour vingt thalers. Elle se nomme Donnek, et elle est de la ville de Mensa; et elle sera dans son pays et près de sa famille après peu de jours.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) R. BARRONI.

No. 212.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received August* 2.)

My Lord, *Adowah, April* 7, 1855.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Dejajmatch Kasai has taken, since his coronation, the name and style of "Theodorus, King of Ethiopia," there being an ancient prophecy that a King of this name should reform Abyssinia, restore the Christian faith, and become master of the world.

He is now persuaded, I hear, that he is this destined Monarch, and his new seal bears the motto of "King of Kings." He has ordered the Mahometans in his dominions to become Christians within the year, and has driven out the Roman Catholics.

He has 50,000 men, and has ordered a part of them to march against the Mahometan Gallas, who have assembled in great force in the Province of Worrahaimano in defence of their faith. Next year he will reduce Shoa to obedience, and probably most of the Pagan Galla tribes.

His other ideas of conquest I will recount when I have seen him. He dreams even of turning the waters of the Nile into another channel, and thus to ruin or subdue Egypt.

* No. 214.

So strong is his crusading spirit that a Syrian has persuaded him to send a message to the Emperor of Russia, as the defender of the Cross against the Crescent. This man has not started yet, and I shall send due notice of his movements.

The King is capable of great things, good or evil. He wishes to discipline his army, and has in part already succeeded; to abolish the feudal system; to have paid Governors and Judges; and to disarm the people.

He is just, hearing in person the poorest peasant; he has stopped the system of bribes; he has by his own example, and by giving dowries and rewards to those who marry, discouraged polygamy and concubinage; he has forbidden the Slave Trade, and has tranquillized the whole country, no one daring to dispute his pleasure.

His fanatical zeal, his vehement character, and the pride engendered by his wonderful success—armies and strongholds defeated or taken almost by the terror of his name—render it hard to foresee how he will receive European advances; and our relations with Turkey and Egypt will complicate every difficulty.

On the other hand, he has written to me to come when I find it convenient; he has advanced Mr. Bell to high dignities, and trusts him much. It is said also, and he himself wrote thus to me before his last victory, that he desires friendship with England; and the Aboona, now very powerful, will, I think, assist us if no missionaries are sent. At all events it is better to deal with one than with many; and a few interviews will decide the question, the result of which I shall not fail to lay before your Lordship immediately.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 213.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 22, 1855.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 16th of February,* acquainting you that Mr. Bruce had been instructed to investigate the charge against the Bey of Taka of endeavouring to intercept your despatches, I am directed by the Earl of Clarendon to state to you that Mr. Bruce, who is now in England, has informed his Lordship that, before leaving Egypt, he made arrangements with the Egyptian Government for the investigation before the Great Council of Cairo of the ex-Governor of Taka's conduct in this matter, and that he had furnished the Dragoman of the Consulate-General who was to bring forward your charge against the Bey, with copies of the depositions of Mr. Kossika, and of Mr. Huguelin, the Austrian Vice-Consul at Khartoum.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 214.

Consul Plowden to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.—(Received at the Foreign Office, September 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 12, 1855.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Ibrahim Pasha, Governor of Massowah, hanged himself in his harem on the 11th February last.

I was on a distant expedition when this occurred, but now transmit the following particulars for your Lordship's information.

In January, the Pasha of the Hedjaz, acting on orders transmitted from Constantinople, sent to Massowah a person in his confidence named Atta Bey, with orders to investigate the numerous charges preferred against the late Pasha, and more particularly to make inquiries respecting a serious burglary of 1,000 guineas, stolen from a Spanish merchant under French protection some two years ago; and in which matter it appeared that Ibrahim Pasha had acted, to say, the least, with the most culpable indifference.

Atta Bey pursued these inquiries in an honourable and open manner, and with as much respect for the Pasha as was compatible with his duty; but the latter became suddenly possessed with the idea that his assassination was designed, and, under the influence of this hallucination, remained constantly armed, refused to see any one, and wrote two letters to my Consulate soliciting protection.

* No. 198.

My secretary represented to him the absurdity of his conduct, but with little effect.

He also received news that his dismissal was resolved on, and appeared to fear, not without reason, that he would be called on to pay the 1,000 guineas above-mentioned from his private purse.

His fears, real or unreal, so worked upon a mind naturally weak, and rendered more imaginative, if report be true, by the habit of consuming opium, that he committed suicide, having first swallowed his seals and written two letters, one disposing of his property, and the other stating that he died by his own hand.

He was buried with propriety by the authorities of the island, who sent also a copy of his last letters and a *procès-verbal* of his death to the Pasha of the Hedjaz.

A temporary Governor arrived a few days afterwards, who had quitted Jiddah with orders to send his predecessor there, under a military guard if necessary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 215.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received September 5.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 1, 1855.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt on the 28th of February of the following despatches, relating to the affairs of Senhait, an Abyssinian province, namely, of the 26th of June, 6th of July, and 9th of November, 1854.*

I have already mentioned in my despatch of the 3rd of November, 1854,† that 203 persons who had been carried into captivity from that province had been restored to their families.

I have addressed a letter to the present Governor of Taka, stating that ninety-one still remained to be accounted for, and requesting that those who are alive may be at once sent back pursuant to the orders of His Highness the Viceroy of Egypt, and that the casualties may be attested by competent witnesses under his seal of office.

I doubt not that these requests will be attended to, and that I shall receive a reasonable reply from the Governor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 216.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received September 5.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 1, 1855.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Pasha of Massowah has committed suicide by hanging; and that the Governor appointed by the Pasha of the Hedjaz has arrived who was already *en route*, and who had orders to send his predecessor to Djeddah.

I will not trouble your Lordship with any details regarding the death of Ibrahim Pasha, as, though curious, they do not touch upon affairs connected with my Consulate. A *procès-verbal* has been sent to the Pasha of the Hedjaz by the French Consul and others who were in the island at the time.

I trust that the orders alluded to in your Lordship's despatch of the 28th of October, 1854,‡ for regulating the conduct of the late Governor, will be forwarded to and appreciated by the present one.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* Nos. 158, 167, and 186. † No. 190. ‡ No. 182.

No. 217.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received September 5.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March 3, 1855.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Dejajmatch Kasai has defeated and taken prisoner Dejajmatch Oobeay, and having thus vanquished his last and most formidable competitor, has been crowned with much pomp by the Aboona Salama and all the clergy as King of Ethiopia.

There is at last some chance that Abyssinia may be united under one Sovereign, and such an one as shall merit the support and friendship of Her Majesty's Government.

He has signalized his career already by two great acts—the abolition of the Slave Trade and of the barbarous mutilation of fallen enemies; he is generous beyond example in the history of Abyssinia, merciful in the hour of victory, and both in his words and his actions, that I have carefully watched, fully desirous of a sincere friendship with Europeans, more especially with the English Government.

As soon as the country is more quiet I propose to visit him, at his own request, and shall then be able to give your Lordship a more detailed report of this apparently favourable opening.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 218.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received September 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March 3, 1855*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 26th October, 1854,* on the 26th February, 1855, acceding to my request to visit England during the present year.

My previous despatch of this date will explain to your Lordship that I consider it my duty first to visit the extraordinary man who, through every difficulty, has made himself master of Abyssinia.

I trust therefore that your Lordship will approve of my taking advantage of your gracious permission some months later, and on my return from that visit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 219.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received September 5.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March 4, 1855.*

WITH reference to my despatches of January 9 of this year,† I have the honour to state that I have visited the Provinces of Mensa and Bogos.

In the former I found the brother of the Naib with his gunners; the inhabitants had all fled. On my representing to him the impropriety of his proceedings, he left the village, and the people returned to their homes.

Since my return to Massowah, I have ascertained what I before suspected, that the late Pasha had ordered this invasion in an official letter to the Naib.

In Bogos I pacified several blood-feuds with adjoining tribes, and exhorted the people to abstain from plundering excursions into what must now be considered Egyptian territory.

All the tribes and districts on the northern frontier of Hamazayn sent deputies to request my protection from the Arabs tributary to Egypt. I answered that they must first give me a solemn promise to discontinue their own predatory habits, and to forget their ancient feuds. I gave them a month to consult, that the reply might be more unanimous.

All the frontier tribes, like their Arab neighbours, having occasion to send their cattle in search of grass, the exact limits of the two kingdoms will be very difficult to define.

* No. 180. † Nos. 203 and 204.

In the meantime, and in the temporary absence of all authority in Tigré, I have done what was in my power to establish a pacific intercourse.

When some Chief shall have been established in Hamazayn by the new King Kasai, I shall be able to explain these affairs to him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 220.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received September 5.)

(Extract.) *Massowah, March 4, 1855.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt, on the 26th February, of your Lordship's separate despatch of the 15th April, 1854,* authorizing me to expend a sum of money not exceeding 200*l.*, should I consider it necessary, with regard to the affairs mentioned in my despatch of the 25th January, 1854.†

No. 221.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received September 5.)

(Extract.) *Massowah, March 8, 1855.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the new King of Abyssinia, Dejaj Kasai, has named Dejajmatch Areya, as Governor of Tigré.

All foreign politics I shall of course carefully refer to the King; at the same time it is satisfactory that the Governor of Tigré should be of that family, of the Ras Welda Selasee, and of Sabagardis, to whom Mr. Salt and Mr. Coffin were accredited by the British Government; and also personally well disposed towards Europeans, and on friendly terms with myself.

As to the new King, formerly called Dejajmatch Kasai, and as respecting his career I have the honour to call your Lordship's attention to the despatches in which I have mentioned him.

No. 222.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, September 6, 1855.*

I TRANSMIT, for your Excellency's information, copies of two despatches from Mr. Consul Plowden,‡ containing observations respecting the new King of Ethiopia, and the suicide of Ibrahim Pasha, the late Governor of Massowah.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 223.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September 12, 1855.*

WITH reference to your despatch of the 1st of March,§ I am directed by the Earl of Clarendon to convey to you his Lordship's approval of the steps which you have taken, as therein reported to procure the return to their homes of the remaining inhabitants of the Province of Senhait, who had been taken captives by the Bey of Taka.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

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* No. 153. † No. 151. ‡ Nos. 214 and 217. § No. 215.

No. 224.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 12, 1855.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 3rd of March,* and I am to convey to you his Lordship's entire approval of your having deferred availing yourself of your leave of absence, in order that you might visit the present ruler of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 225.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 12, 1855.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to convey to you his Lordship's approval of your exertions to settle the feuds among the tribes which you visited in your journey through the Provinces of Mensa and Bogos, as reported in your despatch of the 4th of March.†

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 226.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received November* 3.)

My Lord, *Gondar, June* 18, 1855.

SINCE the date of my last despatch till now, I have been constantly on the road.

I found the King Theodorus with some difficulty in his camp, in the Province of Dillanta, on the borders of Worrahaimano. I remained there five days, and had several interviews with him.

I returned in safety to this city, though the country is in a very disturbed state; but a rebel Chief being in force in the Province of Waggera, it is impossible for me at present to go on to Tigré, which is also very unsettled.

I shall be constrained, most likely, to pass the rains here, but shall lose no opportunity that may offer.

Should the King beat the Gallas, everything will become tranquil; and if it be possible to extinguish the fiery spirit of the Abyssinians, to reform their laws and manners, and to establish a tranquil sovereignty, the new Monarch is certainly well fitted for the arduous task.

In a few days, if messengers can pass, I shall send to your Lordship a Report on the state of the country, on its prospects, and more particularly an account of my conference and its results.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 227.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received November* 3.)‡

My Lord, *Gondar, June* 25, 1855.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a Report, being a short account of the recent change of Government in Abyssinia; the present state of the country; the character of the King Theodorus; his reforms and ideas; and of my interview with him, and its results.

I trust that instructions will be sent as soon as convenient, the state of my health having for some time required medical advice that I cannot obtain here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 218. † No. 219. ‡ Laid before Parliament, 1866.

Inclosure in No. 227.

Report.

IN my last Report I represented Northern Abyssinia. independently of Shoa, as being ruled by three Chiefs, who were generally at variance with each other, and whose feudal vassals were most often in a state of secret or open rebellion. A remarkable man has now appeared, who, under the title of Negoos or King Theodorus, has united the whole of Northern Abyssinia under his authority, and has established tolerable tranquillity, considering the shortness of his career and the hazardous wars in which he has been and is still engaged.

From his earliest youth Dejajmatch Kasai regarded his present elevation as assuredly destined, but concealed his designs with prudence equal to his daring until ripe for execution. First he denied the authority of the Queen, mother of Ras Ali, under whom he governed the provinces near Sennaar; defeated in succession all the troops she could send against him; and lastly, herself, with tenfold his numbers. He protested, however, that he was still the faithful servant of Ras Ali, but refused to surrender except on certain conditions of peace. The Ras then sent against him an immense force; the armies camped opposite to each other for some time, the Ras not wishing to drive matters to extremity; and in the interval Kasai fought several minor battles, detected and punished some traitors in his own camp, and introduced a little discipline into his army.

The Ras having sworn to do him no injury, he surrendered and came to Debra Tabor, where he so completely lulled all suspicion that he received all his former honours and provinces from the Ras; the Queen being in a measure disgraced. He returned to Kwora, and attacked all the low countries towards Sennaar, Shankallas or Arabs, accustoming his soldiers to war and hardships.

His projects not being yet matured, on several occasions when it was confidently reported that he had rebelled, he baffled his accusers by suddenly appearing in the Ras's camp, and following him to war in Godjam with about a third of his forces, thus quite winning his heart, though I ventured to point out to the Ras his dangerous character.

At last, about two years and a-half ago he threw off the mask, and the Ras having sent against him Dejajmatch Goscho, that Prince was defeated and slain in battle.

The Ras now became seriously alarmed, and ordered half his army under his best Commanders to attack him; he also called upon Dejajmatch Oobeay, Chief of Tigré, for assistance, and that Prince furnished a very large contingent. Though numbers were so overwhelming against him, Dejajmatch Kasai met these forces and give them a signal defeat, killing most of the Chiefs. Shortly after he took the daring resolution of attacking the Ras, and arriving by forced marches near the camp of that Prince in Godjam in the rainy season, sent him a defiance, and met him, though so far superior in cavalry, in the open plains. The Ras fought with the utmost courage in person. The loss of life was considerable on both sides, but Kasai's determined valour again won the day, Ras Ali escaping.

He then retired from Godjam, and afforded to Birro Goscho, who had been for five years besieged by the Ras in his mountain fort of Soma, an opportunity of leaving that stronghold.

During some months Dejajmatch Kasai remained tranquil, amusing Dejajmatch Oobeay at first with friendly proposals, afterwards demanding of that Chief the Aboona Salama, who had been banished by Ras Ali, with menaces in case of non-compliance. Oobeay becoming alarmed sent, first, his son with proposals, and, subsequently, the Aboona; the latter was reinstated in his dignity at Gondar, and a peace was made between the Chiefs. Dejajmatch Kasai then pursued Birro Goscho even to the Galla Provinces, where he had assembled a large force, defeated and took him prisoner.

He was now strong in guns and troops, and on his return camped in the Province of Waggera, from whence he declared war against Oobeay, reproaching him with his falsehood, which was proved, in having sent letters to encourage Birro Goscho. With some reluctance Oobeay at last put himself in motion to oppose Dejajmatch Kasai, who had advanced into Semen. The latter, by forced marches, fell suddenly upon his rival, and in two hours defeated him, taking prisoner all his sons and Generals, with himself Without delay he invested Oobeay's strongholds, which surrendered at once.

The fruits of this last victory were large treasures accumulated for three generations; the submission or imprisonment of almost all the Chiefs of Abyssinia, and the coronation of Dejajmatch Kasai by the Aboona Salama, under the title of Theodorus, King of Kings of Ethiopia.

Discovering a plot against his life, the King only placed in durance those concerned,

displaying in all things great clemency and generosity, and the ransom of Dejajmatch Oobeay was fixed at 120,000 dollars.

With scarce a week's delay, and in spite of the murmurs of his soldiers, the King marched against the Mahomedan Gallas, who had, during his absence, burnt some churches, and assembled all the forces of Christian Abyssinia, Tigré included, in the Province of Dillanta, on the borders of Worrahaimano, where I found him.

He may have from 50,000 to 60,000 men of all arms.

Such has been his adventurous and warlike career. I shall now say a few words on his personal character, the reforms he has effected, the designs he is contemplating, and the condition and prospects of the country.

The King Theodorus is young in years, vigorous in all manly exercises, of a striking countenance, peculiarly polite and engaging when pleased, and mostly displaying great tact and delicacy. He is persuaded that he is destined to restore the glories of Ethiopian Empire, and to achieve great conquests; of untiring energy, both mental and bodily, his personal and moral daring are boundless. The latter is well proved by his severity towards his soldiers, even when these, pressed by hunger, are mutinous, and he is in front of a powerful foe; more so even by his pressing reforms on a country so little used to any yoke, whilst engaged in unceasing hostilities, and his suppression of the power of the great feudal Chiefs at a moment when any inferior man would have sought to conciliate them as the stepping-stones to Empire.

When aroused his wrath is terrible, and all tremble; but at all moments he possesses a perfect self-command. Indefatigable in business, he takes little repose night or day; his ideas and language are clear and precise; hesitation is not known to him; and he has neither councillors nor go-betweens. He is fond of splendour, and receives in state even on a campaign. He is unsparing in punishment—very necessary to restrain disorder, and to restore order in such a wilderness as Abyssinia. He salutes his meanest subject with courtesy; is sincerely though often mistakenly religious, and will acknowledge a fault committed toward his poorest follower in a moment of passion with sincerity and grace.

He is generous to excess, and free from all cupidity, regarding nothing with pleasure or desire but munitions of war for his soldiers. He has hitherto exercised the utmost clemency towards the vanquished, treating them rather as his friends than his enemies. His faith is signal; without Christ, he says, I am nothing; if he has destined me to purify and reform this distracted kingdom, with His aid who shall stay me: nay, sometimes he is on the point of not caring for human assistance at all, and this is one reason why he will not seek with much avidity for assistance from or alliance with Europe.

The worst points in his character are, his violent anger at times, his unyielding pride as regards his kingly and divine right, and his fanatical religious zeal.

He has begun to reform even the dress of Abyssinia, all about his person wearing loose flowing trowsers, and upper and under vests, instead of the half-naked costume introduced by the Gallas. Married himself at the altar and, strictly continent, he has ordered or persuaded all who love him to follow his example, and exacts the greatest decency of manners and conversation: this system he hopes to extend to all classes.

He has suppressed the Slave Trade in all its phases, save that the slaves already bought may be sold to such Christians as shall buy them for charity: setting the example, he pays to the Mussulman dealers what price they please to ask for the slaves they bring to him and then baptizes them.

He has abolished the barbarous practice of delivering over murderers to the relatives of the deceased, handing over offenders, in public, to his own executioners to be shot or decapitated.

The arduous task of breaking the power of the great feudal Chiefs—a task achieved in Europe only during the reigns of many consecutive Kings—he has commenced by chaining almost all who were dangerous, avowing his intention of liberating them when his power shall be consolidated. He has placed the soldiers of the different provinces under the command of his own trusty followers, to whom he has given high titles, but no power to judge or punish; thus, in fact, creating generals in place of feudal Chieftains more proud of their birth than of their monarch, and organising a new nobility, a legion of honour dependent on himself, and chosen specially for their daring and fidelity.

To these he gives sums of money from time to time, accustoming them to his intention of establishing a regular pay; his matchlock-men are numbered under officers commanding from 100 to 1,000, and the King drills them in person. In the common soldiers he has effected a great reform, by paying them, and ordering them to purchase their food, but in no way to harass and plunder the peasant as before; the peasantry he is gradually accustoming to live quiet under the village Judge, and to look no more to

military rule. As regards commerce, he has put an end to a number of vexatious exactions, and has ordered that duties shall be levied only at three places in his dominions. All these matters cannot yet be perfected, but he intends also to disarm the people, and to establish a regular standing army, armed with muskets only, having declared that he will convert swords and lances into ploughshares and reaping-hooks, and cause a plough-ox to be sold dearer than the noblest war horse.

He has begun to substitute letters for verbal messages. After perusing the history of the Jesuits in Abyssinia, he has decided that no Roman Catholic priests shall teach in his dominions; and insisting on his right divine over those born his subjects, has ordered the Abyssinians who have adopted that creed to recant; to foreigners of all classes, however, he permits the free exercise of their religion, but prohibits all preaching contrary to the doctrine of the Coptic Church. To the Mahometans he has declared that he will first conquer the Gallas, who have seized on Christian lands, devastated churches, and, by force, converted the inhabitants to Islamism; and after that, the Mussulmans now residing in Abyssinia will have the option of being baptized or of leaving the country.

He is peculiarly jealous, as may be expected, of his sovereign rights, and of anything that appears to trench on them; he wishes, in a short time, to send embassies to the Great European Powers to treat with them on equal terms. The most difficult trait in his character is this jealousy and the pride that, fed by ignorance, renders it impossible for him yet to believe that so great a Monarch as himself exists in the world.

In his present campaign he proposes to subdue or exterminate the Mahometan Gallas, and perhaps Shoa. Next year he will devote to the settlement of Tigré, including the tribes along the coast, and meditates the occupation of Massowah. After that he wishes to reclaim all the provinces lately conquered by Egypt along his northern frontier; even Khartoum, as his by right: nor does his military ardour hesitate to dream of the conquest of Egypt, and a triumphant march to the Holy Sepulchre.

Some of his ideas may be imperfect, others impracticable; but a man who, rising from the clouds of Abyssinian ignorance and childishness without assistance and without advice, has done so much and contemplates such large designs, cannot be regarded as of an ordinary stamp.

The King is now, I hear, wasting Worrahaimano with fire and sword; the Abyssinians, but lately accustomed to his vigorous sway, and in no way comprehending the grasp of his ideas, already fancy that he will not return, and bring about prophecies and discontents, fostered by Galla emissaries. The country is disturbed; but there is only one open or dangerous revolt, headed by the son of Dejajmatch Oobeay in Semen, who, owing his life and freedom to the King's mercy, now gives out that he himself is the destined Theodorus. He has gathered together a considerable army, and occupies the road between Gondar and Tigré.

The King is confident in his strength, and with his usual unhesitating courage, looking only to the enemy of most importance and in his front, will not, at present, condescend to notice this ebullition; but if he returns crowned with victory, no mercy will be shown to these rebels, his enemies will disappear, and tranquillity will be at once restored.

He will hereafter be quite capable of carrying out his views with regard to Massowah, though he will be unable to contend with the Egyptian forces.

Should he unite all the Gallas and Northern Abyssinians, Shoa to Tajoura and Zanzibar, Tigré with the sea-coast and Massowah, into one government as he purposes, and a frontier arrangement be made with Egypt, Abyssinia may, under his rule, rank as a Christian kingdom; this is the last chance for negotiations and Treaties.

Should he now or at any time fail in his designs, or fall in battle, the misrule and anarchy that must ensue will baffle all human calculation, and render peaceful interference impossible: Abyssinia must then be left to her destinies, until some European Power shall think it worth while to conquer and instruct the most fertile of African provinces.

On approaching the camp, the intervening country being dangerous to traverse on account of the Gallas, I requested an escort; the King, to do me honour, sent four of his generals with several companies of gunners, who accompanied me to the camp with ceremony, the King's flutes and drums playing before me, and fired a salute of musketry when I approached his tent. The tent was filled with all his officers in handsome dresses, and the ground was entirely covered with carpets; the King was seated on a couch, splendidly attired, with his crown on the pillow and his sword of state held behind him: the Aboona and the Tchegee were seated on high chairs to the right and left—every one else standing. He received me with great politeness, and caused me to sit down on a carpet near himself. After a short conversation respecting my journey, and on the forms

of government in England and other countries, he told me to retire, as I must be fatigued, causing a large tent to be pitched for me.

The next day I saw him again early in the morning. After my visit, an Abyssinian of the Roman Catholic persuasion was brought to trial; this man the King ordered to dispute publicly on his religious creed with the Aboona, saying that if his reasons were the best he himself would become a convert. The monk refused to recognize any authority there present, and said he would dispute only before the Pope of Rome: the King sent for me, and as the monk persisted in obstinate silence, the Judges after some discussion gave sentence of death for contumacy to his Sovereign; which sentence the matchlock-men were called out to execute immediately. There were above 1,000 persons present; but even the Aboona, who wished to save the man, dared not speak. I rose and obtained his life, but could in no way persuade the King to banish him or release him from his chains.

The evening before the day fixed for my departure the King sent to me to know the object of my coming. I replied that I had not come on the part of the Government or in any official capacity; but that as I was about to visit England, it was important that I should know and report His Majesty's disposition respecting the establishment of a Consulate, and friendly relations generally; I hinted also at what had been arranged with the Ras Ali. The King said, "I know nothing of what Ras Ali may have done; I am young and inexperienced in public affairs; I have never heard of a Consulate under the former Kings of Abyssinia, and this matter must be referred to my Council and the principal people of my Court."

The next day being sick myself, I sent Mr. Bell, who is much trusted by the King; and after several messages to and fro the King finally replied as follows, "I cannot consent to a Consulate, as I find in the history of our institutions no such thing; but for anything else that you wish for, now or hereafter, for yourself or other English, I shall be happy to perform your pleasure, and could I receive any Consul I should wish for no one more agreeable to me, or more esteemed by me, than yourself."

I had ventured to hint that the sea-coast and Massowah might possibly be given up to him on his consent; but though his ambition was roused at this, he feared the clause conferring jurisdiction on the Consul as trenching on his prerogative, and the time for consideration was so short that though half inclined to say yes, he was too much startled at my proposals to do so.

The next morning he offered me some hundred dollars for the expenses of my journey, and begged me to pass the rainy season in Gondar; I replied that had he received me as Consul I should even have followed him in his campaigns, and have shared his dangers; but that after his refusal, my duty was to return to my country as soon as possible; and that as for the money, I could not receive it, as I was paid by my own Sovereign. He spoke to me in the most affectionate manner, gave orders for my honourable reception every where as far as Massowah, and said, "In refusing your request for a Consulate, my only reason is that it appears an innovation, but do you not forget my friendship for you, and cause your Queen also to regard me as a friend. After the rains I shall send to Her Majesty an Embassy and letters, and when these wars are finished I will give every favour and protection to Englishmen who may visit my country: do you also visit me and write to me."

The Aboona Salama tried in every way to assist me in this negotiation; and it will be seen that the King's refusal is hardly a refusal, and that he does not wish to break off all Treaty with us, but rather the contrary, being only startled by the clause about jurisdiction of Consuls.

I left the camp with all honour, the King adjuring me twenty times not to forget to write to him constantly wherever I might be, and giving me his own mule to ride as a proof of his friendly feelings. I told him that I should report all our conversation, and receive the orders of my Government in consequence; that I should then report the answer to him, which was all that I was authorized to do.

The matter was much hurried, as the King was on the eve of starting against the Gallas, with whom his outposts were indeed daily skirmishing; and my state of health would not permit of my encountering the fatigues and privations of such a campaign. Neither did I think it advisable to appear too eager at first, as that might arouse his suspicions, and confirm him in an obstinate refusal.

I told him that I was sorry for his decision rather on his accouut than on mine, but that he was perfect master in his own dominions, and to decide as he pleased.

There is no doubt that the Roman Catholic Mission has caused much jealousy in regard to Europeans, and not unnaturally, as the Mission obstinately persists in usurping the functions of the Aboona and the Abyssinian clergy, so the King has an undefined but

not unreasonable fear that we wish in like manner, and by friendly appearances, to usurp the political rights of the Sovereign; or rather, his Counsellors wish to persuade him to this effect.

I see much to hope for in these conversations. It is well to find a King in Abyssinia proud of his dignity, alive to his responsibility, capable of considering grave matters, and of replying with decision, not lightly giving assent to a thing he does not understand, and yet seeking for our friendship in all ways that he can understand. Nor is it very important to obtain a direct accord until such a time as his power shall be firmly fixed. Whenever he does sign a Treaty, to whatever effect it may be, he will fully appreciate his obligations, and faithfully fulfil them to the extent of his authority. Any other Abyssinian would have temporized in the hope of obtaining presents, as did the King of Shoa, Sahela Selassie; but this man has a noble disdain of falsehood or covetousness.

It is apparent from the honourable and friendly manner in which I took my leave, and from the King's expressions, that he does not regard his refusal as a matter that should break off our correspondence, or give offence. He has refused rather the form than the substance of our proposals.

The Aboona Salama and Mr. Bell, who has ever exerted himself in my behalf with the utmost zeal, will lose no opportunity of explaining to the King the nature of a Consulate, and of our other propositions; and I think that the objections he has taken will be somewhat modified ere long. He, in fact, only wishes to treat on equal terms, and considers that his own laws and administration of justice should suffice for all strangers; and that a Treaty, if made, should be carried out by himself without the Envoy having judicial powers, though he would not object to an Ambassador to represent the interests of a foreign nation, without those powers.

Two of the principal difficulties that we have hitherto had in negotiating with Abyssinia are now in a fair way of disappearing: one vigorous Sovereign may replace the feudal oligarchy, the proud and rebellious chieftains, that have hitherto bewildered all my efforts: the interregnum on the coast belonging neither to Turk nor Abyssinian may disappear; and those wild tribes that acknowledge no law but their will, no faith but their swords, and that hold the passes into Abyssinia, may be taught to acknowledge a lord and master. The one difficulty that will remain is the want of a sea-port in the hands of either England or Abyssinia.

In the present state of affairs, there are three ways of acting:—

One, to withdraw altogether the Consul from Abyssinia, and to cease all communication with that country.

The second, to consider that the King proposes to attack the Egyptian territory, at least where the Egyptian troops have occupied any portion of the ancient limits of Abyssinia; and also that he will probably seize on Massowah, unless the Turkish Government should defend it with such a force as will render it a heavy burden on the finances; therefore to await in silence the course of these events, when probably he will recognize the value of our friendly proposals, and seek himself for a renewal of them.

The third to accept his proposition of sending Ambassadors, and to trust to their report of their reception and of our greatness, which information may very likely induce the King to accord all we wish; he being already half-disposed to listen to us.

On the first Her Majesty's Government must decide, after examining this report, which is not so full as I could wish, in consequence of my unwilling detention in Gondar, and the near approach of the rainy season, which makes me fear to delay the departure of my messengers. I trust that this measure will not be decided on, at present.

With regard to the second, I think that should the King agree to our proposals hereafter, it would be better for all parties that Massowah should be given up to him on condition that he appoint an European in his service as Governor. The Turks cannot keep that island in future, if the King's power increases, without large garrisons; but the King can stop their trade as he pleases, and can harass them continually; he would reduce to obedience the half-civilized and ungoverned coast tribes; would reclaim the Hababs and other numerous Christians; abolish all interior duties on English imports, would need but a small force there for purposes of police, and would there learn the value of trade and of foreign intercourse.

On the other hand, should the Turks remain in an expensive and precarious possession, the state of disturbance and anarchy along the frontier will always exist as at present, or be doubled, unless indeed they should follow up their large garrisons with large armies, for which the attacks of the Abyssinian King will soon afford them a pretext, and then attempt the conquest of the country.

As regards the frontier towards Egypt, the King will probably soon receive there a check, that will induce him to seek for our mediation, and which will conduce much to the enlargement of his ideas. Egypt may be made to abandon some of her more recent conquests on the frontier, and Abyssinia with a seaport of its own, a settled boundary and a King with civilized ideas, will be worth treating with on something like equal terms.

The third proposition as to receiving the King's Ambassador may be entertained at the same time with these ideas suggested by the second; and it is, in my opinion, the most feasible: always supposing that the King returns with success from his Galla wars, consolidates his authority, extends it all over Abyssinia as I expect, and sends Ambassadors of such rank, manners, and intelligence as may conduce to his own honour and subsequent enlightenment.

I trust that the road will be clear to Massowah by the time that I receive a reply to this despatch and instructions. If your Lordship is of opinion that the Ambassadors from the King should be received, I shall, in escorting them, take advantage of the leave of absence already accorded to me; and, in case of different orders, I shall also profit by that leave, after having by letter communicated your reply to His Majesty.

In the case of such an Embassy, I request also to be informed if passage by steamer and railway, hotel bills, and such expenses as will scarcely enter into the calculations, or the means, of an Abyssinian monarch of modern times, however munificent, will be borne by Her Majesty's Government; if so, in what manner, and to what amount. If it be worth while to receive these Envoys, it is worth the while to receive them in a manner becoming our own greatness.

Gondar, June 25, 1855. (Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 228.

*The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 27, 1855.

I HAVE read with great interest the able Report on the present state of the Kingdom of Abyssinia, inclosed in your despatch dated Gondar, June 25, 1855,† and I entirely approve your proceedings, as reported in that despatch, as well as the language held by you at your interview with King Theodorus.

You will acquaint the King that Her Majesty's Government are fully informed with respect to the events that have recently taken place in Abyssinia, and that they desire to express their admiration of the valour and skill which he has displayed in the field, and of his moderation in victory, and also of the wisdom and benevolence with which he has commenced the work of reform, and of his labours for the welfare of his people. At the same time, however, you will convey the advice, and express the earnest hope of Her Majesty's Government that the King will abstain from religious persecution and extending religious principles by force of arms, which is contrary to the principles of Christianity, and cannot fail to involve him in endless troubles.

Her Majesty's Government are convinced that the establishment of friendly and intimate relations between Great Britain and Abyssinia would be attended with many advantages to both countries; and you will accordingly inform the King that the Queen, our gracious Sovereign, will have much pleasure in receiving, and treating with due honour the Ambassadors whom His Majesty may send to her Court.

This must, however, depend upon your receiving from the King a distinct assurance that he renounces all idea of conquest in Egypt and at Massowah.

Her Majesty's Government have latterly remonstrated in the strongest terms against the intentions of the Viceroy of Egypt to attack Abyssinia, and the present Viceroy has not only put a stop to such proceedings, and has confined himself within the limits of his own dominions, but he has set free the Abyssinian prisoners reduced to slavery by his predecessor. Her Majesty's Government would subject themselves to grave suspicions if they received an Embassy from a Sovereign whose designs against the Sultan, the ally of the Queen of England, were previously known to them.

Should you receive a complete and satisfactory assurance on this subject, and should the King of Abyssinia determine to send Ambassadors to Her Majesty's Court, it will be your duty to accompany them, and you are hereby authorized to defray the expenses of their journey to England, respecting which you will be careful to observe all reasonable economy.

I apprehend, however, that the route which the Ambassadors would pursue must be

* Laid before Parliament, 1866. † No. 227.

through Egypt; and as the Viceroy is aware of the hostile designs of the King, it is highly probable that His Highness will not allow them to pass through his territory; and you will therefore communicate with Mr. Bruce, and ascertain from him whether leave will be granted or not, as it would be highly inexpedient that you should be exposed to being turned back from the Egyptian frontier in company with the Abyssinian Emissaries.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 229.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, November* 28, 1855.

I INCLOSE, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Mr. Consul Plowden,* instructing him as to the language to be held by him to the King of Abyssinia, and as to the proposed Embassy from that country to England.

I also inclose a copy of a Memorandum on Abyssinian affairs which I have received from Mr. Plowden.†

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 230.

Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received November 29.)

My Lord, *Therapia, November* 19, 1855.

I HAVE received complaints from the British Agent at Massowah, respecting the difficulties which he experiences in obtaining the liberation of slaves imported from Abyssinia.

Inclosed herewith is a copy of the Memorandum by which I have brought the cases in question under the immediate consideration of Fuad Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

Inclosure in No. 230.

Memorandum.

L'AUTORITE directe et péremptoire de la Sublime Porte est requise pour mettre fin à toute entrave mise à l'exécution du Firman Impérial envoyé il y a quelque temps a Massowah dans le but d'empêcher la vente des esclaves tirés de l'Abyssinie. Le Gouverneur et les Magistrats de l'île, s'ils ne s'opposent pas de front aux réclamations des Agents Anglais et Français, ne cherchent que trop souvent d'en détourner l'effet. Les esclaves, par conséquent, ne jouissent pas de la protection que le Firman leur accorde, les Agents des Puissances alliées sont décrédités, et quelquefois on leur impose l'obligation de mettre une somme d'argent en dépôt afin de pouvoir rendre la liberté à quelque malheureuse victime d'un trafic reprouvé par l'opinion de l'Europe.

Des extraits de la correspondance officielle se trouvent ci-joints. Leur contenu est fortement recommandé à l'attention sérieuse et éclairée du Ministère Ottoman. Le Soussigné, fort du droit que lui donnent les faits qui s'y trouvent recités, est convaincu que la Porte se hâtera d'émaner les ordres nécessaires pour faire cesser au plutôt et complètement un état de choses qui ne saurait continuer sans l'exposer à de justes reproches.

Therapia, le 10 *Novembre*, 1855.

(Signé) STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

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* No. 228. † Inclosure in No. 227.

No. 231.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, November* 30, 1855.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 19th instant,* I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve of the steps you have taken to call the attention of the Porte to the difficulty which the British Agent at Massowah experiences in obtaining the liberation of slaves imported from Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 232.

The Earl of Clarendon to Mr. Bruce.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 3, 1855.

I INCLOSE for your information a copy of a Memorandum which I have received from Mr. Consul Plowden on Abyssinian affairs, and respecting a proposed Abyssinian Mission to this country.†

I also inclose a copy of an instruction which I have addressed to Mr. Plowden on these subjects.‡

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

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* No. 230. † Inclosure in No. 227. ‡ No. 228.

1856.

No. 233.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received January* 1, 1856.)

My Lord, *Gondar, September* 2, 1855.

MY position here is now one of much difficulty and no small danger. The King is lost sight of in the Galla country, though there is little doubt of his ultimate success.

I have received sure information that the rebel Chief in Semen is coming in force to Gondar, and that his great object is to seize me, hoping to extract large ransom; the appearance that I have necessarily kept up as the Representative of Great Britain having caused exaggerated reports of my wealth.

There is no safe place of retreat; the King's prolonged absence, and his silence, owing to the rainy season, having given courage to the discontented in every quarter.

I scarcely know how to send this despatch; and I inform your Lordship of my straits, not in any spirit of despondency as to my safety or resources, but to explain any delay in my correspondence during the next few months, as it is very possible that I may be unable to write again for some time.

When the King returns these difficulties will, I hope disappear.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 234.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received February* 4, 1856.)

My Lord, *Gondar, October* 28, 1855.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that my couriers dispatched to the King have at last returned. As I reported in my last despatch, the Gallas of the Wallo have submitted themselves to a man, and the King is now on the borders of Shoa, whose ruler has offered to renounce his title of "Negoos," to pay annual tribute, and to surrender himself to the King's pleasure. Whether these terms will be accepted, or others more rigorous imposed, is not certain; perhaps a battle will decide, whose result is not doubtful. The King then proposes to return by the route of Godjam, destroying in his march those who have rebelled in his absence, and will probably remain some time in Tigré, when his policy with regard to Massowah and its neighbourhood, and the Egyptian frontier of Taka, will develop itself. Whatever may be the result of his projects, his military talent and undaunted energy must excite the admiration of those who know him.

In my report forming the inclosure to my despatch of the 25th June, 1855,* I had the honour to state that, in my opinion, the King's ideas with reference to the establishment of a Consulate would shortly be modified. He has now sent to request me to remain till I can have another interview with him, and both Mr. Bell and the Aboona Salama advise me, if possible, to comply with this request, saying that the King has let fall several expressions favourable to my proposals.

As the establishment of a Consulate or Embassy becomes of importance in proportion to the prospect of a vigorous and undivided rule, and as I wish, if possible, to elicit decided proposals from the King, I now purpose to remain a short time, if the state of affairs here and my very indifferent health will permit me to do so.

The rebels from Yemen and the King's Lieutenants are encamped some twenty miles from this town, and about the same distance from each other; a battle is daily expected, whose result is not material provided the King returns in safety from his adventurous campaign.

I may mention, as an instance of the ignorance with which I have to contend, that the King's General here is highly indignant with me for not joining him in the field. The King himself has ordered every one to pay me the greatest respect.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

* No. 227.

No. 235.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 7, 1856.

I HAVE to inform you that I approve of your staying at Gondar under the circumstances reported in your despatch of the 28th of October last.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 236.

Mr. Bruce to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received March 3.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, February* 17, 1856.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a despatch I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, on the position of Massowah, and the advantages that would result were the Turkish Government to consent to transfer that port to Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE.

Inclosure in No. 236.

Mr. Bruce to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

(Extract.) *Alexandria, February* 16, 1856.

YOUR Lordship is no doubt aware of the rise of a remarkable man in Abyssinia, who, under the name of Theodore I, now rules the Abyssinian tribes.

He has, after uniting the different parts of Northern Abyssinia, reduced the King of Shoa to be his tributary, and has compelled the Gallas and the other southern tribes to acknowledge his authority.

He has latterly returned from this expedition, and now, I am informed, professes his intention of seizing Massowah, in order to open a communication for Northern Abyssinia with the Red Sea, and at the same time of wresting from Egypt the Soudan and such other provinces as in ancient times formed part of the Ethiopian Monarchy.

On the frontiers of Egypt there is not much to fear. The Viceroy's troops are sufficiently numerous and disciplined to check any approaches of the Abyssinians in that quarter. But in Massowah the case is different. The Turkish garrison is small, and has no footing beyond the island on which the town is situated.

The lowlands between it and the hills of Abyssinia are occupied by predatory tribes, who render the roads unsafe, and by depriving the Governor of the revenue he might derive from commerce, oblige him to connive at the Slave Trade, as the only means of satisfying the demands of his soldiery.

Owing to this necessity, the firmans obtained by your Excellency against the Slave Trade carried on from that port have remained a dead letter, and always will remain so while the position of the Turkish officials at that place is unaltered.

Without speculating on the development of trade to be expected in the Red Sea, should the projected Maritime Canal be made across the Isthmus of Suez, the railway to Suez, which may be completed, I think, within a twelvemonth, will lead to attempts at a direct trade with Abyssinia, and as the existing authority at Massowah cannot secure safety to merchants and their goods, the injury caused to commercial interests will call for a change.

The Emperor of Abyssinia is determined to seize Massowah, both on account of its being necessary to the progress of his country, and also because, in the hands of its present rulers, it serves as a deposit for kidnapped Christian children. Being close to his resources, he would be able to subdue the half-civilized tribes who at present intercept all communication between it and the interior, and would render it the highway for the exports of the rich products of the upper country.

A further advantage would ensue were it possible to induce the Sublime Porte to consent to transfer this port to Abyssinia. By giving them access to the Red Sea, the Abyssinians would be brought into contact with civilization. The British Government

* No. 234.

would be in a position to make its counsels respected, and it would have a right in consideration of the great service thus rendered through its influence, to insist on the Emperor's acquiescing in the existing limits between his country and Egypt.

I take the liberty of bringing this subject under your Excellency's notice, in case you should think it worthy of consideration.

No. 237.

Mr. Bruce to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received March 19.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, March* 2, 1856.

I HAVE to report to your Lordship the final issue of the investigation, which, in obedience to your Lordship's instructions, I demanded as to the conduct of Khosrew Bey in throwing difficulties in the way of the transmission of Mr. Plowden's correspondence from the frontiers of Abyssinia and Egypt.

The Viceroy ordered the Great Council to examine the affair, and I instructed Mr. Messara, my interpreter, to bring the case before them, and to support it by the depositions of several respectable persons, by whom the acts charged against Khosrew Bey were sufficiently proved.

The Council, however, soon showed that their object was not to do justice, but to shield the offender.

They refused to call the witnesses Mr. Messara offered to produce, and drew up a garbled statement of what had taken place during the inquiry. This they forwarded to the Viceroy, giving, as their opinion, that the charges brought against Khosrew Bey were not sufficiently supported, though they shrank from pronouncing his acquittal.

On my complaining to the Viceroy of the conduct of the Council, he ordered his secretary, Kœnig Bey, to go over the papers, and being satisfied by his report of the truth of Mr. Plowden's complaint, his Highness ordered Khosrew Bey to be imprisoned, and directed that the accompanying letter should be written as a satisfaction to Her Majesty's Government for the improper conduct of the Bey towards Mr. Plowden.

As the Bey has been turned out of the Egyptian service, and the measures indicated in the inclosure will prevent the recurrence of such proceedings, I wrote a reply, in which I ventured to express my conviction that the decision of the Viceroy would be satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government, and in which I left to his Highness to decide for how long a term the arrest should endure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 237.

Stephan Bey to Mr. Bruce.

M. l'Agent et Consul-Général, *Le Caire, le 7 Février*, 1856.

LE Vice-Roi s'étant de nouveau fait rendre compte de la conduite de Khosroof Bey, précédemment Gouverneur de Takka, a reconnu que les faits restés à la charge de ce fonctionnaire, et notamment les actes qui ont motivé la plainte de M. le Consul d'Angleterre en Abyssinie, méritaient une punition plus sévère que la destitution déjà prononcée contre lui. Son Altesse a, par conséquent, jugé convenable d'infliger en outre à Khosroof Bey la peine de l'emprisonnement. Je suis chargé, M. l'Agent et Consul-Général, de vous faire connaître cette décision, qui sera certainement à vos yeux un nouveau témoignage des sentiments de justice dont Son Altesse est constamment animée.

Le Vice-Roi ayant du reste à cœur d'assurer la sureté de la correspondance des Agents Consulaires et des étrangers établis dans le Soudan, a adressé tant au Gouverneur-Général de cette contrée qu'au Gouverneur du Caire l'ordre de prendre toutes les mesures nécessaires pour que les communications avec la capitale et les autres localités aient lieu avec toute la promptitude et toute la sécurité possibles. Son Altesse, M. l'Agent et Consul-Général, se plait à penser que les dispositions adoptées à cet égard préviendront le retour des abus et irrégularités qui ont donné lieu aux réclamations dont vous avez été l'organe.

Le Vekil du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères,
Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) STEPHAN BEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 237.

Mr. Bruce to Stephan Bey.

M. le Bey, *Le Caire, ce 9 Février*, 1856.

J'AI reçu la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'adresser le 7 du mois actuel, par laquelle vous m'annoncez que Son Altesse a prononcé la peine d'emprisonnement contre Khosroof Bey à cause des actes qui ont motivé la plainte de Mr. Plowden, Consul de Sa Majesté Britannique en Abyssinie, et en même temps vous me faites part des dispositions prises par Son Altesse afin que de tels abus n'aient pas lieu dans l'avenir.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté appréciera dûment l'impartialité qui a dicté la décision du Vice-Roi dans cette affaire, et apprendra avec satisfaction que Son Altesse le Vice-Roi a donné les ordres nécessaires pour assurer la prompte et sûre transmission à la capitale des communications dirigées de provinces lointaines.

Je sais, M. le Bey, que les ordres de Son Altesse et les principes reconnus de son administration sont les meilleures garanties qu'on puisse avoir contre la répétition de tels actes. Je me rapporte donc entièrement à Son Altesse quant à la durée de l'emprisonnement du Bey. Je n'ai nullement l'intention de provoquer une sentence rigoureuse envers un homme qui a souffert la perte de son emploi; mais je crois qu'elle doit être assez forte pour démontrer la détermination de Son Altesse de punir ceux qui sont coupables d'un manque d'égards envers un fonctionnaire de Sa Majesté Britannique.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE.

No. 238.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Paris, March* 6, 1856.

I HAVE received from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt a copy of his despatch to your Excellency of the 16th ultimo,* explaining the grounds on which he considers it is desirable that the Sultan should consent to transfer the port of Massowah to the Government of Abyssinia; and I have to instruct your Excellency to advise the Porte to enter into an arrangement for the transfer of Massowah, which appears to be of no importance to Turkey, and which she will not be able to protect in the event of the operation contemplated by the Rulers of Abyssinia being carried into effect.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 239.

The Earl of Clarendon to Mr. Bruce.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 7, 1856.

I HAVE to state to you, in reply to your despatch of the 17th of February,† that I entirely concur with you as to the advantage which would result from the transfer of Massowah to Abyssinia; and I have instructed Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, with reference to your despatch to his Excellency of the 16th ultimo, to advise the Porte to enter into an arrangement with the Rulers of Abyssinia to that effect.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 240.

The Earl of Clarendon to Mr. Bruce.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 22, 1856.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 2nd of March,‡ and I have to instruct you to [redacted] to the Viceroy of Egypt the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for the

* Inclosure in No. 236. † No. 236. ‡ No. 237.

proof he has given of his just and friendly feelings towards them by punishing Khosroof Bey for throwing difficulties in the way of the transmission of Mr. Plowden's correspondence from Abyssinia through Egypt.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 241.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2, 1856.)

My Lord, *Gondar, October* 19, 1855.

I HAVE sent repeated couriers to the King of Abyssinia during the past rainy season, none of whom have yet returned. I learn, however, that after an arduous campaign, in spite of the difficulties of hail, rain, and swollen torrents, a cold country without shelter or fuel, hunger, disease, and the incessant attacks of the Galla-horse, bold, restless, and numerous as Cossacks, he has crushed or subdued those formidable warriors. It is further currently reported that he is now rapidly advancing to attack the King of Shoa.

He has heard that all Abyssinia is in rebellion in his rear, but with characteristic haughtiness pays no attention to these reports, and envelopes his own designs in profound silence and secrecy.

The rebels from Semen, about 8,000 strong, have advanced to within one day's journey of Gondar, and there will probably be a battle in this neighbourhood, in which the King's Lieutenants have, I think, little chance. There is no great safety here now, nor can I well see my way to Massowah yet. As soon as any of my couriers return I shall be able to give more correct information of the King's movements and prospect of success; and on his success depends the future position of Abyssinia as a nation. I do not doubt of the victorious result of his expedition to Shoa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 242.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2, 1856.)

My Lord, *Gondar, November* 26, 1855.

WITH reference to my last despatch, I have the honour to inform you that the rebel Chief* has been encamped at Gondar during eight days, and has levied contributions. It was thought probable that he would attempt to possess himself of my person, but it does not appear that he ever contemplated such violence. He even, at my intercession, set at liberty a French merchant whom he had chained, for a very small ransom. The King's Generals having declined to offer battle he has now marched towards Begemder; his future movements being uncertain.

The Kingdom of "Shoa" has entirely submitted itself to the King Theodorus, who has appointed there a Governor, and is believed to be now in pursuit of the Negoos of that country who has fled to the Gallas. This Negoos is the son of Sahela Selassee, who signed a Treaty with the British Government.

All opposition having been now subdued in that quarter, the return of the King is expected daily. Those who have rebelled here, in the vain hope that the difficulties of his expedition would overwhelm the King, will then scarcely find a shelter from his vigorous arm.

I dispatch a courier to him to-morrow, and hope soon to learn his exact intentions with reference to my propositions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* Dejaj Negoosie. See No. 260.

No. 243.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2, 1856.)

My Lord, *Gondar, November* 28, 1855.

AFTER the rebel forces left Gondar, as I informed you in my last, the King's generals followed them, and a battle ensued, in which the latter were beaten, as I expected.

The whole country is now in the hands of the rebels, and I can only hope for the King's speedy return to end this confusion, and enable me to find a road, which at present is impossible.

The French merchant whom I had put at liberty, as mentioned in my despatch of the 26th instant,* having insisted on leaving this town, in spite of my urgent entreaties, is now again in chains, having had a narrow escape of his life.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 244.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 30, 1856.)

My Lord, *Gondar, December* 15, 1855.

AFTER their victory mentioned in my last despatch, the rebels returned to Gondar and levied further contributions. This was an anxious week; but having made many friends during my stay in Abyssinia, my house was unmolested.

I have the honour to inform you also that the French merchant, named M. Lefebvre, formerly a lieutenant in the French navy, alluded to in my despatches of the 26th and 28th ultimo,† as being in chains for the second time, has been again set free at my instance.

I have brought him back to Gondar, and having discovered that he is insane, and has been so probably for years past, I have prepared a report for the Consul-General of France in Egypt, of which I do not think it necessary now to send a copy. In the meantime I have been obliged to put him under restraint until I can find means of sending him to Massowah; difficult at any time in the state he is in, much more so now when the country is absolutely without a Government, and my own position, owing to the King's absence, critical enough to demand all my attention and caution.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 245.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 30, 1856.)

My Lord, *Gondar, December* 22, 1855.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the King has sent messengers to all parts of Abyssinia to announce his complete success in Shoa.

He pursued, with his usual vigour, the Negoos of that country into the forests to the south, where the latter had taken refuge after setting fire to most of his property.

There the Negoos died of sickness; and the King, having satisfied himself of the identity of the body, returned to Shoa, which is now completely submitted to him. The Gallas called Abitcho, not far from Gooragué, proud and unconquered horsemen, having refused to acknowledge him, received a speedy lesson, leaving 1,000 of their number dead on the field, besides wounded and prisoners.

I trust in a few weeks to be able to meet the King somewhere, which is desirable, as I shall then be able to bring written proposals from him to the British Government, and shall also gain some insight into his ideas respecting the Egyptian frontier, a subject on which Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt lately wrote to me.

The King has written to me, through Mr. Bell, requesting me to await his return, which he says will be almost immediate.

* No. 242. † Nos. 242 and 243.

The army of the King has now recovered from the extreme hardship of its campaign in the rainy season. He can now add to his levies the numerous horse of Shoa and the Gallas, and he has taught his troops what Abyssinians never before learnt—confidence in themselves and in their General.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 246.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 30.)

My Lord, *Gondar, February* 8, 1856.

SINCE my despatch of the 22nd December, 1855,* I have been obliged to leave Gondar.

The King's cousin, named Mackwonen, escaped from the fortress where he had been confined for seventeen years, and having obtained assistance from the rebels of Semen, and engaged them to return to Gondar with him, he speedily collected a large force. As I could no longer remain safely here, I watched the moment when the army of Semen retired again towards that province, and went out by night, just escaping the advanced guard of one army, and the rear-guard of the other; I then retreated to the Province of Bellasa, still faithful to the King, and was there well received. Subsequently Mackwonen, after having plundered several districts, encountered the King's troops and was killed; after which the country about Gondar being again in the hands of the King's Governors, and comparatively quiet for the moment, I returned here.

I have no certain news of the King, but it is reported that he has passed beyond Shoa to Hurrur, in the Somanli country; and having been everywhere victorious is now returning. If this is true, I shall soon be able to communicate with him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 247.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 30.)

My Lord, *Gondar, February* 17, 1856.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have just received intelligence from Massowah of the revolt of the Naib of Arkeeko against the Turkish rule. He has burnt those villages on the coast whose inhabitants refused to join him, and has withdrawn men and cattle into the Shiho districts; he is followed by some thousands of armed men, and has established a blockade of Massowah, permitting no one to pass to or from Abyssinia. He has treated Europeans with courtesy, and up to the date of my information, the 28th December, had not touched any of our residences on the mainland.

I have reported to your Lordship more than once the circumstances under which the Turks established a fortress at Arkeeko. It was done by a Governor named Ismail Hakki, about nine years since, and was an act of arbitrary violence; this occurred under the Egptian rule. Previous to that time, and while Massowah was subordinate to the Pasha of the Hedjaz, there was a Treaty between the Naibs and the Turkish Government whereby the Island of Massowah only, and the customs duties on all caravans from Abyssinia, were ceded to the latter.

The Naib was otherwise quite independent on the mainland: he received, moreover, from Djeddah a salary of 12,000 dollars per annum in consideration of his observance of the above Treaty, of his permitting the free transit of fresh water from the mainland to Massowah, and of his swearing allegiance to the Sultan, as the Head of the Mussulman faith.

After the removal of Ismail Hakki, and the restoration of Massowah to the Pashalic of Djeddah in 1848, the Ottoman Government refused to return to the ancient accord, and took advantage of what had been done by Egypt, retained the fortress built at Arkeeko, and refused all payments to the Naib, making use of him only to collect tribute from the different tribes along the coast.

The present Naib, a man of intelligent and resolute character, now demands the restoration of the former Treaty, the demolition of the fortress of Arkeeko, and the

* No. 245.

annual payment of 12,000 dollars: there is little doubt that he meditates an attack on Massowah; and if the King Theodorus returns from Shoa, will perhaps solicit his powerful aid, and become his liege subject.

This is the state of the case without referring too far back in history, or to those times when Massowah was in possession of the Christian King of Abyssinia.

The Turks having destroyed the power of the Naibs, did not send a sufficient force to rule the tribes along the coast, nor could they have done so without great expense, that could only be repaid by subsequent conquests in Abyssinia. The Abyssinian Chiefs again having abandoned, *de facto*, the coast for sixty or seventy miles from the sea, that territory became a desert, and a scene of disorder and robbery, dangerous to travellers and merchants, unprofitable to its scanty population, and a very difficult anomaly to public officers, as while three parties claimed it—the Turks, the Naib, and the Abyssinian Chief of Tigré—no one governed it.

The revolt of the Naib having now forced this question into consequence, the best course must be considered, how should these lawless regions be restored to some wholesome rule, and how, and when, should the British Government interfere to effect this?

As the Ottoman Government in the Red Sea cannot furnish armies large enough to protect commerce or property on the mainland, it should, if it still wishes to retain its hold in this quarter, strictly confine itself to the occupation of the Island of Massowah, fortify it well, and make arrangements for obtaining water by supplies from Dahilec, and by cisterns. Is it worth its while to do so? The Naib can collect 15,000 men in a very difficult mountainous country from which he can at all times completely suppress the Abyssinian trade; if he calls in and obtains the assistance of Tigré, he will have 20,000, and 2,000 matchlocks; if the Abyssinian King returns and claims the Naib as his lieutenant, Massowah in its present state will not hold out a week.

The Ottoman Government, too proud to acknowledge its weakness, refuses to treat with the Abyssinian King on equal footing, pretending to claim a country in which it has never held a foot of ground.

To fortify Massowah will cost money, and to maintain troops there will be expensive; to remain idly at Massowah, the Slave Trade being abolished, and the caravans and supplies from Abyssinia being stopped, must be very unprofitable to the rulers, and very hurtful to our Indian or European traders.

If a large army be sent even to attack the Naib in his hills, the result will be doubtful, the expense great, and a collision with the Abyssinian King almost certain.

There is, then, only one way in which the Turkish Government can retain possession of Massowah—by making a Treaty to that effect with the Sovereign of Abyssinia, who will then force the Naib to observe that Treaty; and even in that case the abolition of the Galla Slave Trade has destroyed half the value of the Colony in Turkish eyes: moreover, I do not believe that the present Abyssinian King Theodorus will consent to abandon that island. Even if the Turkish Governor now concludes a peace with the Naib, the King on his return will not ratify it; and will, in his turn, claim the Naib as his subject and Massowah as his right.

Is the Ottoman Government, then, prepared to defend that possession by force of arms, seeing that even if the garrison should repel the Abyssinian attacks, the island will remain in a state of perpetual blockade and a useless incumbrance, unless, in concert with Egypt, a large army be sent to attack in their turn the Abyssinians?

These contingencies it is well now to consider, as the character of the present Monarch, together with the events now passing on the coast, render them very probable.

I think that we should now in no way interfere until the King returns, when he will probably confer with me on the subject; that, in the meantime, every man-of-war that may touch at Massowah should receive instructions to observe strict neutrality, and only to protect on board, or in the Island of Massowah, Europeans and their property—instructions to which effect should be sent to the Governor of Aden. The quarrel must not be considered as one between savages and a civilized people, but as one involving future interests, which a false step may seriously complicate.

The Governor of Massowah has already warned the Europeans resident on the mainland that they should retire into the island, and that if they refuse he can no longer hold himself responsible for their safety.

When the Abyssinian King returns—if he consents to receive British Consuls in his dominions, as he has already promised protection to European commerce and travellers—I shall then recommend that arrangements be made for handing Massowah over to him, its possession by the Turks on present terms being nearly useless to themselves, and a mere obstacle to commerce and civilization. The Naib will then, as Chief of those districts on the coast, now in so disgraceful a state, restore order and security; and, as

responsible to a superior able to exact obedience, will find it his interest to observe our Treaties with that King; unity of interests and Government will be established from the sea to the Gallas; and Abyssinia will be brought directly in contact with Europe; from which we must hope for happy results.

If even on the death of the King, anarchy should ensue, our own power on the coast will protect our subjects and property, without involving, as at present, long and delicate discussions with European Powers; but this theme must be reserved for a future day.

If, on the other hand, the King refuses to receive our officers or our proposals, and haughtily appeals to arms alone as his arbitrator with Egypt and Turkey, it will then be submitted by me as a question for Her Majesty's Government to decide whether we should leave the Contending Parties to measure their respective strength—a struggle which would probably end in the conquest of Abyssinia by the Mahometans; or whether we should restore to the Abyssinian King the territories he demands, and trust to time and conciliation for overcoming his jealousy in respect to foreign Consulates as regards their judicial powers.

If he lives and prospers, I hope that his intelligence will lead him to adopt most of our views cordially; and he is the only man that will be capable of vanquishing the jealousy and vanity of his subjects.

If he does not return, the question will materially change; no one will be found to replace him; and even Turkish apathy will then be better than Abyssinian misgovernment and cupidity.

To give your Lordship some idea of the daring campaign that the King has made into countries hitherto unknown, and without keeping up his communications, I may mention that we have no message from his camp later than the 23rd of November last, and that few Abyssinians even believe that he will ever return. I need not say how my difficulties are increased by this feeling; but I believe that he will return, and in such manner and so triumphant as to justify my opinion of his character and good fortune.

The tribes on the coast call loudly for me to effect some settlement between the Turks and the Naib; but I consider my more important duty to be here, as my departure would be the signal for revolt, and would enfeeble utterly the remaining partisans of the King: independent of the many difficulties of the road, this alone would decide me to remain. I must not lightly throw away the influence that I have acquired with all tribes and classes from Massowah to the Gallas, which neither the King's absence, nor the conflict of parties, has yet been able to weaken or destroy.

The interruption of communication with Europe, and the cessation of all my supplies, money included, occasion me also no small inconvenience.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 248.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 30.)

My Lord, *Gondar, March 5, 1856.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that my messenger to the King has returned with letters from him. He had led his army as far as Hurrur, and having vanquished several Galla tribes, took prisoner the son of the late Negoos of Shoa, with almost all his nobles. He then returned to Shoa, to Ankobar, from whence he writes to me.

The King says that he quite understands the difficulty of my position here; but in reply to my application to retire, if he does not intend soon to return, he urgently requests me to remain at all hazards, as he wishes to confer with me on many important matters. He says that he shall leave Shoa as soon as he has received the remaining revenues; and after punishing the rebels in Godjam, and his own Governors, who have been remiss or faithless, intends to reach Tigré before the rainy season in July.

Respecting the Egyptian frontier, he has requested me to reply, through the same medium of Her Majesty's Consul-General, in his name, as follows:—

"I, the King, am engaged in a distant war. My Governors were left with orders to protect my territories simply, till my return. Till now Ethiopia has been without a Sovereign, but now that by the grace of God I wear the Crown, I shall not depart from those usages that become all Sovereigns. If you receive any further communication from Egypt before my return, refer it to me."

In a private note through Mr. Bell, he says, "Answer for me as you think best for my dignity and your own. I am ready for peace or war."

While conquering Pagan kingdoms, leading his numerous forces safely through regions quite unknown, and changing the laws and institutions of Shoa, this singular man, regardless of rebellion in his rear, or murmurs among his troops, has also dared to commence a total reform in his army, marshalling the soldiers into regiments, appointing officers of different grades, fixing their pay and the number of their private servants, and also mixing up soldiers from several provinces at random in those regiments, thus striking a mighty blow against the feudal system, under which the men clustered round the Chief of their native district, and followed him only in obedience or in revolt.

I am about to write that I shall strive to remain here till June next; though it will be by no means easy to do so unless the King speedily appears.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 249.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 30.)

My Lord, *Gondar, April* 22, 1856.

THE road to and from Massowah having been shut for months past, except for an occasional and well-secreted letter, I have been unable to obtain official writing paper, and must therefore request indulgence for this informality.

I have the honour to inform you, with reference to my last despatch, that the King Theodorus has returned from his conquests in Shoa, and is now in the Province of Godjam, six days' journey from this place, where he has requested me to wait for him. He purposes, I believe, to pass the rainy season in Tigré, in which case I shall be able to communicate freely with Europe.

The rebels in Godjam, and all the provinces between Gondar and Shoa, are dispersed or taken, and all is tranquil; but the roads to the north, between this and Massowah, are in a state of wild confusion for the present.

I am advised by my Agent at Massowah that the Governor of that place has obtained the aid of Egyptian troops, and not satisfied with attacking the Naib, has also ravaged a portion of Hamasayn, carrying away many Christian prisoners, and treating them with cruelty. It is obvious that if the Turkish Government treats the King of Abyssinia as a barbarian, and attacks his territories without notice of war, he will be justified in making reprisals in like manner.

The determined jealousy with which the Ottoman Government has ever met my mission to this country, in the fear that what it still affects to call a tributary Province should be acknowledged as an independent nation, has again been manifested. Orders have been given by the Governor of Massowah to attack the Provinces of Mensa and Mogos, to respect which precise orders have been so often apparently sent, on my representations, and at the instance of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople. Doubtless that Government calculates on wearing out my patience, and that such insignificant matters will not be insisted on by the British authorities.

The Slave Trade is still carried on at Massowah in defiance of the Sultan's Proclamation.

I wish to put Her Majesty's Government in possession of these facts, but do not recommend that any steps should be taken until I can furnish more details, and until the King's arrival in Tigré, when doubtless war will break out on a more serious scale, or peace will be due to the interference of Her Majesty's Government, Turkish policy being seemingly unprepared for either.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 250.

Mr. Bruce to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 30.)

(Extract.) *Alexandria, June* 20, 1856.

IN forwarding Mr. Plowden's despatches,* I inclose copy of a letter from Mr. Barroni, from which it appears that the attack on the Christian territory therein alluded to was not made in consequence of orders from the local Government here, but by the Turkish Governor of Massowah, and that the officer in command of the Egyptian troops had refused obedience when ordered to attack Mensa, Bogos, and Senhait.

* Nos. 244 to 249.

The object of these attacks is, no doubt, plunder and slaves, by means of which only the Governor can pay his troops.

The answer sent to me by the King of Abyssinia* is not in reply to your Lordship's despatch, which had not then reached him. It is the answer to a private letter I addressed last summer to Mr. Plowden, on receipt of his information on King Theodore's ambitious views, and in which I urged him to recommend King Theodore not to commence a predatory warfare on the frontier, in the event of his having matters in dispute with the Turks, but to proceed in a manner becoming a Sovereign by diplomatic steps at the Porte.

This advice seems to have produced some effect; but I fear that these most injudicious inroads on Christian provinces made by the Turkish Governor will lead to reprisals, and that a war will spring up between this country and Abyssinia.

Independently, however, of this untoward event, I think that the language of King Theodore's message to me, and Mr. Plowden's account of his character, and of the circumstances of the country, afford no ground for hoping that the King will listen to any reasonable terms of accommodation, should he succeed in combining together the discordant elements of the Abyssinian monarchy. He will hardly be able to break down thoroughly the feudal system, and to supersede the relation between the Chiefs and their retainers, by attachment to the person of the Monarch, unless he can propose some object of ambition, which will excite the sympathy of all classes, and can gratify by conquest the aspirations thus formed. Such an object he finds in the restoration of the Christian Empire of Abyssinia, and it is singular to see the interest with which his career is watched, even in Egypt, by the enlightened Copts and their priesthood. They do not conceal their ardent vows for his success.

It is evident that in this critical state of affairs the Turkish Governor of Massowah has acted with the greatest imprudence in breaking with the Naib of the neighbouring districts on the mainland, and still more in going out of his way to invade an unoffending Christian territory. This last act, with the encouragement given to the Slave Trade, contrary to the orders of the Porte, will afford King Theodore a plausible pretext for attacking the Turkish Settlement at Massowah. The Egyptians will be called in to assist, and a war will be undertaken to retain a fort which is of no use whatever, except as a slave barracoon.

Said Pasha has shown no disposition hitherto to attack the Abyssinians in that quarter, and his force is only sufficient to maintain order.

But if they invade the provinces, which of late years have been considered as forming part of Egypt, he will not be sorry to have an opportunity of meeting them in the field.

Inclosure in No. 250.

Mr. Barroni to Mr. Bruce.

Sir, *Massowah, May* 14, 1856.

TO-DAY I received from Mr. Plowden the inclosed despatch, and according to his orders, I beg to inform you that I protested to this Governor for the violated Amasayn territory, Abyssinian province, by the Egyptian troops.

This Governor considered for nothing my protest, but, after which the chief of the Egyptian soldiers, Ali Aga, fearing responsibility, refused for three times the order of this Governor to go to Mensa, Bogos, and Senhait; and so those provinces have been saved till to-day by the invasion of the Egyptians. The chief of the garrison of Massowah refused also the order that he received from this Governor to invade the same Christian provinces.

The commerce of Slave Trade, renewed here on the 24th March past, and more than 300 Gallas slaves have been sold in this market of Massowah, and this Custom house took his right for them as formerly. This commerce is protected by this Governor Emin Effendi, and by the chief of the Egyptian troops.

When slavery was prohibited here by the order from the Sultan, all the slaves who remained at Massowah were sold by contraband, protected by this Governor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. BARRONI.

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* See No. 248.

No. 251.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, July* 2, 1856.

I TRANSMIT for your Excellency's information copies of a despatch from Mr. Bruce, and one from Mr. Consul Plowden,* respecting the state of affairs in Abyssinia; and I have to instruct your Excellency to remonstrate strongly with the Sublime Porte against the unjustifiable and ill-advised conduct of the Governor of Massowah, in attacking the Christian provinces in Abyssinia, as reported in the enclosed papers.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 252.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, July* 2, 1856.

I TRANSMIT for your Excellency's information a copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Plowden,† reporting that the Naib of Arkeeko had revolted against the Turkish rule, and has established a blockade between Massowah and Abyssinia.

I have to instruct your Excellency to speak to the Reis Effendi upon this matter, and to ask him what the views and intentions of the Sublime Porte are with regard to it.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 253.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 3, 1856.

YOUR despatches to the 22nd December, 1855, and to the 22nd April of the present year, both inclusive, have been received at this office.

With reference to your despatch of the 17th of February,† giving an account of the revolt of the Naïb of Arkeeko, I have to acquaint you that your proceedings, as reported in your despatch, are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 254.

The Earl of Clarendon to Earl Cowley.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, July* 4, 1856.

I INCLOSE, for communication to Count Walewski, copies of despatches from the British Consul at Gondar, reporting the steps taken by him on behalf of a French subject named Lefebvre.‡

I am, &c.

(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 255.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 5, 1856.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to convey to you his Lordship's approval of your proceedings with respect to the French merchant Lefebvre, as reported in your despatch of the 15h of December last.§

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

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* Nos. 249 and 250. † No. 247. ‡ Nos. 242, 243, and 244. § No. 244.

No. 256.

Lord Cowley to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 22.)

My Lord, *Paris, July 20, 1856.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch of the 4th instant,* instructing me to communicate to the Imperial Government the copies of the despatches from the British Consul at Gondar, which were therein inclosed, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a note which I have received from M. Baroche, expressing the gratitude of the Imperial Government, for the kind assistance afforded by Mr. Plowden to Lieutenant Lefebvre, under the unfortunate circumstances in which the latter was placed.

I have &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 256.

M. Baroche to Lord Cowley.

My Lord, *Paris, le 18 Juillet, 1856.*

J'AI reçu la lettre en date du 5 de ce mois, par laquelle votre Excellence m'a fait l'honneur de me communiquer les copies de trois dépêches de Mr. Plowden, relatives aux malheureuses circonstances dans lesquelles s'est trouvé M. le Lieutenant de Vaisseau Lefebvre, et qui témoignent du secours aussi empressé qu'efficace qui lui a été spontanément prêté à plusieurs reprises par l'Agent Britannique en Abyssinie.

Je suis heureux, my Lord, d'avoir à vous prier de transmettre au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine l'expression de la gratitude du Gouvernement de l'Empereur, autant pour les démarches de Mr. Plowden qui ont sauvé notre infortuné compatriote d'une mort presque certaine, que pour la gracieuse communication que votre Excellence m'a faite de la correspondance de cet Agent, sur l'invitation de Lord Clarendon.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) F. BAROCHE.

No. 257.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 26, 1856.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to transmit to you, for your information, a copy of a note addressed by M. Baroche to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris,† in answer to the communication which Lord Clarendon had directed his Excellency to make to the French Government respecting the assistance rendered by you to the French Lieutenant Lefebvre under the circumstances reported in your despatch of the 15th of December last.‡

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 258.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received October 30.)

My Lord, *Gondar, June 23, 1856.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I went to Godjam, and remained with the King about a fortnight.

He intended to have marched at once against the remaining rebels in Tigré, but a fatal cholera attacking the camp so disorganized the army, that he was obliged to content himself with sending the ancient chief of Tigré to try his fortune, and will remain here himself till September, at which time he has promised to take me with him to Adowa. I cannot find my way to Massowah as things are at present, and I must try in the meantime to impress him favourably regarding our proposals. He has again expressed his intention of sending Ambassadors to England as soon as we reach Tigré, and continues to evince towards myself both respect and regard.

* No. 254. † Inclosure in No. 256. ‡ No. 244.

Should the King beat or disperse the remaining rebels, as I confidently expect he will, and live a few years, he will be able to pursue his plans for the reformation of the Abyssinian Government; if he does not succeed in effecting an improvement, no native of the country ever will. I spoke to him of vaccination which he says he shall be happy to see introduced. I proposed to him also to send his son to England, whether he will or not, I do not know. Respecting the Ambassadors, I shall of course follow such instructions as may be waiting for me at Massowah; I can arrange nothing positive until the King reaches Tigré.

The cholera is ravaging the country, and scarce any who are attacked recover; it last appeared here twenty-two years since, and the consternation it now causes is in proportion to the ignorance of the people, and the inefficacy of medical aid; all business, even markets, are suspended.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

1857.

No. 259.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 16, 1857.)

My Lord, *Gondar, August* 5, 1856.

SINCE my despatch of the 23rd June 1856,* all communication has been interrupted by a very heavy rainy season and by other dangers.

The King has remained in the ancient castle of Gondar. The south of Abyssinia, as far as Shoa is tranquil, the north is in the hands of a rebel chief, who has collected a large army in Tigré. As no military movements are possible until October, matters must remain in this position till then, when either the rebels will disperse, or one more battle will decide between anarchy and order—between a vigorous monarchy, or a feudal oligarchy and consequent barbarism.

I see the King frequently. He revolves many plans for reforming the Government that can not yet be executed; he pays me great respect, and firmly intends to send an Embassy to England as soon as we arrive in Tigré. I do not press him on the subject of the Consulate, or other Representative here of England, as I see that he is considering the matter seriously, and, I think, favourably, and it is my opinion that he will accede sooner or later to all reasonable requests; but it must not be forgotten that he yields in all things to the pressure of reason and not of fear, and that, as an absolute monarch, he has but little to wish for from us. His mind is principally bent on the reform and discipline of his army; in all respects a very remarkable man. Had he means proportionate to his energy and courage, he would do great things.

I think that a Resident without defined judicial powers would more suit his spirit and the constitution of the country than a Consul with such powers as have been accorded to us by Mahometan Princes; and this modification of our proposals would remove a great cause of not unreasonable jealousy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 260.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 16. 1857.)

(Extract.) *Gondar, October* 5, 1856.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the King is still in Gondar awaiting the fall of the River Takazzee; his Ras, or General, has chastised some remaining rebels in Godjam.

Tigré is occupied by Dejaj. Negoosee, that Chief who last year seized Gondar, taking advantage of the King's absence in Shoa;† two-thirds of that province are, however, in the possession of governors sent by the King, under the direction of Dejaj Kasai, the son of Sabagadis, who only await the favourable season and his orders to begin hostile operations.

The King is too much influenced by the Coptic Aboona and priesthood, but by his general character merits the support of all Europeans interested in the desire to civilise this portion of Africa by fair and gentle means.

The King continues firm in his intention of sending an Embassy to England, and will then probably write his ideas respecting a Consulate or Embassy here, and his modified acceptance of our proposals.

Until the country is entirely submitted to him, it is, as I before wrote, of small importance to secure his agreement to forms; his mind is daily inclining towards us, and he wishes for our assistance to discipline his army, and to introduce reforms into his Government.

I have cast my lot with his, and his very respect and affection for me have created numerous enemies among those who have so long flourished on disorder.

His failure would put an end to all hopes of Europe interfering in Abyssinia, save by the sword.

* No. 258. † See No. 242.

No. 261.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 23, 1857.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to convey to you his Lordship's approval of the line of conduct which you have pursued with regard to the present state of affairs in Abyssinia, as reported in your despatch of the 5th of October last.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 262.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received March 2, 1857.)

My Lord, *Emfras, November* 10, 1856.

IT is only a few days since that I have been able to receive copies of despatches from the Foreign Office to the date of the 27th November of last year; even these were torn open on the road, and escaped destruction by the merest chance.

With reference to that of the 16th February, 1855,† I have the honour to state that I have, as instructed, expressed to the King the satisfaction with which Her Majesty's Government has regarded his intention to prohibit the exportation of slaves from his dominions

His Majesty still retains this intention, though circumstances have as yet prevented the full accomplishment of it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 263.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received March 2, 1857.)

My Lord, *Emfras, November* 11, 1856.

HAVING learnt by your Lordship's despatch of the 17th April, 1855,‡ and its inclosure, that a Firman has been sent to Massowah, respecting the reception of Christian evidence in Mahommedan criminal courts, I have the honour to state that I now send instructions to my agent at that place to lay the same formally before the Turkish authorities.

If any special interpretation of the Firman should be attempted as respects the evidence of Abyssinians, I shall communicate it after my own arrival at Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 264.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received March 2, 1857.)

My Lord, *Emfras, November* 11, 1856.

I HAVE the honour to state that I have used, and shall continue to use, what small influence I have, to dissuade the Abyssinian authorities from religious persecution.

It is not to be expected however that my voice should be as effective as that of a resident in a native court of India, with armies at his back, and my strength is strictly limited to such powers of persuasion as I may possess. First, with regard to the persecution of Mahomedans. Up to this time the King has not forced a single individual of that creed to change his faith.

The King has overthrown the Galla dynasty, that partially ruled Abyssinia for seventy years; and whilst he was engaged in military operations last year, these Gallas from Worrahaimano burnt down several churches, the King then uttered the threat of forcing them to acknowledge Christianity, and either to rebuild the numerous churches destroyed

* No. 260. † No. 199. ‡ No. 207.

by them in the last 200 years, or to quit his territories. This therefore appears to me a political and dynastic question rather than a religious one.

The Gallas, who formerly invited the interference of Mahommed Ali Pasha, would, had they the power, uproot Christianity in Abyssinia; the King must therefore be regarded in his wars with them, as the bulwark of an ancient church, that has resisted through many ages the increasing attacks of Mahomedans.

The question of the expulsion of the Roman Catholic mission is a more delicate one, and since that mission has openly espoused the cause of those chiefs who still are in arms against the King's authority in Tigré, he is naturally more incensed against it. Unless defeated by an armed force, he will never consent to the residence of Roman Catholic teachers in his territories, In perusing my despatches your Lordship will not forget that I am writing from a country in a mediæval state, whose intercourse with the rest of the world has been more bounded than that of Borneo or Japan; and which should not be judged according to the standard of Europe in the nineteenth century; yet several of its institutions, and the general justice and humanity of its administration under the present King would lose little by the comparison with some modern periods.

He is an honest man, and strives to be just, and though firm, far from cruel; if he sometimes errs through ignorance or mistaken religious zeal, we shall I trust deal tenderly with such faults, rather than abandon Abyssinia to hopeless anarchy, to barbarous foes, or to foreign conquest.

While on this subject of persecution, I may inform your Lordship that some German Protestant Missionaries are now in the country: I do not know that they are doing much good or any harm; but the King allows them to ramble about where they please, and to distribute their books as they like without remark; this I believe is not allowed even in so enlightened a state as Sardinia.

There is no doubt that he would view with displeasure any public preaching, for the simple reason that he considers his Aboona and his clergy as sufficient for the religious wants of his subjects.

I regret that I see no way of persuading the King that the residence of a Roman Catholic Mission in his dominions, is compatible with his authority and the welfare of his subjects, and while I shall always strive to assimilate his ideas to those of England in such matters, I can hold out but little hopes of my success. I must solemnly declare myself irresponsible for the consequences to those gentlemen or their followers, who now aid the King's adversaries, and trust to the success of battles, to effect a lodgment in Abyssinia.

Should the King be defeated my task will be done, but it is my opinion that even their present friends will then allow them to remain in the country but a very short time.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 265.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received March 2, 1857.)

My Lord, *Emfras, November 12, 1856,*

ON the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 27th November, 1855,* I immediately placed a translation of it in the hands of the King, and requested from him a written answer to your proposals: I had also a long interview with him, in which I distinctly laid before him the consequences of a quarrel with Egypt, and how embarrassing it would be for the English Government to receive an Embassy from him, if he persists in hostile intentions.

A day or two afterwards he sent me for perusal the draft of a letter that he intended to write on these subjects: the substance of which was—"That he had hitherto given no provocation to Egypt, and that, while he reserved to himself the right, to demand hereafter certain territories, gradually wrested from Abyssinia, during the reigns of feeble princes, or the extinction of all responsible government, he promised to take no steps of a hostile nature until he should receive our reply."

The King further said that he trusted in God, who had raised him to the throne of his ancestors from nothing, and not in man, and that he did not wish to demand anything that he could not establish a right to, as belonging to his realm.

I cannot write decisively to your Lordship until I obtain the King's formal letter: it is my private opinion that he demands the Arab country on his northern frontier as far

* No. 228.

as the village of Sennaar, also Massowah, and the high lands of Bogos, Mensa, Halhal, the Hababs, &c., all of which tribes still speak the Abyssinian language: for the rest, that he values our friendship as far as we may assist him with arms and discipline, to subdue the Gallas and other savage nations to the south; and with artisans and engineers to improve and develop the resources of his country; by which means he hopes to become strong enough to consolidate a kingdom, long enfeebled by misrule and ignorance; and to leave the succession to his son: he may even ask us to guarantee that succession.

The King expresses much hesitation as to writing at all, until at least he shall have subdued the remaining rebels in Tigré; saying with that frankness that is his characteristic, that it would be a falsehood to style himself a king while any one so near disputes his authority, and while he cannot afford us an efficient and extended protection.

One thing is evident, that unless we do assist him to consolidate his power, all our steps are useless; as his death will otherwise be the signal for confusion, and worse.

Should we not in some measure meet his wishes, he will probably say that as our friendship offers him no advantage, so, he will not seek for it.

The question of the passage of the Embassy through Egypt, cannot be settled until I can obtain the King's letter, and forward it through Her Majesty's Consul-General.

I hear that the Patriarch of Alexandria is shortly expected in this country, viâ Khartoom; his advice will be received by the King with the greatest deference, and much good or harm may result from his suggestions.

This is the first patriarchal visit in the history of the country, and may have important results.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 266.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 3, 1857.

YOUR despatches to the 12th November last have been received and laid before the Queen.

With reference to the intimation contained in your despatch of the 5th of August last,* that the King of Abyssinia would be more likely to listen to the proposals of the British Government if the proposition for conferring defined judicial powers on the British Resident in Abyssinia were withdrawn, I have to state to you that if the King cannot be brought to recognize the Treaty concluded between you and the Ras Ali on the 2nd of November, 1849, on the ground that it confers judicial powers on Her Majesty's Consul, it may be as well to give up those powers; but you should remind the King that good faith should prevent his repudiation of that Treaty, and you should state to His Majesty that if he objects to any of its provisions he should propose modifications.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 267.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir *Foreign Office, March* 4, 1857.

WITH reference to the contents of your despatch of the 12th of November last,† I have to observe to you that you will have no difficulty in demonstrating to the King of Abyssinia that England cannot assist His Majesty with an armed force, but Her Majesty's Government wish to know confidentially from you in what manner they could prove their good-will towards the King, and aid him in the work of reform which he has begun.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

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* No. 259.

† No. 265.

No. 268.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March* 5, 1857.

WITH reference to my despatch to your Excellency of the 28th of November, 1855,* I transmit for your information a copy of a report from Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia,† respecting the internal affairs of that country, and its relations with the Vice-Royalty of Egypt.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 269.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received May 18.)

My Lord, *Debra Tabor, January* 15, 1857.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Patriarch of Egypt arrived here, and was received with much ceremony by the King, on the 27th of December last; for a fortnight all was apparent harmony, but I saw well that much distrust existed in the King's mind respecting this visit.

The Patriarch had no letters for me, nor did he admit me into his councils; he even went so far as to recommend His Majesty to dismiss Mr. Bell and myself from his country: this was his first indiscretion.

A deep hatred had long existed between the Coptic Aboona Salama and the King, the former being too imperious and unbending to suit a Monarch who exacts implicit submission from all; and the King had even openly accused the Bishop of aiming at sovereign authority. On the arrival of the Patriarch, the Aboona was imprudent enough to demand liberty for the King's numerous political prisoners, at a moment when half of Abyssinia is still in arms against him.

The Patriarch brought rich presents: a diamond cross, apparently some Turkish order; a thousand sequins, with which he requested the King to make a crown for himself, and other costly articles. Instead of in some measure accommodating himself to the material forms of Abyssinian worship, he spoke slightingly of their reverence for the Cross, of their prostrations to the Church, and of their saints and holidays; he pressed the King constantly to review his troops, and after a stay of only a week, he began to insist on returning to Cairo.

The King, who hates the name of Mahomet, and is a man of fervent, even fanatic, religious temperament, had expected to see in a Patriarch the Representative of Christ upon earth, one with his ideas wholly bent on religious matters, who would bless his efforts to extirpate Paganism and Islamism, and give spiritual counsels to himself and his subjects.

In proportion to the shock his sensitive mind received, distrust took the place of reverence, and he at last conceived the idea that the Holy Father had become a partial Mussulman, that his reviews were to inspect the King's weakness, that the crown or mitre was to be a token of fealty to the Viceroy of Egypt, that the diamond cross was to be worn by him as a mark of submission to that Pasha, and that the Patriarch was, in fact, the emissary of the Viceroy, with a view to the subjection of Abyssinia to the Mahometans.

Whilst the King was secretly revolving these suspicions, the Patriarch and the Aboona in concert took a step that confirmed them all to his jealous mind, and set in a blaze the smouldering fire—they wrote the draft of a letter that the King should address to Seyd Pasha, the contents being briefly as follows: "That the King was to send him forty mules for his artillery, and in return prayed the Viceroy to send all the Coptic soldiers in his service, three Turkish officers to discipline the Abyssinian troops, regimental bands, pioneers, sappers, engineers, bakers, doctors and medicines, cannons, and muskets." In this letter, moreover, the King addressed Seyd Pasha as an inferior addresses his superior. News at this moment also reached the King from the frontier Arabs that camels were collecting, that Turkish troops were advancing, and warning him that the Patriarch was an emissary of Egypt; the messenger even hinted at danger from poison.

* No. 229. † No. 265.

The King, comparing all this with his crude distrust, at once declared that the Aboona Salama wished to bring soldiers of his nation to usurp his throne, and that the Patriarch was a Mahometan who had engaged to deliver Abyssinia to Seyd Pasha. He had the letter publicly read; he stormed against the Turks, and ordered that the Bishops should be confined to their house and guarded, putting all their property under seal. It was in vain they represented that the phrase about the Coptic soldiers was an error in translating from the Arabic, and that they only wished to assist him in civilizing Abyssinia; the King had made up his mind, and declared that he would never permit the Patriarch to return as a Mussulman subject, and that Seyd Pasha might, if he liked, come and seek his messenger here.

By some good fortune, in the midst of this storm, the King preserved his respect and kindness towards me and other English here; but his suspicions being now fully roused, my position was too delicate to permit of open remonstrance. I, however, moderated the anger of both parties with a view to future reconciliation.

Mr. Bell and myself had nearly, I believe, succeeded in eradicating from the King's mind distrust of the English: he spoke his inmost thoughts to us; he called us his children; he purposed to send an Embassy shortly to England; to write a peaceful and honourable letter to Egypt; and to accept, if not a Consul, something very similar.

It is evident that hopes of an accommodation with Egypt are become more uncertain; and, according to my instructions, without it no Embassy can be received from Abyssinia; the King will, in that case, not accept any foreign emissary.

He states that he shall send letters to all the Christian Courts, explaining his conduct with regard to the Patriarch, and it would be desirable that we should bear them; but his mind is just now in so inflammable a state that I shall let the proposition emanate from himself.

Whether the Copts entertained ambitious views or not, I shall not pretend to say with any certainty; I think that the Patriarch is innocent of anything but the ambition of civilizing Abyssinia by himself, thereby to extend the power and limits of his diocese; the Aboona Salama has certainly always feared and disliked the King, and I believe, from some disclosures made by the Patriarch himself, that Seyd Pasha or his advisers had made him their tool to obtain a gradual influence in Abyssinia, thus, at least, to exclude Europeans, and trusting to accident for some pretext of future interference.

Whilst the King, on the one hand, vituperates the Patriarch, he thinks that his reign is specially blessed by the visit, for whatever purpose, and wishes at all risks to keep him.

It would scarcely be a misfortune should a quarrel with a powerful people show the Abyssinians their own weakness, and thus induce them to seek earnestly and more humbly for the friendship and support of their fellow-Christians in Europe; my mission will at least have had this good effect, that they will turn naturally to England for sympathy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 270.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received May* 18.)

My Lord, *Debra Tabor, January* 17, 1857.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the King and the Patriarch have been reconciled with much ceremony, and sworn to peace and friendship; the Patriarch is to return to Egypt.

The King does not the less believe that Seyd Pasha had some secret end to gain by the message, but whatever may be his future intentions with respect to the religion of Mohammed, his frontier questions, and his views of extended Empire; I dare say that he will write now a conciliatory letter to the Viceroy.

I trust soon to obtain the King's formal reply to your Lordship's despatch* on this subject.

Should his present avowed and written intentions be peaceable, I shall not consider myself entitled to pry too closely into his future plans; the rather, that while our assistance can aid him to vanquish all his foes here, and to consolidate his Government, it can hardly enable him to do any material damage to Egypt during this generation at all events, and the lapse of time may moderate his crusading spirit.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 228.

No. 271.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received May* 18.)

My Lord, *Wuns Aggee, February* 5, 1857.

SINCE my last letter the King called me privately and gave me the reason for his apparent indecision with regard to his answer to England, and respecting arrangements with Egypt.

He said that he had received sure information from the Arabs under Abyssinian protection, that the Egyptians in Sennaar were preparing a force on a large scale, for the purpose of invading the Abyssinian territory, and that thousands of camels were being everywhere pressed for the service. He continued, "You see my difficulties, and that these movements are concerted with the Mohammedan Gallas, and I must first play a game with these latter to prevent their joining the Turks, then suddenly fall upon the rebels in Tigré, and, having disposed of them, return to meet the Egyptian troops advancing on my frontier. How can I send friendly propositions to Egypt, when Seyd Pasha, under the cloak of amity, proffered by the mouth of the Patriarch, is thus veiling designs of conquest? I had," he said, "intended to send to you a letter declaring that which is the truth, that I had no intention of attacking the Egyptian territory, and at most should, perhaps, many years hence, have demanded some provinces unfairly wrested from Abyssinia." On Mr. Bell proposing that he should now send to England as his friend—"What!" he said, with indignation, "do you suppose me capable of fear, or that I will send at such a moment?" He added, that the Sultan had approved of Seyd Pasha's proceeding. I myself replied that I did not believe that the Viceroy would ever become the aggressor in the face of our protests, and while negotiations with England were yet pending. "Well," he said, "we will talk further of it in a few days; for your person," he said, "if man can do it, I will place you in safety at Massowah."

The King before he heard this news was on the point of sending a friendly message to the Viceroy.

Now, my own opinion is that, if armaments are being collected in Sennaar, it is for the purpose of attacking, under some pretence, those Arabs to the south of that province, who are, and always have been, protegés of the Abyssinian rulers, and with the present undecided frontier rights this must lead to a collision in which the Egyptian Government will be wrong; first, as proceeding beyond its present actual limits without consulting its European allies; and, secondly, even if aggrieved by Abyssinian subjects, in attacking them without due notice to the King, who is not a man to be treated as a barbarian.

Fasogli, where the Egyptians are now building a strong fort, was an Abyssinian possession at the time when Mr. Bruce visited Gondar, and it is certain that their designs on Abyssinia are as constant, however veiled, as those of Russia on Constantinople.

I may be wrong in my surmise, but I trust that Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt will be instructed to watch over these or similar movements; and I shall say that I think it will be time enough to abandon the cause of Abyssinia when the King shall have placed himself in a false position, either by finally refusing our alliance, or at least by some overt and unprovoked act of hostility, which cannot at present be in any way attributed to him.

While I regret the delay that has taken place in these negotiations, it is gratifying to find that nothing has shaken the King's confidence in English amity, or in me as its representative. Should any attack take place on the Abyssinian territory at present it will add to my embarrassments, but I shall not be able to attribute any fault to myself, whatever may ensue.

The Arabs attached to the two sovereignties have been accustomed for centuries to wage war with each other, and those on the Egyptian side have not abandoned their feuds, more than their Abyssinian brethren, but this cannot be fairly construed into a *casus belli*. If the Viceroy of Egypt be aggrieved, he should lay those grievances before the world, and should equally demand redress of his aggressor, and receive his answer before entering upon hostilities.

If Abyssinia, still suffering from domestic feuds and distractions, is attacked by a powerful foreign enemy, the King, who is making a noble effort to restore it to the rank of a nation, will be forced from his difficult policy at home, to die uselessly in combats where his great daring cannot enable him to encounter discipline and resources.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 272.

Mr. Bruce to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received May* 18.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, April* 29, 1857.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a note I addressed to His Highness the Viceroy on receipt of Mr. Plowden's despatches herewith inclosed.*

In the interview I had two days ago with His Highness, he alluded to the probability of a conflict between him and Abyssinia, and I warned him against any step which might be considered as other than a measure of self-defence. I have thought it advisable, however, to send him the inclosed note, in order that he may be under no mis-apprehension as to the opinions of Her Majesty's Government on the relations between Abyssinia and Egypt.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE.

P.S.—In reply to my letter, the Viceroy has sent to assure me that the reports alluded to in Mr. Plowden's despatches are unfounded; that he had made some preparations, called for by disturbances in Cordofan, but had no intention of molesting Abyssinia.

This is, I think, correct, for Saïd Pasha has very few troops in Soudan compared with the force kept in the times of Mohammed Ali and Abbas Pasha.

I shall convey to Mr. Plowden the substance of the Viceroy's message to me.

F. W. A. B.

Inclôsure in No. 272.

Mr. Bruce to Kœnig Bey.

M. le Bey, *Alexandrie, le* 29 *Avril*, 1857.

JE viens de recevoir à l'instant des renseignements positifs de l'Abyssinie qui m'annoncent que le Roi de ces pays se croit sérieusement menacé d'une invasion du côté de l'Egypte, à cause des préparatifs belliqueux qui se font sur la frontière du Senaar. Ces informations, bien ou mal fondées, lui sont arrivées au moment qu'il se disposait à entrer en relations d'amitié avec Son Altesse le Viceroi, qui auraient eu le bon résultat d'empêcher une guerre sur les frontières, où la délimitation entre les deux pays est très incertaine, et où l'état des populations fournira toujours des prétextes d'hostilités s'il n'existe pas une bonne intelligence entre les deux Gouvernements.

Je le dois à la confiance avec laquelle Son Altesse m'a toujours traitée de lui exposer nettement les sentiments du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique sur les rapports qu'il désire voir établis entre l'Egypte et l'Abyssinie. D'un côté, il a fait entendre au Roi Théodore que, s'il veut conserver l'amitié de l'Angleterre, il doit respecter le territoire de l'Egypte, qui fait partie de l'Empire Ottoman, son ancien allié. De l'autre côté, il est résolu à ne pas souffrir qu'on porte atteinte à l'indépendance de l'Abyssinie.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté est bien informé sur l'état de choses qui existe depuis longtemps sur la frontière, et il serait très heureux de contribuer par tous ses efforts à éviter, par un accord amical, les embarras qui naissent de l'incertitude où on en est à l'égard des limites des deux pays. Mais il verrait avec un déplaisir extrême qu'on cherche un prétexte, dans les disputes partielles qui résultent nécessairement de cet état de choses, pour une invasion hostile, et il ne manquerait pas d'en faire retomber la responsabilité sur celui qui en est véritablement l'auteur.

Je conseille fortement Son Altesse d'agir avec beaucoup de prudence dans cette affaire, et de ne pas changer les relations qui ont existé depuis assez longtemps entre les tribus là-bas et les deux Gouvernements.

Je vous prie de soumettre cette note à la considération de Son Altesse sans délai. Je m'estimerais heureux de pouvoir contribuer à la conservation de la paix entre l'Egypte et l'Abyssinie.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE.

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* Nos. 269, 270, and 271.

No. 273.

The Earl of Clarendon to Mr. Green.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 19, 1857.

I HAVE to state to you that I approve of the note addressed to the Viceroy of Egypt by Mr. Bruce, on the subject of the affairs of Abyssinia, and of which a copy is inclosed in his despatch of the 29th ultimo,* and I have to instruct you to use your best efforts for the promotion of peaceful relations between Egypt and Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 274.

The Earl of Clarendon to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 22, 1857.

I HAVE received your despatches dated respectively the 15th and 17th of January and the 5th of February,† reporting the visit of the Patriarch of Egypt to the King of Abyssina, and the distrust entertained by the King of the aggressive views of the Pasha of Egypt; and I have to state to you that I approve of your proceedings with a view to allay the excitement produced in the King's mind by the supposed objects of the Patriarch's visit; and you will assure him of the friendly feelings of Her Majesty's Government towards him, and of their desire for his welfare.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

No. 275.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 29.)

My Lord, *Dembea, April* 2, 1857.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatches of the 7th February, and 3rd, 5th, and 26th July of last year.‡

In your despatch of the 26th of July, 1856,§ is inclosed copy of a communication from M. Baroche to Her Majesty's Ambassador in Paris, respecting Mr. Lefebvre: and I must express my gratitude to your Lordship for having brought the matter under the notice of the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 276.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 29.)

My Lord, *Dembea, April* 2, 1857.

SINCE the date of my despatch of February 5,‖ I accompanied the King on a secret and rapid expedition that he made against the Wolla and Worrahaimano Gallas, entirely without baggage or incumbrance.

With his usual success, in the short space of a fortnight he expelled all his enemies, appointed Governors, and took fortresses without firing a shot; and in three weeks from starting he returned to his camp in Begemder.

The King is thus strengthening his power to the South, and I fully believe that his remaining enemy in Tigré will be disposed of in the same manner as soon as his steps shall be turned that way; this I trust may take place in June at latest, when his single rule will afford some hope of dealing with Abyssinia as a kingdom.

On the King's return he told me to repose for awhile at Gondar; and as I had repeatedly pressed him on the subject of an answer to your Lordship's letter, as referred to in my despatch of the 12th November, 1856,¶ at my last interview he spoke to me as follows:—

* No. 272. † Nos. 269, 270, and 271. ‡ Nos. 235, 253, 255, and 257
§ No. 257. ‖ No. 271. ¶ No. 265.

"I will not, and I cannot give a written reply as a King till these rebellions are settled, and till it shall be manifest that I am chosen as ruler over this people; for yourself you cannot doubt of my friendship; and, excepting that I will not receive a Consul—an appointment foreign to the institutions of my nation—of my friendship for your Queen, to whom I trust in due time to send an Embassy with you.

"You say that you will be considered perhaps in fault for the long delay since my return from Shoa: say from me—and your words should be as credible as my written letter at present—that I could not hitherto send you with any assurance of safety, as my enemies have become your enemies; and, moreover, that I have detained you as the trustworthy officer of a great Power to witness the issue of these events by God's help, not far distant, and to see whether my Saviour has truly ordained me shepherd of these realms.

"But, after all," he said, "Kings and Queens are to me but of little moment, and had I not loved and trusted you personally, I should long since have sent you to your country."

"For the Turks," he said, "if they attack me, perhaps Heaven will bless our arms against the infidels; if not, at least, we know how to die in our saddles."

I must now wait the issue of events, and trust that the King's presence in Tigré may settle the complicated struggles of Abyssinia, and enable me to write a decisive letter regarding his message to England.

That he should heartily enter into friendly terms with Seyd Pasha I hope, but I fear that our negotiations will, on that point, receive a temporary check, but by no means, I trust, a final one, some objects being nearly gained, namely, one Sovereign in Abyssinia, and a partial recognition that other nations exist and are of value besides Abyssinia; to which recognition jealousy ignorance, and fear have hitherto been an insurmountable barrier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 277.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received August 5.)

My Lord, *Dembea, May* 20, 1857.

SINCE the date of my despatch of the 2nd April, 1857,* the King has been still engaged in pursuing the rebels, and establishing more firmly his Governors in the Galla province of Worrahaimano.

As he never communicates his plans to any one, I cannot say if he proposes to cross the River Takazze into Tigré this year.

Whatever may be my impatience to see the end of these struggles, and thereafter to be able to define clearly the King's views with respect to European connection, I cannot but confess that he is taking the right road to Empire, by crushing insurrection in his rear and on his flanks, and thus gradually concentrating his whole force on the principal rebel who occupies Tigré.

The King looks forward to wide and undisputed dominion; to the foundation of a lineal and enduring Dynasty. It requires these lofty ideas, the persuasion of a religious mission, and the firmness of an extraordinary character, to enable him to pursue his way, unshaken by entreaties, by scoffs, by misfortunes, or by treasons; seeking for no assistance, curbing a mutinous soldiery, and never revealing his designs till the moment of their accomplishment.

If he does not cross to Tigré this year I am persuaded that he will take such measures during the rainy season that little will be left to do when the river becomes passable. In the meantime I see nothing left for myself but patience; and I trust that Her Majesty's Government will approve of my staying while there is a chance of success.

After the King's occupation of Tigré he will assuredly give a distinct answer to our proposals; and if, as I expect, he then sends an Embassy to England, it will be time enough to examine the value of his alliance, the prospects of its continuance, the dangers of a disputed succession, and the proper style and office of a British Representative here, if appointed.

Perhaps his refusal to come to a friendly understanding with Egypt and Turkey will then put an end to my efforts, until contact with a civilised Power shall have enlightened

* No. 276.

a mind abounding in natural vigour, but uncultivated. I have exhausted every effort to make him give me a decisive answer on this point at once, without success; I see, therefore, no resource in this case also but to wait till the completion of his conquest shall thaw this obstinate silence.

If, however, your Lordship, after perusing my despatches on this subject, thinks that I should rather demand an immediate answer, or permission to quit his territory, I am prepared to do so, though risking something with a despotic and fearless Monarch. His most favourable answer is not doubtful—he will at once politely dismiss me.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 278.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August 7, 1857.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 20th of May;* and to acquaint you, in reply, that his Lordship entirely approves of your intention, under the circumstances stated in your despatch, to remain for the present with the King.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

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* No. 277.

1858.

No. 279.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2, 1858.)

My Lord, *Dembea, September* 7, 1857.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of two despatches from your Lordship, dated the 23rd February and the 3rd March last,* referring to my suggestion as to the withdrawal of our proposal for Consular jurisdiction, and directing me, under certain circumstances, not to insist upon this clause as embodied in our former Treaty with the Ras Ali.

I have to state that I do not think it advisable to refer to this or any other matter connected with a Treaty, until such time as the King shall have completed his conquest of Abyssinia by the dispersion of the rebels in Tigré, and the occupation of that province; but that I shall bear in mind my instructions, and allude to this subject when, after the accomplishment of those projects, the King shall bring on the *tapis* his idea of an Embassy to England, and consequently his proposals with respect to his relations with Egypt—points on which both my instructions and our future relations with Abyssinia more immediately turn.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 280.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2, 1858.)

My Lord, *Dembea, September* 7, 1857

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 4th March last,† directing me to suggest to Her Majesty's Government in what manner it could prove its good-will towards the Abyssinian Monarch; and I beg to inform you that I have written to His Majesty, who is in Yedjo, a letter calculated to prove to him our friendly intentions, and also to elicit his opinion on this subject.

I have, however, little hope of an explicit answer till the conquest of Tigré, or rather the expulsion of the rebels from that province shall have been completed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 281.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2, 1858.)

My Lord, *Dembea, September* 8, 1857.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's despatch of the 22nd May last,‡ alluding to my account of the Patriarch of Alexandria's visit to Abyssinia, and the consequent ferment excited in the King's mind.

I have written to His Majesty, who is at some distance, an assurance of the friendly feelings of Her Majesty's Government, and of its desire for his welfare; and insisted again upon the pacific views of the Viceroy of Egypt, as detailed in a communication from the Honourable Mr. Bruce; reiterating my constant advice to the King regarding his warlike mania.

I shall forward his answer when received.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 282.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2, 1858.)

(Extract.) *Debra Tabor, November* 15, 1857.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I am with the King, who is concentrating his forces here. The only opposition to his authority worth mentioning is the Chief Dejaj

* Nos. 261 and 266. † No 267. ‡ No. 274.

Negoosee, who, now in possession of Tigré, unfortunately excludes us from the sea-coast.

Taking advantage of the King's long absence in Shoa, and subsequent events, he rebelled, and has collected all those disaffected to the King, or disinclined to order, under his banners. The King having, for his own reasons, allowed Dejaj Negoosee till now to strengthen himself in Tigré, it would be useless to deny that he is at the head of a very large force, and has become a formidable enemy.

No. 283.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2, 1858.)

My Lord, *Debra Tabor, November* 22, 1857.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the Patriarch of Alexandria has taken leave of the King to return to Egypt; the King has given him a large quantity of ivory for himself, and he is moreover the bearer of a letter to the Viceroy of a pacific and friendly tenor, accompanied by a present of horses and mules, in charge of two envoys.

The Patriarch has engaged, I believe, that the Viceroy shall in return send arms and cannons to the King; however this may be, I have no doubt that the mission will be politely received and answered; thus the obstacle foreseen by your Lordship to the transit through Egypt of a Mission from the King to Great Britain will be removed completely.

While for this reason Her Majesty's Consul-General will doubtless further the chances of a friendly reception in behalf of the King's emissaries, I must at the same time inform your Lordship that the Patriarch has not shown the liberal spirit that might have been expected from one bred so near the influence of civilization. Misled, doubtless, by the Bishop, Aboona Salama, they both strove to impress the King's mind with a jealous fear of all Europeans, wishing that the Copts alone should have access to this country. The Aboona even went so far as to state plainly to the King that the English only sought his friendship to undermine his power and conquer his country. Your Lordship may imagine the effect of two such authorities combined upon a mind which, though intelligent, is fanatically religious, and already impregnated with traditional jealousy of Europeans, and the additional difficulties thus thrown in my way.

As, however, so crooked a policy is foreign both to my nature and to the principles of the English Government, I did my best to secure for the Patriarch a safe return to his country, at one time doubtful, and to induce the King to send a friendly Embassy to the Viceroy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 284.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 2, 1858.)

(Extract.) *Debra Tabor, November* 25, 1857.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a letter from the King addressed to Her Majesty, with a translation, wherein he states his intention, as soon as his present embarrassments shall be somewhat settled, of sending an Embassy to England.

In this letter he carefully avoids calling me Consul, and he addresses Her Majesty in the most respectful idiom afforded by the Abyssinian language, and even as his superior, a consideration which he would, perhaps, show to no other person in the world.

His word thus pledged he is certain to fulfil, and I wait, therefore, as long as my precarious state of health will permit me, in hopes of bringing to your Lordship the news of the complete submission of Abyssinia, and to escort his Ambassadors.

He will send in the most friendly spirit, and we must see what effect our answer produces on his mind: he will give a friendly reception and protection to our travellers and merchants, but I do not believe that he will ever consent to the residence of Consuls here, or to the planting of a flag in any part of his dominions.

The manly pride of his character that will not risk the loss of an iota of his dignity may be seen in his present letter; as while surrounded by harassing enemies and endless difficulties, and scarcely yet believing that the Viceroy of Egypt is sincere in his friendly declarations, he still scorns to request our assistance, or to place himself under an obligation.

His disdain of wealth or gain is the more remarkable in a country where all, from high to low, are beggars.

In reply to my inquiry, "in what manner we could prove our friendship," he would

say nothing; but I would suggest that Her Majesty's Government send to Massowah at once 200 or 300 percussion muskets of the old pattern not now in use, with a quantity of caps to match, for his soldiers, and one handsome piece for his own use, with 50 lbs. of good powder, and some thousand caps, as an earnest of our intentions.

He is a man worth supporting, in my opinion, and his character, though jealous, affords the only chance of dealing peacefully with Abyssinia.

The arms, if sent, should be addressed to the King of Abyssinia, and care must be taken that no delay be caused by the Turkish authorities at Massowah, when the proper moment shall arrive for me to present them.

If any accident happens to the King, the gifts can be sold and the money replaced.

I make this suggestion, inasmuch as the King will value this mark of consideration the more coming at a moment of difficulty, and will regard it as a sign of true and disinterested friendship; nevertheless it must remain for your Lordship's consideration, whether there is sufficient reason for the step. The King knows nothing of my intention to propose it.

Inclosure in No. 284.

King Theodore to Her Majesty the Queen.

(Translation.)

THIS letter from Theodorus, King of Kings, of Ethiopia, is sent to the Queen of England, Victoria; may your health be preserved and well as mine is; praise be to God.

I have received and entertained Mr. Plowden, as your ambassador, in a spirit of friendship and goodwill.

I have not sent him to you till now, owing to my constant campaigns and embarrassments.

You and I are both the children of Christ, in whose name also I seek your friendship.

Now, therefore, if shortly by His power I am successful and fortunate, I shall send to you Mr. Plowden, accompanied by other ambassadors of dignity, with the news of my fortunes and success, that so our pleasure therein may be mutual.

No. 285.

The Earl of Malmesbury to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 8, 1858.

IN answer to your despatch of the 25th of November last,* which was received at this office on the 2nd instant, I have to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Government would be glad to do anything to testify their good-will towards the King of Abyssinia, and that they are disposed to carry into effect your recommendation as to the Present to be sent to His Majesty. But Her Majesty's Government wish to be informed in what manner you propose that the Present in question should be sent on from Massowah, in order to ensure its safe delivery.

I am, &c.
(Signed) MALMESBURY.

No. 286.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received August 9.)

My Lord, *Toramba, June* 5, 1858.

CIRCUMSTANCES have still prevented the King from putting into execution his projected campaign against Dejaj Negoosee in Tigré, but in the meanwhile he has not been idle.

He has made many and successful expeditions against those enemies in the South, and amongst the Gallas who are in league to uphold Dejajmatch Negoosee as their last hope of evading the vigorous sway of the King, he has made a severe example of several rebel chiefs who fell into his power, and, whilst keeping in check the Gallas, has driven Negoosee's force across the Takazze; he has also entirely repossessed himself of the important kingdom of Lasta, whose chief had rebelled and joined the enemy.

* No. 284.

In the meantime Dejajmatch Kasai, the lieutenant of the King in Tigré, has gained a decisive success over a considerable body of Negoosee's troops sent against him, and we are now looking forward with some certainty to a decisive movement against that chief which I have no doubt will be completely successful.

I remain still, the rather that the King always talks with increasing pleasure and eagerness of his intended Embassy to England, and has even several times spoken of sending his only son.

It is evident that our future relations depend upon the life and fortunes of one man, and are therefore precarious, but this is natural in a kingdom so disorganized, and, during so fierce a struggle for supremacy; but, unless I receive orders to the contrary, I must still consider it my duty to remain at all hazards, at any rate till the end of the rainy season in November.

I might stay at Massowah to await the issue, and, if nothing decisive be done, I propose to go there by the Sennaar frontier in November next; till then I strive to increase the King's friendly dispositions, that might cool in my absence, and to assist him with my advice.

My messengers are laid wait for in Tigré, and the rains now set in; unless, therefore, the King makes some decisive movement during this month, my correspondence will necessarily be somewhat interrupted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

1859.

No. 287.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received April* 13, 1859.)

My Lord, *Worrahaimano, July 5*, 1858.

IN my despatch of the 5th of June last* I mentioned that circumstances had hitherto delayed the King's intended campaign against the rebel Chief in Tigré.

In June, the Gallas of Wallo and others united under a chief of determined character: acting in concert with the rebels in Tigré they ravaged several provinces, and threatened to destroy everything as far as Gondar, should the King venture to absent himself.

As this Chief had assembled 50,000 horse, inflamed by the fanatic ardour of Islamism, added to their national love of plunder and slaughter, the danger was too formidable and too immediate to be neglected; and the King, leaving Dejaj Negoosee and his army to their future destiny, is now engaged in the arduous task of destroying this Mahratta foe; there being no chance of his proposed mission to England for months to come.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 288.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received April* 13, 1859.)

My Lord, *Wadla, November* 15, 1858.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 8th April.†

I have stated in my despatch of the 5th July last,‡ that the King is engaged in a furious war against the Gallas, and that Tigré, the readiest access to Abyssinia, remains in the hands of the enemy.

Shoa is submitted to the King, but we could not trust to the safe passage of fire-arms through the savage Adals, between that district and the sea, who have stopped even the caravan trade to Tajurrah.

Under the circumstances, I am of opinion that the present suggested in my despatch of the 25th November, 1857,§ should be sent to Aden, and there await a favourable opportunity of transmission to Massowah, when I shall be able to announce the King's successful occupation of Tigré.

Should this not occur, the loss will be little more than the cost of transport, which should be by a coal vessel to Aden round the Cape of Good Hope.

As to the difficulty with the Turkish authorities of Massowah, which is of course to be expected; I think there is but one course,—that Her Majesty's Government should distinctly state to the Porte, the friendly negotiations commenced with the Abyssinian King, and should insist on a free transit through Massowah on all occasions.

A Vizirial letter to this effect should be sent to the Pasha of Djeddah for transmission to Massowah, with a duplicate to myself or my agent; the nature of the goods being distinctly mentioned therein, as well as the general principle.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 286. † No. 285. ‡ No. 287. § No. 284.

No. 289.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received April* 13, 1859.)

My Lord, *Wadla, November* 20, 1858.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the King is still engaged in prosecuting the war against the Gallas alluded to in my despatch of the 5th July last,* with much vigour and success; but I cannot pretend to say with certainty when he will be disposed to turn his arms towards Tigré.

This can only be when he feels that his more pressing enemy is sufficiently enfeebled to insure the repose of those provinces that he must then leave somewhat unprotected for a time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 290.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received April* 13, 1859.)

My Lord, *Wadla, November* 20, 1858.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I hear from sources which, though not official, are entitled to consideration, that Seyd Pasha has determined on sending an army to Abyssinia for its subjugation, and is reported to have said that no Sovereign should dictate to him on this point.

I cannot believe that such a course could be contemplated without its being heard of by Her Majesty's Representative in Egypt; still less that it should not have been at once officially communicated to me: and least of all, that it should ever be carried into execution.

The British Government has repeatedly stated that it is determined to assert the independence of Abyssinia; and the last letter I received from the Consul-General conveyed the distinct assurance of Seyd Pasha that hostile movements against Abyssinia were the very farthest from his mind. These assurances I officially laid before the King.

As, however, it is just possible that Her Majesty's Consul-General may be blinded by a statement that these military movements have another destination, and as my great distance precludes the chance of rapid information, and makes me cautious, as much mischief may be done during the delay of my letters that no subsequent exertions can remedy, I have no doubt that a vigorous watch will be ordered to be kept over all movements of the Egyptian troops.

If Seyd Pasha has such an intention, it is certain that no overt act of hostility on the part of the King can be alleged as a pretext for the invasion; I can only attribute it to his having formed an idea that the King's ambition and energy, with the possibility of our friendly assistance to him in organizing his Government, may at some future day render him a formidable enemy. But the Viceroy is surely strong enough to abide the provocation that will render him blameless in the eyes of Europe.

As far as England is concerned, I think it would be an excellent thing to have in this part of Africa a Christian Sovereign, powerful and friendly; and I only wait the moment when the King shall have triumphed absolutely over his foes here, and shall send an Embassy to England, to propose our formal acknowledgment of his sway, and our intention to support it within all reasonable limits.

Should he hereafter refuse to meet our friendly proposals, and attempt to exclude us from his country, it will then be expedient perhaps that the Viceroy of Egypt should show him the power of discipline and the resources of civilization, thereby compelling him to have recourse to the friendly mediation of allies; but this can only be politic when Abyssinia is completely submitted to him,—otherwise with many Chiefs no clear or decisive negotiation can be entered into.

It is evident that should such a blow be given to his yet infant authority it cannot resist the shock, and Egypt must then possess Abyssinia as the lesser evil.

I doubt not, supposing the attack, that the King, embarrassed as he is by numerous and powerful foes, will still make a gallant stand. It is, however, better that at present he should not be exposed to this great, perhaps fatal, trial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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* No. 287.

No. 291.

The Earl of Malmesbury to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 18, 1859.

I TRANSMIT, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Plowden respecting the reported intention of Seyd Pasha to invade Abyssinia.*

I am, &c.

(Signed) MALMESBURY.

No. 292.

Sir H. Bulwer to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(Received May 21.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 11, 1859.

IN pursuance of your Lordship's instruction of the 18th ultimo,† I have inquired of Fuad Pasha whether he had heard anything of an intention attributed to the Pasha of Egypt of attacking Abyssinia, as stated in Consul Plowden's report of November last. His Excellency informs me in reply that the Porte had no knowledge of any such intention on the part of Seyd Pasha, and that he thought there was no foundation for Mr. Plowden's alarm. I shall, however, insist upon distinct orders being sent to the Viceroy to abstain from any hostile aggressions in that quarter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 293.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1859.

THE Earl of Malmesbury has received, and has referred for the consideration of Secretary Major-General Peel, your despatch of the 15th of November last,‡ suggesting that it would be an acceptable present to the King of Abyssinia if a certain number of muskets for the use of his soldiers, and a handsome piece for the King's own use, with 50 pounds of powder, were to be sent to him from England.

In reply, I am directed by Lord Malmesbury to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Government do not consider it advisable, under present circumstances, to issue muskets of any description from Her Majesty's stores; but that an ornamented rifle, with a proportion of ammunition, has been prepared for the King of Abyssinia's personal use, which will be forwarded to Aden to await your further directions.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 294.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(Received July 23.)

My Lord, *Camp, Ein Amba, February* 1, 1859.

I HAVE now been some weeks with the King, amongst the Gallas against whom the war still continues, trying to persuade him to turn his arms against Tigré. I must at the same time confess that he has so entangled himself in this part of the country that it is almost impossible for him to abandon it.

His military force is far superior to that of either of his enemies, but they have adopted a harassing system of tactics: when he attacks the Gallas, the forces of Negoosee appear in Gondar and Dembea; when he marches against these, the Galla Chief leaves his forests and appears at the head of 10,000 horse, threatening the Christian provinces in this quarter.

He cannot divide his army into two portions; in this country treachery towards the Sovereign, arising from dislike to order and good government, and other national causes

* No. 290. † No. 291. ‡ No. 288.

too numerous to recount here, is so common that either from fear or treason, that body of his troops where the King was not in person would be almost certainly beaten, and his position is still so critical that one defeat would be certain destruction.

The King therefore argued that he must remain till he had succeeded in destroying the power of the Gallas, whom he regarded as the most formidable foe, and he then thinks his success against Negoosee in Tigré certain, when he will be able to unite, if he pleases, 30,000 horse from Shoa and other provinces, and all the forces of Tigré, to his present army.

While I was obliged to acknowledge to some extent the force of his arguments, I proposed to leave on the Galla frontier an army of observation, not strong enough to fight, but to keep in check the Galla Chief for two months, while the King should proceed at once to Tigré, the success or failure of which expedition, according to my belief, would be certain within that period. I also hinted that my Government, tired of so long a delay, perhaps doubtful of the result, might recall me, and that I also wished to proceed to Massowah on account of my affairs, much disordered during four years' absence; correspondence also becoming daily more difficult, my road of necessity being by Sennaar.

To this he replied that he would offer no obstacle to my wishes, but that he thought I might be somewhat ashamed of returning to my country without seeing the issue of the struggle that I had so long watched, and that he also should be ashamed of sending me without the Embassy that we had mutually agreed upon. "Providence," he said, "wills that some delay should interpose between my coronation and my perfect success. I cannot just now abandon my people to the fierce Gallas, nor can I tell the hour and the moment when he shall please to permit me to march against Negoosee, but nothing save my death shall prevent me from placing you in safety at Massowah by that road; neither you nor I can control the will of God, and death ends all ties." It remains to see what effect my conversation has on his plans.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 295.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(Received July 23.)

My Lord, *Camp, Ein Amba, February 2, 1859.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 20th November, 1858,* I have now the honour to inform you that the Viceroy of Egypt has sent an Ambassador to the King with rich presents.

The Embassy has arrived in the Abyssinian territory. As he has sent with other things four pieces of cannon, I must conclude that I was misinformed, and that the Viceroy has no hostile feeling towards this country.

The King's mind may perhaps now become convinced that the Egyptians are not his natural enemies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 296.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(Received July 23.)

My Lord, *Camp, Wadla, March 1, 1859.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 1st ultimo,† I have the honour to inform you that the King has returned with his army so far. What his plans may be I know not: he is at present employing some Europeans and his soldiers in road-making; he pays them handsomely for their work, and says that he can only succeed in conquering all his foes by making wide roads, that he may pass with his army rapidly from one point to another.

The roads in Abyssinia are by nature very bad, and the fact of such an idea entering into his mind, and of his attempting to carry it into effect while engaged in constant warfare, stamps him at once as superior to his race.

No one is more averse to labour than the Abyssinian soldier, and by working with his own hands he has overcome even this repugnance.

* No. 290. † No. 294.

He was delighted with the operation of blasting, which he saw on a small scale; and these labours, encouraged by myself and Mr. Bell, will, if he lives, contribute much to make him seek the friendship of Europeans.

If he dies, I need scarcely say that we shall be looked upon by his subjects as national enemies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 297.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received July* 23.)

My Lord, *Begemder, March* 10, 1859.

THE King has established his camp in Walda, where I left him last week, and has marched back without baggage against the Galla Chief, who has appeared in force according to the plan contrived by him and the rebels in Tigré, as mentioned in my despatch of the 1st ultimo.*

The presence of the King in Wadla has driven away the troops of Negoosee that threatened Gondar, and his plan is now to occupy this central position permanently, and to march from thence rapidly against his foes in either direction, as occasion shall offer.

If he remains steadfast in this plan it offers, I think, a fair prospect of success; though no one can say certainly how soon he may march towards Tigré.

He continues, as an important part of this plan, clearing roads in different directions, as mentioned in my last despatch.

The Turkish Embassy referred to in my despatch of February 2nd is in Dembea.†

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 298.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received July* 23.)

My Lord, *Begemder, March* 25, 1859.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the King has returned from his expedition against the Gallas, as reported in my last despatch, without other material result than their temporary dispersion, and that he is now at Yfag, in Begemder, near the Lake Tana, where he proposes to receive the Turkish or Egyptian Ambassadors.

His camp is still stationary in Wadla, but he has with him about 15,000 men, and may perhaps be contemplating some attack in the direction of Semen.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 299.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received July* 23.)

My Lord, *Gondar, May* 27, 1859.

I HAVE the honour to state that the King, after having reached Gondar, in which neighbourhood he remained some time, has again returned to Wadla; what his intentions are with regard to the rebels in Tigré, whom, unfortunately, he thoroughly despises, I cannot say.

Having suffered from ill-health, sometimes severely, for four years, I thought it advisable that I should seek medical advice and change of air while waiting for the completion of his conquests, until which no effective negotiation can be entered upon, and which is, perhaps, more distant than I thought; though, in my opinion, no less certain.

I therefore took leave of the King in March, with the intention of proceeding, via Sennaar, to Egypt or Massowah, according to the state of my health; and had prepared for my departure, when I was attacked by a violent fever, from which I still suffer, and

* No. 294. † No. 295.

which has rendered it impossible for me to undertake now so fatiguing a journey. I am therefore forced to remain here another rainy season, or till about December next.

The King was very kind to me during my illness, and as I shall, I trust, leave him on the most friendly terms, I cannot, I think, do better than to await in England the issue of these struggles for power, when our negotiations can be resumed with more certainty and on more precise terms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN,

No. 300.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 30, 1859.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 31st of May last,* I am directed by Lord John Russell to inform you that the ornamental rifle intended as a present from Her Majesty's Government to the King of Abyssinia has been forwarded to you by way of Suez, but that Lord John Russell has, upon consideration, deemed it unadvisable to give directions for the transmission of the intended supply of gunpowder, as there appears to be considerable difficulty in insuring its transmission free from risk.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 301.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(Received September 13.)

(Extract.) *Gondar, June* 18, 1859.

I HAVE the honour to state that the King has gone again on a campaign against the Wollo Gallas, and will perhaps pass the rains in Shoa; I shall, therefore, probably have little or no communication with him for the next four months.

The troops of Negoosee already threaten Gondar; and my weak state of health rendering it impossible for me to travel, my own position will be one of sufficient danger.

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* No. 293.

1860.

No. 302.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received January* 7, 1860.)

My Lord, *Begemder, September* 20, 1859.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, owing to the rainy season and the circumstances of the war, I have had no communication with the King, nor have I ever known with any certainty where he might be. He now informs me that he has been engaged in destroying the Gallas in all directions, and that he has now returned in safety to a locality comparatively near.

The Gallas, however, still maintain a harassing war.

The troops of his adversary in Tigré, Dejajmatch Negoosee, I must now call him his rival, have pushed on to the neighbourhood of Gondar, and even further, and the war has become more envenomed and complicated.

It is impossible to say what an hour or a day may bring forth in these countries, but I see in these events only an additional reason for leaving the country until the struggle shall be decided, as until that I can be of no further practical use here.

The King appears now to be obstinately bent on exterminating the Gallas before proceeding to attack his rival in Tigré, and no one can foresee what time may elapse, or what events may occur, before the completion of this design.

Should anything important take place, changing these prospects before December, I shall immediately communicate it.

I was attacked, in March last, by a pestilence of a peculiar and formidable nature, that has desolated several provinces and still continues its ravages, and, in the absence of all medical advice, am but slowly recovering from its poisonous effects.

Should no political change occur here to detain me, I trust in December to be sufficiently strong to undertake my proposed journey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 303.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Malmesbury.—(*Received January* 7, 1860.)

My Lord, *Begemder, October* 5, 1859.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 31st May, 1859,* and to state that the rifle mentioned therein, and destined for the King of Abyssinia, has been received by my agent at Massowah, but no ammunition.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

No. 304.

Lord J. Russell to Consul Plowden.

(Extract.) *Foreign Office, January* 18, 1860.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 20th September last,† dated from Begemder, respecting the operations of the King of Abyssinia against the hostile tribes by whom he is harassed, and in connection with this subject, I have to observe to you that Her Majesty's Government do not consider that any special advantage is derived from your repeated visits into the interior. You will therefore return to Massowah, which is your proper residence, and you will not leave it, unless under very exceptional circumstances, without orders or permission from the Secretary of State.

* No. 293. † No. 302.

There are various matters to which your attention should be directed at Massowah.

The interests of that port are intimately connected with British interests in India, and, with judicious care and encouragement, it may become the outlet of a large trade between Abyssinia and Her Majesty's dominions.

No. 305.

Consul Plowden to Lord J. Russell.—(Received April 13, 1860.)

(Extract.) *Debra Tabor, February* 2, 1860.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 20th September, 1859,* I have to state that in addition to the severe illness under which I laboured as mentioned in that despatch, and from which I still suffer, I had the misfortune in November to break my leg, and, without surgeons or advice, have since been entirely incapacitated from labour, mental or bodily.

In the beginning of that month the King had suddenly fallen upon a rebel chief in the Kingdom of Shoa; had taken by assault the fort of Ankoburr, and having placed his own governors there, had just returned to Worrahaimano.

No. 306.

Consul Plowden to Lord J. Russell.—(Received April 13, 1860.)

(Extract.) *Debra Tabor, February* 3, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the King, having marched in six weeks upwards of 600 miles over a country without roads, and presenting great natural difficulties, has entered Tigré with 60,000 men, leaving about 15,000 on the Galla frontier, to make head till his return.

His adversary Dejaj Negoosee has retreated without firing a shot, and the King has been received with songs of triumph by the whole population of Tigré.

The dénouement remains to be seen. I hope soon to be strong enough to join the King in Tigré, and to report further to your Lordship.

No. 307.

Mr. Colquhoun to Lord J. Russell.—(Received May 11.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, May* 2, 1860.

YOUR Lordship will peruse with regret the annexed letter, and its inclosure, which I last night received from Mr. Barroni, the Consular Agent at Massowah, informing me of the assassination of Mr. Plowden, Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, when about to return to Gondar.

The letter from Mr. Bell, alluded to in Mr. Barroni's despatch, has not come forward from Jeddah. I shall instruct Mr. Barroni to request the Abyssinian authorities to place seals on all Mr. Plowden's effects, and shall suggest to him the propriety of his going himself up to Gondar to see to the preservation of the late Consul's correspondence and archives, and bring them down to Massowah to await the arrival of the person named by Her Majesty's Government to succeed him.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 307.

Mr. Barroni to Mr. Colquhoun.

Sir, *Massowah, March* 30, 1860.

I HAVE the painful task of reporting a melancholy event. Mr. Plowden, the Representative of England in Abyssinia, has been assassinated. On arriving close to the town

* No. 302.

of Gondar, and while crossing the River Kaha, he was suddenly attacked by 400 men, headed by Garred (a Chief under the orders of the rebel Dejaj Negoosie), and in the skirmish he received a mortal wound in his breast. Some particulars of this sad event are detailed in a copy of a letter herein inclosed, which was received on the 26th instant from Mr. Bell.

Please to inform Her Majesty's Government of this lamentable occurrence, and be kind enough to give me such instructions as you may think necessary for my guidance in the present emergency,

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. BARRONI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 307.

Copy of a Letter from M. Maderakal, Mercha, and Pashia Mohammed to Mr. Barroni, dated Gondar, February [?] 18, *and received March* 26, 1860.

My dear Mr. Barroni,

WE send you melancholy news. The Almighty always does according to His own will, and not ours. Your dear friend Mr. Plowden, your father and our father, was pierced with a lance by a brigand named Garred, near to Gondar, at the River Kaha, and after nine days he is dead.* The brigand took 1,000 dollars to deliver him up, which was advanced by the town of Gondar. Without this money he was determined to take him with him into the mountains, where he was going. We have lent that sum, thinking he could live and enter his country. We buried him in the King's Church at Gondar. It was a great burial, after the Abyssinian manner. Thirty of the clergy were present, besides all the population of Gondar. Pashia Mohammed, Mercha, and I, Maderakal, were with him when he was assassinated by Garred, who robbed us of our mules, money, and everything we had with us; and, moreover, we were severely bound together.

Dear Sir,—Now we have no time, but afterwards we will write you everything.

Your most humble,
(Signed) MERCHA.
MADERAKAL.
PASHIA MOHAMMED.

No. 308.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(*Received May* 30.)

My Lord, *Paris, May* 29, 1860.

WHILE I was with M. Thouvenel yesterday, the conversation turned on the death of Mr. Consul Plowden, concerning which M. Thouvenel had received details which may not be known to your Lordship. I requested his Excellency therefore to furnish me with a copy of the report which he had received, and he has most obligingly done so. I have the honour to inclose a copy herewith for your Lordship's information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 308.

M. Rousseau to M. Thouvenel.

M. le Ministre, *Djeddah, le 7 Avril*, 1860.

JE crois devoir porter à la connaissance de votre Excellence la nouvelle suivante, qui m'est parvenue d'Abyssinie par le navire le "Yeman," et qui m'a été confirmé par M. le Comte de Russel, qui l'a apprise à Massowah au moment de son départ.

Mr. Plowden, Consul d'Angleterre à Massowah, mais qui résidait depuis plusieurs années dans l'intérieur de l'Abyssinie auprès du Roi Théodorus, dont il était l'ami et le conseiller intime, est mort à la suite d'une blessure qu'il a reçue en combattant dans les circonstances suivantes. Mr. Plowden se rendant de Gondar au camp du Roi Théodorus, établi dans le Volkaïte, vers la fin de Février ou dans les premiers jours de Mars dernier, aurait été arrêté en route à une ou deux heures de distance seulement de Gondar par un

* Mr. Barroni states that Consul Plowden died March 4, 1860. See No. 336.

Chef nommé Garède, neveu de Théodorus, passé au service de Négoussie. Une ancienne querelle dont Garède et Mr. Plowden avaient conservé le souvenir haineur et vindicatif, aurait été, dit-on, la cause principale de ce malheureux évènement. Mis en présence de Mr. Plowden par une circonstance fortuite, Garède lui réclama impérieusement un tribut pour son passage sur ce qu'il prétendait être ses terres. Mr. Plowden s'y serait refusé; une rixe s'en serait immédiatement suivie entre ses gens et les agresseurs—rixe dans laquelle Mr. Plowden, après avoir tiré un coup de pistolet sur son adversaire sans l'atteindre, aurait reçu de lui un coup de lance qui le frappa au-dessus du sein gauche. Blessé grièvement, Mr. Plowden fut saisi et conduit aussitôt à Gondar, où une rançon de 1000 thalaris fut payée à Garède par les membres de la petite colonie Européenne. Gondar étant une ville entièrement soumise au Roi Théodorus, il y a lieu d'être surpris que les autorités qui y commandaient pour lui ne soient point intervenues aussitôt pour s'opposer au paiement de cette rançon, et au besoin pour faire arrêter Garède, qui y avait accompagné son prisonnier.

Toujours est-il que celui-ci ayant reçu les 1000 thalaris pût quitter la ville sans être inquiété, et se retirer sur son territoire.

Quelques jours après cet évènement, Mr. Plowden succombait à Gondar aux suites de sa blessure, qui, dit-on, n'aurait point été mortelle si elle avait été soignée aussitôt avec intelligence.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) ROUSSEAU.

No. 309.

Mr. Colquhoun to Lord J. Russell.—(*Received June* 6)

(Extract.) *Alexandria, May* 29, 1860.

A LETTER I have just received from Aden, confirms the intelligence of Mr Plowden's murder. Captain Playfair details the sad affair much as I had received it—he adds that Mr. Plowden's remains were interred with every honour in the Royal Church at Gondar and the King is reported to have announced his intention to take signal vengeance for the loss of his friend. Mr. Barroni writes to Aden in great tribulation, that his very means of subsistence are cut off by Mr. Plowden's death; and as it would be a source of great embarrassment to be without an Agent at Massowah, at present, Captain Playfair has authorized Mr. Barroni to draw on him for 100 rupees a month: he has alsosent a vessel of war to secure the late Consul's effects and papers if any such are forthcoming, and to obtain any further information that may have reached the coast.

I would venture respectfully to suggest that no time should be lost in replacing Mr. Plowden, and that we should also have an efficient Agent, whether Consul or Vice Consul, at Massowah:—under such, Mr. Barroni would do well as a subordinate. I hear a very good character of him.

No. 310.

Mr. Baring to Mr. Hammond.—(*Received June* 8.)

Sir, *India Office, June* 8, 1860.

IN forwarding the inclosed copy of a letter from Captain Playfair, Assistant Political Resident at Aden, I am directed by Sir Charles Wood to observe that he thinks it probable that Lord John Russell is already in possession of the information which it contains. As, however, the arrangements to be effected in consequence of the death of Mr. Plowden must be determined by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir Charles Wood desires, before he replies to Captain Playfair's letter, to know whether the proceedings of that officer are approved by Lord John Russell.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. F. BARING.

Inclosure in No. 310.

Captain Playfair to Sir C. Wood.

(Extract.) *Aden, May* 12, 1860.

I HAVE this moment received despatches from Massowah, containing the melancholy intelligence of the murder of Mr. Walter Plowden, Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia.

2. From a letter addressed by Mr. Bell to Mr. Barroni in Massowah, dated 12th March last, and from other letters to the same gentleman, the following appear to be the particulars of this calamitous event.

3. Mr. Plowden was about to enter the town of Gondar, *en route* to Massowah, when, on crossing the River Kaka, he was suddenly set upon by 400 rebels, under the command of Dejaj Garred, (a chief attached to a party of Dejaj Negoosie), and received a mortal wound, from a spear, in his chest. In this condition he was taken prisoner, and, on the rebel chief intimating his intention to carry him off to the mountains, Mr. Plowden was compelled to pay a ransom of 1000 dollars, besides his arms and effects.

4. He appears to have been taken by his friends to Gondar, which journey occupied six days, and in three days after his arrival there he died. He was buried according to the rites of the Abyssinian creed, in the Church of Gemja Beyt, with all the honours with which the Abyssinian Ecclesiastics could invest his funeral.

5. There appears reason to suppose that the assassination of Mr. Plowden was instigated by the rebel Dejaj Negoosie. The Emperor Theodore is much affected, and has announced his determination to exact signal vengeance for his friend's death.

6. I shall take steps to secure as much as possible of Mr. Plowden's effects and papers.

7. I would take this opportunity to solicit the earnest attention of Her Majesty's Government to the state of our relations with Abyssinia. At Massowah, Mr. Barroni has for many years acted as Agent for Mr. Plowden, by whom he was paid, and he has been of great service in keeping this Residency well informed of all that transpires there; but now he has neither official position nor means of subsistence, and I would strongly advise that he be immediately appointed Consular Agent at Massowah, with a small salary, pending any permanent arrangement which Her Majesty's Government may be pleased to make. In order to secure his services for the present, I will accept the responsibility of informing him that I have made this recommendation, and I will authorize him to draw upon me for the sum of 100 rupees per mensem, on the understanding that it is to be considered rather in the light of a gratuity than of a regular salary, and subject to immediate discontinuance, in the event of my proceedings not being approved.

No. 311.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Baring.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 15, 1860.

I HAVE laid before Lord John Russell your letter to Mr. Hammond of the 8th instant,* inclosing a copy of a despatch from Captain Playfair, Assistant Political Resident at Aden, reporting the death of Mr. Plowden, Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, and stating that he had authorized Mr. Barroni to take charge (*ad interim*) of the business of the Consulship, and had assigned to him as Acting Consul an allowance of 100 rupees a month; and I am directed by his Lordship to request that you will inform Secretary Sir Charles Wood, that Lord John Russell approves the arrangement thus made by Captain Playfair for the temporary care of the British Consulate until the permanent arrangement consequent on Mr. Plowden's death shall have been settled. Of this, Sir Charles Wood shall be informed as soon as possible.

I am, &c,
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* No. 310.

No. 312.

Mr. Colquhoun to Lord J. Russell.—(*Received August* 3.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, July* 17, 1860.

I HAVE only this week received a letter, now of old date, containing particulars of Mr. Plowden's death, and I have the honour to enclose a literal copy of it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

Inclosure in No. 312.

Mr. Schimper to Mr. Barroni.

Monsieur, *Adowah, le* 19 *Mars*, 1860.

IL m'est extrémement douloureux de transmettre une nouvelle qui vous affligera aussi profondement que moi.

Mr. Plowden a trouvé sa mort par un des Chefs liés à Dejaj Negoosie, qui, chassé par l'Empereur Theodore du pays de Sangallas, a continué sa fuite à Wogara. Probable est, que là il a appris l'approchement de Mr. Plowden, car ce n'est que par cela qu'il est probable et compréhensible qu'un de ses Chefs (Garred) ait pu se rendre à la rencontre de notre ami près de Gondar, pour se précipiter à l'imprévu sur lui. Défense n'était pas possible. Mr. Plowden a reçu un coup de lance à la poitrine ; la blessure était mortelle, néanmoins l'a-t-on enchainé pour le forcer à payer 1,000 thalers, condition à regagner sa liberté, laquelle il a reçue après le payement, pour mourir après l'accident neuf jours.

J'envisage la mort de Mr. Plowden, qui avait toujours travaillé pour le véritable bien de ce pays, comme un très grand malheur publique, touchant les indigènes comme les étrangers. C'est bien difficile à présent qu'en Europe on connaisse tout ce qui passe ici, et que l'on connaisse la vérité des faits ; car notre voix, comme venant des particuliers, n'a pas beaucoup de poids et n'ose pas se faire entendre par tout, car nous avons juste raison de craindre la puissance infernale de la part des intrigants répandant des mensonges sur ce pauvre pays. Plus fin et plus fort que nous, très exercés en machination, la victoire serait à leur côté, malgré que la vérité nous soutienne.

Il n'y avait que Mr. Plowden dont la voix avait pu se faire valoir, car lui était Consul et le seul ici. Autres Consuls et personnes ne connaissant eux-mêmes par propre inspection l'Abyssinie, n'en peuvent parler que par ce qu'ils apprennent par ouï-dires qu'ils (nouveaux dans ce pays) envisagent comme vrais sans l'être.

Le malheur de Mr. Plowden a beaucoup affligé l'Empereur Théodore, qui vengera sérieusement son ami. Dejaj Negoosie, à l'approche de l'Empereur, avait pris la fuite de Wogara à Séméné. Au départ de mon messager il allait se sauver à Sahéla, et l'Empereur était en train de lui couper la route en descendant de Wogara à Sabra.

En quelques jours nous en apprendrons le résultat.

(Signé) SCHIMPER.

1861.

No. 313.

Lord J. Russell to Captain Cameron.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 2. 1861.

THE Queen having been graciously pleased to appoint you to be Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, I inclose to you herewith Her Majesty's Commission to that effect.

I also inclose a set of general instructions prepared for the use of Her Majesty's Consuls abroad.*

You will be punctual in forwarding to this Department such of the returns required from you as you may have an opportunity of furnishing from the place of your residence and you will collect and transmit to me any further useful information relative to commerce, navigation, agriculture, and any other branch of statistics.

The salary attached to this appointment is 600*l.* a-year, and an allowance will be made to you for office expenses and house-rent of 300*l.* a-year. This allowance will be issued quarterly to you, or to your assigns, by the Paymaster-General, together with your salary.

The condition of this arrangement, however, is that you are restricted from engaging in commercial pursuits. It is not probable that any fees will be collected at Massowah under the Act 6 Geo. IV, cap. 87, and the Order in Council of May 1, 1855; but in the event of your having occasion to levy such fees you will collect them on account of Her Majesty's Government, in conformity with the instructions contained in a circular despatch dated the 8th of July, 1859, of which a copy is herewith inclosed.

I also transmit a copy of a circular instruction of the 12th of March last, relative to the payment by Her Majesty's Consuls of the office expenses of their Consulates during their leave of absence.

You are to understand that the salary and allowances now assigned to you are to cover, so far as this office is concerned, not only the expenses of your maintenance, but also all miscellaneous and office expenses of your Consulate.

A sum of 125*l.* will be granted to you by way of outfit.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Inclosure in No. 313.

Commission appointing Mr. Cameron to be Consul in Abyssinia.

(L.S.) VICTORIA R.

VICTORIA, by the Grace of God, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c., &c., &c., To all and singular to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting!

WHEREAS We have thought it necessary for the encouragement of Our subjects trading to the Dominions of the Emperor of Abyssinia, to appoint a Consul to reside at Massowah, to take care of the affairs of Our said subjects, and to aid and assist them in all their lawful and mercantile concerns: Now Know ye that We, reposing especial trust and confidence in the discretion and faithfulness of Our trusty and well-beloved Charles Duncan Cameron, Esquire, now British Vice-Consul at Poti, have nominated, constituted, and appointed, as We do by these Presents nominate, constitute, and appoint him the said Charles Duncan Cameron, to be Our Consul in Abyssinia; Hereby giving and granting unto him full power and authority by all lawful means to aid and protect Our Merchants and others, Our subjects, who may trade with, or visit, or reside within the said Dominions, and also to appoint Vice-Consuls at such Ports and Places within his Consular District, as may be necessary for the better protection of Our subjects trading with, visiting or residing at all such Ports or Places: To have and to hold the said Office during Our pleasure, with all the rights, privileges, and immunities thereunto appertaining.

* The Inclosures in this despatch are the ordinary Consular Instructions.

And We do hereby strictly enjoin and require all Our subjects to take due notice of this Our Commission, and yield obedience thereto. Given at Our Court at Saint James', the thirtieth day of June, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty, in the Twenty-Fourth Year of Our Reign.

By Her Majesty's command,
(Countersigned) J. RUSSELL.

No. 314.

*Lord J. Russell to Consul Cameron.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 2, 1861.

YOUR first duty on arriving in Massowah, which you will consider as the head-quarters of your Consulate, will be to make yourself acquainted with the general state of political affairs in Abyssinia.

Her Majesty's Government are so imperfectly informed in regard to what may have happened in that country since the death of your predecessor, that I am unable to lay down any very precise rules for the guidance of your conduct.

The civil war which prevailed at that time may have been brought to a conclusion decidedly favourable to one or other of the Contending Parties, or it may still prevail with the alternate success of either.

It seems to Her Majesty's Government undesirable that you should avow yourself the partizan of either of the Contending Parties if the contest is still going on. Whatever interest Her Majesty's Government may have in Abyssinia can best be advanced by the tranquillity of the country; but if the British Agent becomes the partizan of one side, the rivalry of European interests which, however disavowed by the Governments of Europe, is almost invariably found to exist on the part of their Agents in such countries as Abyssinia, will stimulate foreign Agents to declare a partizanship for the other, and thus a civil contest will be promoted and encouraged which would otherwise die out of itself, or very shortly be brought to a conclusion by the decided preponderance of a victorious party.

The principles, therefore, on which you should act are abstinence from any course of proceeding by which a preference for either party should be imputable to you; abstinence from all intrigues to set up an exclusive British influence in Abyssinia; and lastly, the promotion of amicable arrangements between the rival candidates for power.

Her Majesty's Government are aware that religious rivalry has contributed its share to promote dissension in Abyssinia; but such rivalry should receive no countenance from a British Agent, on the contrary, his study should be to extend as far as possible general toleration of all Christian sects, as being most consistent with the doctrines of Christianity and with sound policy. The British Government claim no authority to set up or advocate in a foreign country one sect of Christianity in preference to another; all that they would urge upon the rulers of any such country is to show equal favour and toleration to the professors of all Christian sects.

But although it is not desirable that you should engage in a contest with the Agent of any other Power for superiority of influence, or that you should openly exhibit suspicion or jealousy of his proceedings or of the influence which he may be supposed to have acquired, it will be your duty closely to watch any proceedings which may tend to alter the state of possession either on the sea-coast or in the interior of the country, and you will keep Her Majesty's Government at home, and Her Majesty's Governor-General of India, fully informed of all matters of interest which may come under your observation, sending your despatches under flying-seal, in the one case through Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, and in the other through the Political Agent at Aden.

In addition to matters of a political or commercial nature, you will pay particular attention to any Traffic in Slaves which may be carried on within your district, and report fully upon the same; and you will further avail yourself of any suitable opportunity to impress upon any native rulers who may directly or indirectly encourage or permit such a Traffic the abhorrence in which it is held by the British Government and the dislike with which any parties who may have recourse to it are likely to be regarded in this country.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

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* Laid before Parliament in 1865 and 1866.

No. 315.

Mr. Colquhoun to Lord J. Russell.—(*Received March* 18.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, February* 28, 1861.

THE annexed letter, with its inclosures, reached me a few hours after the departure of the last mail. Mr. Barroni, in his letter to myself, states that King Theodore has avenged the deaths of Mr. Plowden and his General, John Bell, by the complete rout of the rebel force; further that Dejaj Negoosee and his brother Tessamma, having been made prisoners, were, with most of the rebel Chiefs, executed at Tembien on the 12th of January.

Inclosure 1 in No. 315.

Mr. Barroni to Lord J. Russell.

My Lord, *Massowah, January* 23, 1861.

TO acquaint your Lordship with all that occurs in Abyssinia, and inform your Lordship how the affairs go on in that country, I beg to inclose a letter received to-day from King Theodore, who has forwarded it to me by one of his own servants; and as I have no authority to do what King Theodore requests from me, I beg your Lordship be pleased to honour me of the instructions which your Lordship deems best necessary for my rule.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. BARRONI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 315.

King Theodore to Mr. Barroni.

(Translation.)

In the name of the Almighty God, King of the Kings, Theodore to Barroni.

I HAVE the pleasure to inform you that all those who murdered (whose Chief was the assassin Garred) our friend Plowden, and killed Bell (Joanes), have been exterminated by me, not one excepted. I also entered into Tigré, where in the plain of Axum I have seized the rebel Dejaj Negoosee, defeated and exterminated all his army. You must come to Adowah as soon as possible, being anxious to despatch to our beloved and gracious Majesty the Queen of England some of my servants, to inform Her Majesty of all that has occurred here.

The servants appointed for this purpose will come with you on your return to Massowah, and you will despatch them to England.

No. 316.

Mr. Colquhoun to Lord J. Russell.—(*Received March* 18.)

My Lord. *Cairo, March* 1, 1861.

THE Rev. Mr. Stern, who passed through Egypt on his way to Abyssinia in Octob 1859, has just arrived here on his return home; he brings most interesting information on the state of the country, having been in constant intercourse with the King.

I shall take the liberty of giving Mr. Stern a letter to your Lordship, in the hope that you may be able to admit him to a few minutes' audience. Should Captain Cameron, recently appointed to succeed the late Mr. Plowden as Consul in Abyssinia, not yet have left England, I would venture to recommend that he should not start till he has had an opportunity of seeing and conversing with Mr. Stern, who may be expected in London about the first days of April.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

No. 317.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Cameron.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 20, 1861.

I AM directed by Lord John Russell to instruct you to defer your departure for your post until after the arrival of the Rev. Mr. Stern, who is now returning to England from Abyssinia, where he has been since 1859. Mr. Stern is expected to arrive in London early in April.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 318.

Acting Consul Barroni to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 23.)

My Lord, *Massowah, February* 15, 1861.

WITH reference to my respectful letter of the 23rd of January ultimo,* I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I am in expectation of being again called by King Theodore, who wishes to have an interview with me at Adowah; and if your Lordship has no objection, I think to comply with the Abyssinian Ruler's desire. My absence shall be no longer than twenty-five days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. BARRONI.

No. 319.

Mr. Murray to Acting Consul Barroni.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 11, 1861.

I AM directed by Lord J. Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th of February last, requesting permission to proceed to Adowah, in the event of King Theodore desiring to have an interview with you at that place; and I am to state to you, in reply, that his Lordship has no objection to your doing so.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 320.

Lord de Grey and Ripon to Mr. Hammond.—(Received April 13.)

India Office, April 12, 1861.

LORD DE GREY AND RIPON presents his compliments to Mr. Hammond, and forwards for the information of Lord John Russell the accompanying papers received from the Bombay Government, relative to the refusal of King Theodore to be re-imbursed the sum he had advanced for the ransom of the late Mr. Plowden, Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, and regarding the presentation of certain gifts to the King as an equivalent.

Inclosure 1 in No. 320.

The Governor of Bombay in Council to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for India.

Right Honourable Sir, *Bombay, March* 13, 1861.

WITH reference to the second paragraph of our secret despatch dated the 22nd June last, we have the honour of transmitting for the information of Her Majesty's Government, the accompanying copy of a letter received through the Acting Political Resident at Aden, from Mr. Barroni, of Massowah, intimating that King Theodore had declined to be reimbursed for the ransom paid by him on account of the late Mr. Plowden.

As an acknowledgment for his liberal and friendly conduct in connection with

* Inclosure 1 in No. 315.

Mr. Plowden, we propose to present King Theodore with a suitable and acceptable gift, the selection of which we have entrusted to Brigadier Coghlan.

We beg at the same time to forward copies of two letters from the Acting Political Resident at Aden, communicating important intelligence regarding the affairs of Abyssinia.

We have, &c.
(Signed) G. CLERK.
W. MANSFIELD.
H. W. REEVES.
W. E. FRERE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 320.

Captain Playfair to the Chief Secretary to the Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, January* 12, 1861.

WITH reference to the concluding paragraph of my letter to your address dated 24th May last, I forward in original, a letter which I have this day received from Mr. Barroni, at Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. L. PLAYFAIR.

Inclosure 3 in No. 320.

Acting Consul Barroni to Captain Playfair.

Sir, *Massowah, November* 21, 1860.

I BEG to inform you that about the end of June last King Theodore was acquainted by me with your kind exertion to engage the Government to pay the sum disbursed by His Majesty for Mr. Plowden's ransom; and on the 18th instant I received from him the following reply: "I gave that money for my friend and not as a loan, and of course I cannot accept it; inform Captain Playfair of that. I write to you on this purpose, and present him my respects."

I beg you to send a copy of this note to A. E. Anderson, Esquire, Acting Chief Secretary to Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. BARRONI.

Inclosure 4 in No. 320.

Resolution by the Honourable Board, dated February 6, 1861.

THAT copy of this letter be forwarded to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India with reference to previous correspondence. The Honourable the Governor in Council would suggest the presentation of some gift to King Theodore as an acknowledgment for his liberal and friendly conduct in connection with the late Mr. Plowden. Brigadier Coghlan may be requested to state what would in his opinion be a suitable and acceptable gift.

(Signed) W. MANSFIELD.
H. W. REEVES.
W. E. FRERE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 320.

The Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay, to Captain Playfair.

Sir, *Bombay Castle, February* 12, 1861.

I AM directed by the Honourable the Governor in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th January last, inclosing a letter from Mr. Barroni, relative to the money paid by King Theodore for the ransom of the late Mr. Plowden, and to inform you that copies will be forwarded to the Government of India and to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

2. I am at the same time desired to intimate to you that Brigadier Coghlan, who is now in Bombay, has been requested to favour Government with his opinion as to what would be a suitable and acceptable gift to King Theodore as an acknowledgment of his liberal and friendly conduct in connection with the late Mr. Plowden.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. ANDERSON.

Inclosure 6 in No. 320.

The Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay, to Brigadier Coghlan.

Sir, *Bombay Castle, February* 12, 1861.

I HAVE the honour, by direction of the Honourable the Governor in Council, to forward copies of the letters noted in the margin* from Captain R. L. Playfair, Assistant Political Resident in charge of the Residency at Aden, and to request that you will have the goodness to favour Government with your opinion as to what would be a suitable and acceptable gift to King Theodore as an acknowledgment of his liberal and friendly conduct in connection with the late Mr. Plowden.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. ANDERSON.

Inclosure 7 in No. 320.

The Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay, to the Secretary to the Government of India.

Sir, *Bombay Castle, February* 12, 1861.

WITH reference to paragraph 2 of the Government letter of the 20th of June last, relative to the repayment of the money given by King Theodore for the ransom of the late Mr. Plowden, I am directed by the Honourable the Governor in Council, to forward for submission to the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India in Council, copy of a communication with accompaniment, from the Assistant Political Resident in charge of the Residency at Aden, dated the 12th of January last,

2. In forwarding this communication I am desired to state that Brigadier Coghlan, who is now in Bombay, has been requested to favour Government with his opinion as to what would be a suitable and acceptable gift to King Theodore, as an acknowledgment of his liberal and friendly conduct in connection with the late Mr. Plowden.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. ANDERSON.

Inclosure 8 in No. 320.

Brigadier Coghlan to the Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Bombay, February* 26, 1861.

IN reply to your letter No. 532 of 1861, I have the honour to state that after careful enquiry, I believe the following articles would form a suitable and appropriate gift to King Theodorus, in recognition of his generous conduct towards the late Mr. Plowden, Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia. The articles are undoubtedly the best adapted for the purpose procurable in Bombay; they are as follows:—

1. One large and one small gold embroidered carpet of Indian manufacture. Price demanded for both, 1,800 rupees.
2. Two embossed silver cups (Surat make), 150 rupees.
3. A Bohemian glass sherbet service, richly gilt, 500 rupees.

The above articles are in the warehouse of Mr. Jaffer Suliman. Should Government decide on procuring them for the purpose indicated, I would suggest that a competent judge be consulted on the price demanded for the carpets.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. M. COGHLAN.

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* 1. Dated May 24, No. 79 of 1860 (see No. 310.) 2. Dated January 12, No. 10 of 1861, with Inclosure.

Inclosure 9 in No. 320:

The Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay, to the Rev. G. P. Badger, M.A.

Sir, *Bombay Castle, March* 6, 1861.

I HAVE the honour by direction of the Honourable the Governor in Council, to acknowledge the receipt of the letter from Brigadier W. M. Coghlan, dated the 26th of February last, and to inform you that the articles therein-mentioned as a suitable and appropriate gift to King Theodorus are approved.

2. I am at the same time desired to state that the Oriental Translator to Government will be requested to have the carpets appraised.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. ANDERSON.

Inclosure 10 in No. 320.

Resolution.

ORDERED, that the accompanying copy of a letter from Brigadier W. M. Coghlan, dated the 26th of February last, be transferred to the Persian Department, with a request that the carpets may be appraised.

Bombay Castle, March 6, 1861.

(Signed) H. L. ANDERSON, *Chief Secretary.*

Inclosure 11 in No. 320.

Captain Playfair to the Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay

Sir, *Aden, February* 5, 1861.

YESTERDAY I received letters from Massowah up to the 19th ultimo. They contain the highly gratifying information that the rebel chief and French protégé, Dejaj Negoosie, has been taken prisoner by King Theodore, as also has the brother of the former, by name Tassamma.

2. Several other chiefs of note have been either killed or captured, and one, by name Alaka Guahra Mikael, whom my informant styles "the greatest liar and scoundrel in Abyssinia," has had his tongue cut out by order of the Emperor.

3. An amnesty has been granted to the troops of Dejaj Negoosie.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. L. PLAYFAIR.

Inclosure 12 in No. 320.

Captain Playfair to the Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, February* 13, 1861.

IN continuation of my letter dated 5th instant, I have to report, for the information of his Excellency the Governor in Council, that the rebel Chief Dejaj Negoosie was executed by the King of Abyssinia on the 12th ultimo at Tembien.

2. Mr. Barroni has forwarded to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, under flying seal, to me, an autograph letter from the King, wherein His Majesty remarks, "All those who murdered our friend Plowden, and killed Bell, have been exterminated by me, not one has escaped. I also entered Tigré, where, in the plain of Axum, I seized the rebel Dejaj Negoosie, and defeated and exterminated his army."

2. This letter is dated previous to the execution of Negoosee.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. L. PLAYFAIR.

Inclosure 13 in No. 320.

The Under-Secretary to the Government of India to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay.

Sir, *Fort William, February* 27, 1861.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 12th instant. and in reply to inform you that the Governor-General in Council entirely approves of the proceedings of the Bombay Government in regard to the instructions issued to Brigadier Coghlan, and desires that the acknowledgments of his Excellency in Council may be conveyed to His Majesty King Theodore for his liberal and friendly conduct in connection with the late Mr. Plowden.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. U. AITCHISON.

No. 321.

Acting Consul Barroni to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 19.)

My Lord, *Massowah, June* 25, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt on the 14th instant of your Lordship's despatch, dated the 11th of April last,* and in reply I beg humbly to state that I will avail myself of your Lordship's kind permission to proceed to Adowah, when King Theodore returns to that place to have an interview with him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. BARRONI.

No 322.

Earl Russell to Consul Cameron.†

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 13, 1861.

THE Queen having learnt that the King of Abyssinia paid a ransom for the late Mr. Consul Plowden, and Her Majesty being desirous of making some acknowledgment for the kindness shown by the King to one of her officers, she has directed that a suitable present should be sent through you to the King; and I therefore transmit to you a rifle and a pair of revolver pistols, which you will deliver to the King as soon after your arrival in Abyssinia as you have an opportunity of doing so.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 323.

Acting Consul Barroni to Earl Russell.—(Received November 14.)

My Lord, *Massowah, September* 8, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that, according to intelligence received from Abyssinia, it is probable that King Theodore will send, at the end of October next, presents and an Abyssinian Embassy to Her Majesty; and begging most respectfully to refer you to my humble note of the 23rd January last,‡ in which was inclosed a letter received from King Theodore, regarding the subject in question, I am still in expectation of your Lordship's instructions for my rule and guidance.

I have. &c.
(Signed) R. BARRONI.

No. 324.

Mr. Murray to Consul Cameron.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 16, 1861.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to state to you that he has received a despatch from Acting Consul Barroni, dated Massowah the 8th September last,§ reporting that it was

* No. 319. † Laid before Parliament, 1865. ‡ Inclosure 1 in No. 315. § No. 323.

probable that the King Theodore would send a mission to this country, and requesting to be furnished with instructions upon the subject; and I am to state to you that his Lordship cannot give any instructions until he receives further information as to such mission.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 325.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(*Received November* 20.)

My Lord, 14, *St. James's Square, London, November* 16, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's despatch of the 13th instant, accompanying a present of a rifle and revolvers for the King of Abyssinia, to express my regret that a parting visit to my friends prevented my replying to it sooner; and to state that I am in readiness to leave England immediately.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 326.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(*Received November* 20.)

My Lord, 14, *St. James's Square, November* 18, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's despatch of the 16th instant,* informing me of a projected mission of the King of Abyssinia to this country, and to assure your Lordship that I shall lose no time, after my arrival in Abyssinia, in obtaining information on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

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* No. 324.

1862.

No. 327.

Earl Russell to Consul Cameron.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 3, 1862.

THE Duke of Saxe Coburg Gotha having intimated to Her Majesty's Minister at Dresden his intention to make an excursion to Egypt and Abyssinia, I have received the Queen's commands to intimate to you Her Majesty's desire that every attention shall be paid to His Royal Highness, who will be accompanied by the Duchess, and a suite of sixteen persons.

Their Royal Highnesses will probably leave Suez for Massowah about the 12th of March in Her Majesty's ship "Odin," and you will make preparations for their reception, and secure such accommodation as may be in your power to provide for them, and you will also procure such guards as may be requisite for the Duke during an excursion which His Royal Highness proposes to make in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 328.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received February* 19.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, February* 10, 1862.

YOUR Lordship will observe by the inclosed letter from Mr. Barroni, at Massowah, that the Kaimakam of that place has formally taken possession of the Island of Disseh, and hoisted thereon the Turkish flag.

The Red Sea and Indian Telegraph Company may perhaps require a station to be on this island, which has many advantages, those of wood, water, and proximity to the Consular residence at Massowah. It would be premature to take any steps now until the direction to be ultimately carried out by the cable be decided on.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

Inclosure in No. 328.

Mr. Barroni to Earl Russell.

(Extract). *Massowah, December* 14, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that on the 1st instant this Kaimakam has sent a Governor and some soldiers to Disseh, to take formally possession of that island and neighbourhoods, and that to-day the Turkish flag has been hoisted in that place.

No. 329.

*Earl Russell to Consul Cameron.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 22, 1862.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 13th of November last,† transmitting some articles as presents from the Queen to King Theodore of Abyssinia as an acknow-

* Laid before Parliament, 1866.

† No. 322.

ledgment of his kindness in ransoming the remains of the late Mr. Plowden, I have to acquaint you that it has since appeared to me to be desirable that I should address a letter to King Theodore in Her Majesty's name, to accompany the presents, and at the same time to announce your appointment, and introduce you to the King.

I accordingly inclose a letter which I have written to King Theodore, and which you will deliver to him, accompanied by suitable expressions of friendship on the part of Her Majesty's Government. If the present should have been given to him before you receive this despatch, you will still deliver my letter, and make the best explanation in your power of its not having arrived sooner.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

Inclosure in No. 329.

*Earl Russell to King Theodore of Abyssinia.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, London, February* 20, 1862.

THE Queen my Sovereign has been informed by her servants in the East of the exertions which your Highness kindly made to recover the remains of her late Consul, Mr. Plowden, and of your generosity in declining to accept re-payment of the sum of money which you paid for that purpose. Her Majesty commands me to assure your Highness that she views your conduct in regard to this affair as a proof of friendship towards herself and the British nation, of which she is duly sensible.

In order more particularly to manifest Her Majesty's thankfulness for these your Highness' services, and to show her regard and friendship for you personally, Her Majesty's requests your acceptance of a rifle and a pair of revolver pistols, as a present from herself. Her Majesty has intrusted these articles to Captain Charles Duncan Cameron, whom she has appointed her Consul in Abyssinia, as the successor of the late Mr. Plowden, and who has lately taken his departure for his post; and I take this opportunity of introducing him to your Highness, and of requesting your protection and favour in his behalf. He is well acquainted with all that concerns the interests of both countries, and will, I am confident, do all in his power to make himself acceptable to your Highness, and to promote your welfare.

I thank your Highness for the letter which you addressed to me, informing me of the steps which you had taken to punish the men who murdered Mr. Plowden and Mr. Bell;† and with my best wishes for your uninterrupted health and happiness, I recommend you to the protection of the Almighty.

Your faithful Friend,
(L.S. The large Signet.) (Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 330.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received April 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, February* 9, 1862.

I HAVE the honour to report that, leaving England on the 19th November last, I reached Alexandria, viâ Trieste, on the 3rd December, where I was detained by the non-arrival of my heavy baggage until the 17th December, and further at Cairo by the breaking down of the intermediate steamer, until the 5th of January, when I sailed from Suez, and arrived at Aden on the 13th of the same month.

The schooner "Mahé," of Her Majesty's Indian navy was there placed at my disposal, and reported ready to sail on the 23rd January.

She brought me to my post at Massowah this day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1866.

† This letter was addressed to Mr. Barroni, and forwarded by him to Earl Russell, January 23, 1861. See No. 315.

No. 331.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received April 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, February 10, 1862.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I took over the archives of this Consulate to-day from Mr. Barroni, who has retired from further connection with the office.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 332.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received April 3.)

My Lord, *Massowah, February 11, 1862.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I this day wrote to King Theodore of Abyssinia, who is at present at Borremadala, thirty days' journey from Gondar, stating that I am charged with presents for him, which I have been ordered to deliver in person.*

I propose to start at the end of March for Gondar, and thence to follow up the further movements of the King.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 333.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received May 5.)

(Extract.) *Massowah, March 20, 1862.*

YOUR Lordship will already have been made aware that the Turkish flag has been planted at Dessee, Adoolis, and Edd, and that the Turkish government intends to extend its hold on the coast to Babelmandeb.

Governors have been appointed at Dessee and Adoolis, and a Sheikh of the country placed in power at Edd.

It is my duty to point out that one of the results of this firm establishment of Turkey along the African coast will be an extension of the slave trade, of which it has so long been the seat—and a strengthening of the hands of the Mussulman population on the Abyssinian frontier.

The Governor, in fact, of this place, who has so far carried out the above plans, meditates planting military colonies along the frontier, aud furnishing them with several thousand fire-arms from Djeddah, and whether this be done or not, his general animus cannot be mistaken.

It is the advancement of Turkey at the expense of Abyssinia.

The officers of King Theodore, on the other hand, are watching these movements with jealousy. There are at this moment here emissaries from his Viceroy at Adowa, who have been specially ordered to pass along the coast, and report on the proceedings of the Turks.

The question, indeed, touches King Theodore doubly—first, as the avowed champion of Coptic Christendom, and more materially, on account of the salt mines of Taltal, whence the Abyssinians of the Interior draw the rock salt which forms their circulating medium, as well as the sulphur mines in the same neighbourhood, which they use for manufacturing powder.

Both of these lie in dangerous proximity to Adoolis.

That King Theodore entertains the determination, sooner or later, of overruning the Turkish possessions on the Coast is matter of certainty.

But a step so purely mischievous, impossible as it is for him to fix himself on the coast, might be rendered more difficult, in the face of remonstrance, if the pretensions of the Turks were placed within proper bounds, with the avowed object of preventing collision.

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* No. 329

No. 334.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(*Received May* 5.)

My Lord, *Massowah, March* 20, 1862.

I HAVE the honour to state that, in starting for the interior, I leave Mr. Edward Walker, a gentleman who has accompanied me, in charge of the Consulate at Massowah.

He has instructions to convey any information of interest to Captain Playfair at Aden, and to Mr. Colquhoun at Alexandria, to fulfil any less responsible duties of the office, during my absence, and to make notes on the Slave Trade along the coast.

The Pasha here has consented for the present to recognize him as my *locum tenens;* but it would be desirable, on all points, in a country like this, if he were invested with an official position.

I would beg most respectfully to solicit that he be either appointed Vice-Consul, or that I might be placed in a position, in some other manner, to present him to the authorities as my representative and assistant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 335.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(*Received May* 14.)

My Lord, *Massowah, April* 26, 1862.

I HAVE the honour to report that His Royal Highness the Duke of Saxe-Coburg leaves Massowah to-day.

I accompanied His Highness on his expedition into Abyssinia.

Owing principally to the influence established by my predecessor, His Highness was cordially received by the wild frontier tribes subject to the King of Abyssinia, in return for which he has commissioned me to present a letter and Decoration to that Potentate.

Supported as these will be by your Lordship's letter, written in Her Majesty's name, together with presents from Her Majesty herself, and coming, as they do, from so near a connection of the Throne as His Royal Highness, I can only hope that they, no less than His Highness' visit, which has been most propitious, will aid me materially in my efforts to bring this long-disturbed country under our civilizing influence.

There is the more reason to trust that this may be the case, as the King is at pres nt specially desirous of direct recognition in Europe, and, as I am now well assured, is quite able to appreciate the value of an European order.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 336.

Mr. Barroni to Earl Russell.—(*Received June* 19.)

(Extract.) *Alexandria, May* 30, 1862.

MR. PLOWDEN, as your Lordship is aware, never returned to Massowah; and I continued in charge of the Consulate till his death on the 4th of March, 1860, at Gondar.

From the 4th of March, 1860, I continued in charge of the Consulate till the 9th of February last, when Captain Cameron arrived.

No. 337.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(*Received June* 28.)

My Lord, *Massowah, May* 5, 1862.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Lordship's despatch dated 22nd February, transmitting a letter to King Theodore of Abyssinia.*

Your Lordship may be assured that I will do my utmost to make it subservient to the objects of my appointment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

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* No. 329.

No. 338.

Earl Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 2, 1862.

HER Majesty's Government have been informed that the Turkish Authorities on the western coast of the Red Sea, near Massowah, are making encroachments on the Abyssinian territories.

I have to instruct your Excellency to warn the Turkish Government not to permit proceedings which may have the result of bringing them into collision with the King of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 339.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Hammond.—(Received September 8.)

(Extract.) *Adowa, May* 27, 1862.

I HAVE already reported officially that His Royal Highness the Duke of Saxe Coburg commissioned me to present one of his decorations to the King of Abyssinia ;* and I then expressed a hope that this would essentially favour the objects of my journey into the interior.

As the Foreign Office may not hear from me again for some time, I may merely state that my expedition has proceeded slowly, on account of fever having broken out in my camp.

I have been obliged to drop twenty sick men—my own and the Viceroy's—on the road, and my house here is a hospital.

I shall overtake the King, they say here, in six weeks. But he is always on the move.

Whether he does'nt move down on the coast will depend on circumstances.

The proceedings of the Turks on the coast have been reported to him from here, but no reply received.

I hope the former will be warned at once, as I requested lately.

A clear settlement requires time and consideration. But, in the mean time, the Turks must be kept back, particularly as they calculate on a certain approval on our part of their proceedings, and will assuredly bring themselves into collision with Theodore, if they encroach so rapidly on the interior as they have been lately doing.

They should be specially warned, and, I think, formally, against interfering with the salt and sulphur mines I mentioned.

The King could hardly avoid fighting on that score, as their taking possession of them would make him dependent on an enemy for his circulating medium and ammunition, there being no other of these mines in the country.

Abyssinia is, for the present, submitted throughout Shoa, Amhara, and Tigré. Only two mountain chiefs still hold out.

No. 340.

Sir H. Bulwer to Earl Russell.—(Received September 26.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, September* 7, 1862.

IN accordance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 2nd ultimo,† I have warned the Porte not to permit the Turkish Authorities on the western coast of the Red Sea, near Massowah, to make encroachments on the Abyssinian territories, which may have the result of bringing them into collision with the King of Abyssinia.

Aali Pasha stated to me in reply that the Porte has no troops in that direction, and cannot therefore have attempted the encroachments which have been reported to Her Majesty's Government, but that the origin of the statement was probably as follows: certain Ottoman subjects had sometime back obtained the protection of the King of Abyssinia. Recently these persons had spontaneously expressed a wish to return to their

* No. 335. † No. 338.

former allegiance—but the Porte had no intention of raising any question calculated to lead to a misunderstanding, or provoke a collision with the King of Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

No. 341.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received October 21.)

My Lord, *Gondar, July 22, 1862.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I arrived at this town on the 23rd ultimo.

King Theodore is at present in the Galla country, but has directed me to await his arrival here.

It is impossible to say when he will come to Gondar. The probability is, however, that he will move in this direction towards the end of September—the rainy season being then over.

It would seem premature to send your Lordship a detailed political Report at present, as commanded by my instructions.

Suffice to say that the plans of the present Ruler of Abyssinia, as announced in the despatches of my predecessor from time to time during the last nine years, are now nearly realized.

He is master of the sovereignties of Amhara, Tigré, and Shoa—the late Rulers of those kingdoms, with their nearer kindred, have been either killed or placed in a position to render them powerless—the puppet Emperor of Abyssinia has been unceremoniously set aside.

The feudal system, at the same time, which has hitherto been the curse of the country, has been deprived of its more mischievous elements—the Tekawunt, an oligarchical body composed of forty of the more powerful nobles of Tigré, has been broken up, the rights of justice have been taken away from the aristocracy and vested either in paid officials or learned men, and the whole country is now united under a military despotism, very different alike from the "heptarchy" described by Salt, and the utter confusion which prevailed in the time of Harris and Mr. Plowden.

The great difficulty of the King at present lies on the side of the Galla country and in Godjam, where a single rebel with a small following is still holding out in the mountains.

The latter conquered—a comparatively easy matter—and the former curbed, the King will, I feel certain, direct his attention to the provinces wrested from Abyssinia on the side of Sennaar, and those on the coast to which the Turks are at present asserting pretensions.

On the latter point, I have already written to your Lordship. I may add, however, that I was right when I asserted that King Theodore would not regard the settlement of the Turks on the sea-coast with indifference.

He has directed the Governor of Hamazeyn to keep a watch over the movements of the Turks, to collect tribute formally from those tribes who belong properly to Abyssinia, but who have been overawed into paying tribute to Turkey during the late troubles in this country; finally, to offer no provocation to the Turkish authorities, but, in the event of any aggression on their part, to draw upon Tigré for forces to resist.

I have said thus much merely to prepare your Lordship for the attitude which this Christian Power, thus suddenly revived, may possibly assume under its present Ruler.

I shall write farther when I shall have seen the King and ascertained his views more precisely.

In the meantime, I can have no doubt, from the manner in which I have been treated by his order, that he is both anxious for our friendship, and feels that he may stand in need of our future support.

Let me beg of your Lordship, in conclusion, to pardon my not having reported my arrival here before, but I have been laid up with fever ever since my reaching Gondar, and utterly unfit for business until within the last three days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

1863.

No. 342.

Mr. Murray to Consul Cameron.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 8, 1863.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you copies of three letters, with the pamphlets accompanying them, addressed by Dr. Beke to the Board of Trade, respecting the expediency of adopting measures for the development of British commerce in Abyssinia, and I am to instruct you to send Lord Russell a report upon this subject with reference to the suggestions made by Dr. Beke.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 342.

Dr. Beke to Sir J. Emerson Tennent.

Sir, *Bekesbourne, November* 3, 1862.

ON the 5th March, 1849,* I had the honour to address to Sir Denis le Marchant, your predecessor in office, a letter, in which I took the liberty of suggesting to the President of the Board of Trade, the establishment of a factory on the eastern edge of the table-land of Abyssinia, stating in detail my reasons for making the suggestion.

In replying to me on the 16th of the same month, by direction of Mr. Labouchere, then President of the Board of Trade, Sir Denis le Marchant admitted that the facts adduced by me went far to prove that the establishment of such a factory might be advantageous to British commerce, but that the (assumed) insecurity of such an establishment, owing to the conflicting and fluctuating fortunes of the native Chiefs, appeared to render the measure one of doubtful policy; and Mr. Labouchere therefore desired to see the Reports of Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia before forming a decided opinion on the subject.

Shortly before the time when the letters thus referred to were written, Mr. Walter Plowden had been appointed British Consul in Abyssinia, where he unfortunately took an active part in the quarrels of the rival native princes, continuing so to do till the beginning of the year 1860, when his partizanship at length occasioned his death.

Seeing the line of conduct adopted by Mr. Consul Plowden, it may be inferred that the development of British commerce was regarded by him as a matter of secondary importance, and that consequently his Reports would not have materially assisted the President of the Board of Trade in forming any satisfactory decision with respect to my proposition.

Captain Cameron, who, shortly after Mr. Consul Plowden's death, was nominated his successor, has not (I am given to understand) remained at Massowah, the seat of his Consulate, on the sea-coast, but has proceeded into the interior of Abyssinia to the Court of King Theodore, where, even if he refrains from following his predecessor's example, he is hardly likely to have it in his power to do much to benefit British commerce.

There cannot, however, be any doubt of its being a serious evil, that during the fifteen years' existence of a British Consulate on the Abyssinian coast, so little should have been done towards the development of commercial relations with the very important portion of Africa which lies within the Red Sea, and through it with the interior of that Continent, and the fact that the French are making extraordinary exertions to establish themselves there, renders it imperative that some measures should be taken on the part of England to prevent our neighbours and competitors from securing to themselves a monopoly.

Under these circumstances I take the liberty of again requesting the attention of the Right Honourable the President of the Board of Trade to my letter of the 5th March, 1849, to Sir Denis le Marchant, and to his reply thereto, as well as to two other letters which I subsequently had the honour to submit to the Board of Trade, the one addressed to Mr. Labouchere, President, on the 27th January, 1852, "on the Trade with Intertropical

* Pamphlet—"Letters on the Commerce and Politics of Abyssinia and other Parts of Eastern Africa"

Africa,"* and the other addressed to Lord Colchester, Vice-President, on the 31st of March of the same year, "on the Cultivation of Cotton in Taka and Northern Abyssinia." *

To the statements and arguments comprised in my several letters, I will now merely add, that the precarious condition of affairs in North America, renders what is said in the last of these letters respecting Ethiopian cotton far more pertinent, and therefore more cogent at the present day, than it was when written upwards of ten years ago.

At the same time I beg leave to transmit to you a copy of a pamphlet recently published by me, under the title of, "The French and English in the Red Sea," which I request you to have the goodness to lay before the President of the Board of Trade.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 342.

Memorandum on the Means of developing British Commerce within the Red Sea, and of securing the Communication between England and India.

THE strip of low country along the western coast of the Red Sea, from the Straits of Babelmandeb northwards, described in my pamphlet "The French and English in the Red Sea," belongs geographically to the adjacent Empire of Abyssinia, which, however, appears not to have ruled over any portion of it for several centuries.

Legally, this Abyssinian coast has belonged to the Ottoman Porte since the year 1558, when the Turks drove the Portuguese out of the Red Sea, and took possession of it and all its harbours and coasts in the name of the Sultan, in his character of Caliph or head of the Mohammedan faith; though they, too, have only occupied the Islands of Souakin and Massowah, with occasionally some adjoining districts on the mainland.

Practically, these coast lands belong to the several native tribes inhabiting them, who claim to be independent; though, from their defenceless state as well as that of their country, they have to acknowledge the supremacy of either Turks or Abyssinians, accordingly as the one or the other may have the means of coercing them.

Half a century ago, Mr. Salt, after remarking that the effect of his two visits to Abyssinia had been to increase the preponderance of Tigré, the province nearest the coast, expressed his opinion that "the only plan which offers a hope of restoring anything like a regular form of government into the distracted country of Abyssinia would be to promote still further the welfare of that province [Tigré], by removing the obstructions which interrupt her communications with the coast, and by establishing thence a free intercourse with the British settlements in the East."

The policy thus clearly defined by Mr. Salt has, during many years past, been repeatedly recommended by me to the attention of Her Majesty's Government. But, as is shown in the pamphlet already referred to, the exertions of Her Majesty's Representative in Abyssinia have, unfortunately, been in the contrary direction. Had the policy so advocated been adopted, it can hardly be doubted that Tigré—the once rich and powerful kingdom of the Axumites, who, in the sixth century, in concert with the Emperor Justinian, built a fleet of vessels at Adulis (in Annesley Bay), and transported an army of 70,000 men across the Red Sea for the conquest of Yemen—would, at the present day, have been in a position to occupy the natural frontier of Abyssinia on the Red Sea, with advantage both to that country and to England.

Weakened and subjected as Tigré now is, she is still, from physical causes which no invasion or conquest can alter, strong and independent enough to place serious obstacles in the way of the permanent occupation of the sea-board by any Ruler of the inland provinces; so that no European Power could encourage Theodore, the present Emperor of Ethiopia (as he is styled), to invade any portion of the coast-lands belonging to Turkey, unless from selfish motives unconnected with the real interests of Abyssinia.

Of late years, on more than one occasion, the French have, for political and religious, rather than for commercial, purposes, attempted to gain a footing on the Abyssinian coast; but they have hitherto been foiled by the assertion of the right of the Ottoman Porte.

This right cannot well be disputed by the French themselves, as the allies of Turkey; but were once some Abyssinian Prince to subdue any portion of the coast, he might cede the same to the French, who would then enter into possession under a right and title which they would choose to regard as paramount to that of Turkey, and which neither Turkey, nor any of her allies under the Treaty of Paris, could hope to prove to be illegal.

Their recent want of success in the case of the pretended cession to them of Dissee or

* Same pamphlet.

Valentia Island, at the entrance of Annesley Bay, by Negussye, the temporary ruler of Tigré, appears to have led the French to look to King Theodore for the accomplishment of their desires. This ambitious prince has for some time past had in contemplation the conquest of Massowah, and could readily be induced to invade and occupy any portion of the coast. And in this the French might aid him as they aided his rival Negussye, without incurring the charge of having themselves waged war against their allies the Turks.

That such is the object of M. Lejean's mission from the Emperor Napoleon to King Theodore cannot be doubted; neither will it be questioned that the sympathies of the French nation are with the Christian Abyssinian Prince in his endeavours to expel the infidel Turks from what he calls "his" dominions, In consideration of the assistance of the French, Theodore will only be required to cede to his powerful ally Dissee, together with Hanfila, Edd, or other suitable points on the sea coast; or should he demur, some pretence would readily be found for wresting those places from him;—and there is no "Treaty of Paris" to protect the rights of Abyssinia.

As regards Dissee, the course is quite clear. If Theodore's army were merely to show itself on the coast, and be there aided by the slightest demonstration on the part of the French, the Naib of Arkiko, Idris, who has been placed in possession of the island, by the Turkish Kaimakam of Massowah, might be expected to throw off his allegiance to the Ottoman Porte; he having already been employed by the French as their agent for supplying arms and ammunition to Negussye, in return for which Dissee was to have been ceded to them.

But, on the other hand, if the French, with a view to their own aggrandizement. should thus indirectly and covertly assist King Theodore in his attempt to deprive the Ottoman Porte of its possessions, any other European nation would be justified in aiding the Porte to withstand the Abyssinians; so as to prevent the latter from ever being in a position to be recognized as actually in possession of any portion of the sea-coast—a condition essentially requisite for making a title on which France could insist.

It is, therefore, respectfully submitted that the Ottoman Porte should be urged and encouraged to maintain sufficient garrisons at the principal places on the sea-board, and also to guard and protect the entire line of coast; and in doing so should be assisted by England by every reasonable means in her power.

This is, in fact, essential for the proper development of commercial relations with the Abyssinian coast, and through it with the interior of Africa, in accordance with the recommendations contained in three letters addressed by me to the Board of Trade:—namely, on March 5th, 1849, to Sir Denis Le Marchant, Secretary, suggesting the establishment of a British Factory in Abyssinia; on January 27th, 1852, to Mr. Labouchere, President, On Trade with Intertropical Africa; and on March 31st, 1852, to Lord Colchester, Vice-President, On the Cultivation of Cotton in Taka and Northern Abyssinia.

The establishment of such commercial relations would, besides, prove an effectual means of stopping the African Slave Trade within the Red Sea; while, from the much greater proximity of Khartum and the Upper Nile to the Red Sea than to the Mediterranean and Egypt, facilities would be afforded for checking the inland Slave Trade, which, according to recent accounts, is now carried on in Sennar to a great extent, and with much cruelty, by European "dealers in ivory."

The consolidation of the Turkish possessions along the coast would further allow of the formation of a land-line of electric telegraph from opposite Perim Island (in continuation of a sea-line from Aden), as far north as Suakin, whence a sea-line could be continued to St. John's, Jubal, and Suez; thus forming the Red Sea line of electric telegraph between India and Europe. This land-line, being thoughout its entire length on Turkish ground, and constantly under the surveillance of British vessels of war in he Red Sea, would not be liable to the same objections as a land-line through any part of the Egyptian territory.

Suakin, at which port or in its vicinity the telegraph land-line would thus cease, is a place of great and rising importance. The Viceroy of Egypt has long desired to acquire it from the Porte; in which case it has been proposed by a French Company to connect it with the Nile, near the junction of the Atbara, the last great affluent of that river, by means of a railway. Though the realization of such a scheme might be of great advantage commercially, its result politically would be to place Suakin in the hands of France. It could not, therefore, be looked upon with favour by England, though, were it possible to nullify the influence of France, not only might a railway—or rather a tramway—be most beneficially laid down there, but the electric telegraph line might be carried from Suakin inland to the Nile (a distance of only 200 miles), and so down the bank of that river to Cairo, thus forming a land-line the whole way from Babelmandeb to Alexandria, entirely through Turkish and Egyptian territory.

But, supposing this grand scheme to be impracticable, Suakin, if continued under Turkish rule and British influence (especially if connected with Aden by means of a line of electric telegraph), might be made to play an important part in the event of a war between England and France, and of the occupation of Egypt by the latter Power.

Alexandria, from the present defenceless state into which it has been designedly reduced by Said Pasha, would fall to a French fleet and army without a struggle, though it might soon be made tenable by the French against the English. If the French, however, were driven out of that city, they would retire on Cairo, or rather in the first instance on the Saidieh Fortress and other military works of the "Barrage" of the Nile, at the head of the Delta. Here provision is at the present moment being made for cutting off from Alexandria the suppy of fresh water, which is to be done by simply carrying within the line of fortifications the head of the Khatatbeh Canal, which is intended to be made the main feeder of the Mahmudieh Canal, by means of which latter Alexandria obtains its supply of water from the Nile. The British forces in Alexandria, without fresh water, would be placed in the greatest straits, if, indeed, they were not compelled to evacuate the city. Its inhabitants would assuredly be brought to the last extremity for want of water.

To counteract, and by the threat of retaliation perhaps to prevent and obviate, so great a calamity, the English might from Suakin take measures for securing the means of cutting off the supply of water from above. This is no chimerical scheme. It is a well-known fact that the inhabitants of the valley of the Upper Nile have it in their power to turn part, at least, of the waters of the Nile into the Red Sea near Suakin; and the great Albuquerque actually proposed to avail himself of this power, at a time when the rivalry between his nation and the Venetians in the Levant was very similar to that now existing between our nation and the French.

This subject is discussed in a letter addressed on August 21st, 1851, to Viscount Palmerston, then Foreign Secretary, and more in detail in my recently published work "The Sources of the Nile." In now adverting to it, I would take the liberty of suggesting that a survey should be made by competent persons of the tract of country through which the communication between the Nile and the Red Sea might be effected. This would not merely provide for the case of the English occupying the locality in question, but also for that of its being taken possession of by the French, or by their ally, King Theodore who (as is notorious) avows his intention to turn the Nile into the Red Sea, as a means of subjugating, if not destroying, Egypt. It would also serve in the event of a line of electric telegraph between India and England by way of the Red Sea being again contemplated.

In submitting these remarks to the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, I beg leave most respectfully to tender my humble services, to aid in carrying into effect whatever measures they may deem it expedient to adopt with reference to the subjects discussed in this Memorandum.

Bekesbourne, November 12, 1862. (Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 342.

Reasons for the Proposed Establishment of a British Consulate at Sawakin, in the Red Sea.

THE British Consulate at Massowah, on the Abyssinian coast, forming part of the Turkish dominions within the Red Sea, was (if I am not mistaken) established in the year 1847, on the recommendation of Earl Grey, then Secretary of State for the Colonies in consequence of a communication which the Mauritius Association requested me to make as to the practicability of obtaining agricultural labourers from Abyssinia. I was led to expect that I should be nominated to the post; but Mr. Walter Plowden, who happened at that time to return to England from Abyssinia, received the appointment.

In the year 1849, having been applied to by Mr. Labouchere (now Lord Taunton), who was then President of the Board of Trade, for information respecting the commerce of Abyssinia, I suggested the establishment of a factory on the edge of the Abyssinian table-land, above Massowah, with a view to opening up a trade with the interior. This suggestion was favourably received by Mr. Labouchere; but, before forming a decided opinion, he desired to see the reports that might from time to time be expected from Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah.

Mr. Plowden was, however, mostly in the interior of Abyssinia, engaged in the disputes among the rival Princes of the various provinces, where he was killed in the beginning of 1860; and Captain Cameron, who has been appointed his successor, has in

like manner proceeded to join the reigning King, Theodore, who is incessantly engaged in warfare with one or the other of the powerful native Princes, who still refuse to recognise him as their Sovereign.

It does not appear that any trade reports have been received from the Consulate at Massowah during the fifteen years it has been in existenee.

Meanwhile the incessant civil wars have not only seriously affected the material prosperity of Abyssinia, but have also operated most injuriously on the commerce of Massowah. During the last three centuries this island has, until recently, been the chief, if not the only, channel available for the trade of that country; but of late years a considerable portion of that trade has gradually been diverted to the northerly port of Sawakin.

At the beginning of the present century, when Lord Valentia visited the Red Sea, there was a good trade at Massowah, whilst that of Sawakin had quite vanished. Everything, however, is now tending to raise the latter port at the expense of the former; and though it is not to be anticipated that Sawakin will ever recover the extensive trade which, as Lord Valentia relates in his "Travels" (vol. ii, p. 286), rendered it in the eyes of the Portuguese de Castro "superior to every city except Lisbon," still there cannot be a doubt that, as the general commerce of the Red Sea revives, it must necessarily again become a place of great importance. Already the native merchants of Gondar, the capital and chief emporium of the upper country, find it more advantageous to descend to Sawakin by a circuitous route through the neighbouring Egyptian territories, than to take, as formerly, the shorter road to Massowah through their own country; added to which, several of the frontier districts lying between Abyssinia and the Egyptian Provinces of Nubia and Sennar, have, one by one, been severed from the dominions of the Viceroy of Egypt, by which change they are brought into closer connection with Sawakin than with Massowah.

To evince the relative importance of the two places, I may state, that from the report of an Agent of the Austrian Government, sent into the Red Sea with a view to the commerce of Trieste, in anticipation of the opening of the Suez Canal, it appears that, in the year 1856, the total exports from Massowah were valued at 239,000 dollars, or 47,800*l.*; whilst those from Sawakin amounted to 354,000 dollars, or 70,800*l.*; showing an excess of the latter over the former of nearly 50 per cent. The imports into Massowah, at the same date, amounted to 196,850 dollars, or 39,370*l.*, of which more than two-thirds were manufactured goods, principally British. The amount of the imports into Sawakin are not given; but assuming them to bear the same proportion to the imports as those of Massowah, they would amount to about 291,500 dollars, or 58,300*l.*

From another source I derive the following figures, proving the steady increase that is taking place in the commerce of Sawakin. In 1850 the Customs duties of that port were estimated at 800 purses of 25 dollars each, or 4,000*l.*; in 1860 they amounted to 1,500 purses, or 7,500*l.*; that is to say, in ten years they have nearly doubled.

There is nothing to invalidate the opinion repeatedly expressed, both to the Foreign Office and to the Board of Trade, that where the elevated, fertile, temperate, and healthy table-land of Eastern Africa approaches most nearly to the sea-coast—namely, near the ancient emporium of Adule, of which, at the present day, Massowah is the degenerate representative—is the natural road into the interior of Africa. By this road the continent was not only in great part peopled, but also received its three religions, Mosaic, Christian, and Mahometan; and by it we may still cherish the hope that Africa will eventually be regenerated by means of European commerce, as the precursor of Christian civilization. But it must be conceded, that unless the disunited provinces of Abyssinia can be subjugated and welded together into a settled monarchy, by the energetic warrior who, during the last few years has possessed himself of the throne of the ancient dynasty; or, should he fail, then until the once powerful aud physically separate kingdom of Tigré, lying east of the great River Takkazie, and surrounding Adule and Massowah, shall regain the pre-eminence which in past ages it possessed, and to which its natural advantages entitle it, Sawakin must be regarded as the chief port on the East coast of Africa within the Red Sea; and, as such, it is unquestionably deserving of being made the seat of a British Consul. The facts adverted to in my Memorandum of the 12th of November last serve to establish, yet more surely than those stated above, the great snd rising importance of Sawakin.

In the appointment of Consular functionaries the general rule of the Foreign Office is to restrict them from trading. But in the case of the Consulate at Sawakin it is respectfully submitted that this rule should be relaxed, at all events in the first instance,

It is not at all contemplated that Her Majesty's Consul at Sawakin should be a trader in the ordinary sense of the word, as was the practice until recently, and as several British Consuls still continue to be. What, however, is essential is that he should be left free to

act in such a manner as he may deem expedient for developing the natural resources of the fertile regions with which he would be placed in communication, in accordance with the suggestions contained in the three letters addressed to the Board of Trade, to which reference is made in my Memorandum.

As shown in the latest of those letters, namely, that addressed to Lord Colchester, on the 31st of March, 1852, the districts of which Sawakin and Massowah are the seaports have been famous in all ages for the production of cotton of superior quality. The naturalist Pliny records that "Ethiopia, the country adjoining Egypt, possesses scarcely any trees except those bearing wool;" the poet Virgil sings of the

"Nemora Æthiopum molli canentia lanâ;"

whilst numerous modern travellers speak in glowing terms of the cotton, which not only is produced throughout the whole of these rich alluvial plains,—far more fertile than those of Lower Egypt,—under the imperfect culture afforded to it by the inhabitants, but which spontaneously "grows five feet in a single year."

It was from these countries that was brought the seed from which has been raised the cotton now forming the staple and the wealth of Egypt. Forty years ago Egypt did not produce one pound of cotton: this present season (1862-63), as I am informed by a merchant at Alexandria, in a letter dated the 12th of last month, the quantity which it will be able to export, principally to Liverpool, of what has become with us an article of prime necessity, is estimated at 250,000 or even 300,000 bales, weighing, perhaps, 150,000,000 lbs.; this enormous quantity being the produce of an exotic plant, of which a few seeds were brought down into Egypt from Ethiopia, as recently as the year 1820. I may be pardoned for expressing regret, that it was not permitted me to realise my plan for opening up a trade in this Ethiopian cotton at the time when I conceived and first proposed it.

There is one more remark which I would yet venture to offer. It is that, should the suggestions contained in the Memorandum already referred to be deemed worthy of consideration, it might be expedient that the Consulate of Sawakin should have jurisdiction within the entire narrow slip of Abyssinian sea-coast belonging to the Ottoman Porte.

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

Bekesbourne, December 22, 1862.

No. 343.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received February 12, 1863.)*

My Lord, *Godjam, October* 31, 1862.

I HAVE the honour to report that King Theodore having sent for me at the close of the rainy season, I joined him at his camp here on the 7th instant.

I was received with a salute of twelve guns, and 6,000 cavalry, infantry, and match-lock men, were marched out to escort me to the camp.

My reception, as regards this point, was the best His Majesty has yet accorded to an Envoy.

On my arrival I was conducted to the King, who awaited me in a large apartment entirely covered and carpeted with silk.

He received me in a reclining posture, with a double-barrelled gun and two loaded pistols by his side. His Ministers and Generals stood round in their robes of state. I was allowed to be seated.

After a few compliments, mead and broiled meat were brought in, and the interview became public.

It lasted many hours, during which His Majesty gave me a detailed account of his last campaign against Negoosee. This he did with much apparent modesty. He dwelt with graphic clearness on the death scene of his late Grand Chamberlain, the Englishman Bell, in which our countryman singled out the Chief Garred, to whom Mr. Plowden owed his death, and killed him on the battle-field, while the King similarly dispatched the same rebel's brother.

Both the slain were His Majesty's cousins.

He spoke of his further revenge for Mr. Plowden's death, when he executed 1,500

* Laid before Parliament, 1866.

of Garred's followers on the same day. He did this, he said, to win the friendship of Her Majesty.

He afterwards broke out into invectives against the Turks; said they were encroaching on him on every side; spoke of the seven flags, as he expressed it, that they had planted on the sea-coast, and dwelt much upon alleged advances from the Egyptian quarter.

He announced his intention of fighting with them, and sending Ambassadors to the European nations to justify his conduct.

Two days after this interview I received a message from His Majesty, directing me to put down my business with him on paper.

I wrote immediately, stating that I was deputed to present him with certain gifts, and a letter of introduction, also to discuss with him regarding the future. That when Mr. Plowden was killed there were two points under discussion, viz., 1, a Treaty; and, 2, the sending an Embassy to England. I offered to take these up where Mr. Plowden had left them.

I was sent for next day to deliver my presents and your Lordship's letter.

Both gave much pleasure, especially the inscription on the gun, to the effect that it was given by Her Majesty, in return for the King's kindness to Mr. Plowden.

The King spoke much this day of his goodwill towards England, and the great things he expected from her friendship, and said that he was anxious to purchase fire-arms and ammunition there. He renewed his invectives against the Turks, and talked of what he could do, if assured of our support on the coast.

My replies were as general as possible, as the room was crowded with courtiers, before whom I was unwilling to deal quite plainly with His Majesty.

His Majesty on this occasion presented me with a buckler, two lances, a war-saddle, armlet, horse, and mule, which I accepted in the name of the Queen; presenting, on my own account, a barrel organ, some powder, and three double-barrelled horse-pistols, the latter being preferred by His Majesty to revolvers.

On the following Sunday I was again sent for, and to a public interview.

The tone of the King had become bolder regarding Turkey. He spoke of the poverty of his country, saying that by invading Egypt he would be greatly enriched, and vaunted more boastfully than before of the achievements he would perform if England would prevent any interference by France on the sea-coast, and keep off a Turkish fleet.

Feeling convinced that, however strong may be the wish of England to befriend Abyssinia, this was not the temper I was sent to encourage, I waited till an opportunity should occur of correcting His Majesty with regard to what I felt to be the sentiments of my Government.

This soon offered, by His Majesty asking me whether England would not force his Ambassador through Massowah and Egypt, the question being prompted by his late doubtful treatment of the Egyptian Envoy, Abderachman Bey, which he had endeavoured previously to explain.

I replied that if there were war, England could not take his Ambassadors through Egypt without the consent of that Government; if there was peace, that I could see no obstacle.

He repeated the question in another form, wishing that I should leave him an opening for skirmishes on the frontier, as apart from actual war.

I gave the same reply.

His Majesty then said that his empire and religion were in danger of being crushed, and that he would fight to the death in their defence; but he made this important addition, that he would not make or bring on war until he had made an appeal to all Christendom.

I told him I was glad to hear this, and that I would write it to my Government.

After this I waited several days in the expectation of a private audience. My food became scant and bad, and I detected a disposition amongst the spies who had been attached to me, according to the custom of the country, under pretence of rendering me service, to turn matters in such a way that at last I should solicit the King to leave.

I was hourly asked when I was going, which I settled one morning by replying to the usual question, to one who I knew would carry it to the King, that I might stay six months, if my business was not finished.

An hour after I received a peremptory message from His Majesty to leave for the sea at once, and send him an answer whether my Government would receive his Embassy or not.

I considered on the other hand that, as I had been sent to His Majesty at a considerable expense, and on a mission of pure courtesy, it was his duty at least to give me some

reply to the question of a Treaty, which had been so long pending, including the other important point as to his admitting a Representative of Great Britain to reside in his country if such were our wish.

I thought too, that unless I had clear details with regard to his projected Embassy, much embarrassment might ensue to us hereafter, while at the same time I had wished to know His Majesty's intentions regarding the slave trade, and to elicit information from him regarding an intercourse with his new kingdom of Shoa, and his hold on the tribes to the side of Zeyla.

I therefore wrote His Majesty a letter, copy of which is herewith inclosed.

Fortunately, just as it was finished, I got a batch of letters from Massowah.

One was a letter from Mr. Colquhoun, telling me that he had received my despatch to your Lordship, stating my fears that Turkey intended to encroach on Abyssinia from her new settlement on the coast, to which he replied that the Porte would be warned to do nothing which could give umbrage to King Theodore. He added that I ought to inform his Majesty that his best mode of obtaining the sympathies of England was by putting down the Slave Trade in his dominions.

There was a further passage regarding Mr. Sheffer's mission to Tadjurah, which was corroborated by an extract from the "Home and Overland Mail," forwarded from Aden, stating what the mission had done, and that this new settlement was merely intended for a base of operations against Abyssinia.

All this, together with the old Treaty made with Ras Ali, was carefully read through to His Majesty by two interpreters, well conversant with English.

I also forwarded a letter to His Majesty in Arabic from Jerusalem, detailing the part our Consul had taken in some outrage against the Abyssinian community there.

The King at the same time got information that Russia had 40,000 men within four day's of Constantinople, that Said Pasha had gone to France, and that the Sultan was in Egypt.

This various intelligence seems to have pressed heavily on His Majesty. He sent me a message, thanking me, entreating me to observe the peril in which he was from two powerful enemies, and begging me to act sincerely by him.

On the following morning I sent a note to His Majesty, telling him that if he wished, I would return by Matemma, where he told me the Turks had been taking tribute unjustly, and gathering troops, and do what I could there to keep them back, or at least, collect facts which might tell against them hereafter.

Matemma is just now a hot-bed of fever.

I reassured him about his Embassy, and wishing to mention something more about his statement regarding not provoking attack,—which, as your Lordship will perceive, I had written to him to say that I would report,—I sent him a letter which I have expedited to our Consul at Khartoum, asking the latter to do his utmost to preserve peace, but above all to report military movements, or aggressions on Abyssinia, to Alexandria.

I told His Majesty that I did this for his sake; but he must also now keep his own Governors in restraint.

The answer of His Majesty was kind in the extreme.

He deprecated my going to Matemma on his account, lest, as he expressed it, I should die in his country like Mr. Plowden, and he should again be left without a resource in his present difficulties, but bade me act as I thought fitting, said that though he was ready to fight, peace was best, and asked me again to do what I could for him by writing.

I answered simply that my life, health, and services, were always at the disposal of His Majesty.

On the following morning, he sent me a silken embroidered robe, similar to that worn by his chief men, with 1,000 dollars towards paying my expenses to Massowah, and a message to come to him.

My first business was to tell him that I had plenty of money waiting for me at Gondar; that I would write to my Government of his kind consideration, but that if I accepted money from him, I might be dismissed from my service.

It was with great difficulty that I could get my interpreters to translate this, as in Abyssinia a refusal of such a nature, especially to a King, has in it something of the nature of an insult.

His Majesty made no reply for half-an-hour. He then said that all he wanted was friendship.

This gave me an opportunity of repeating expressions of good-will on the part of my Government, and of assuring him of my own high appreciation of his character, and devotion to his cause—on which he said voluntarily, that he had well considered the subject of

a Treaty, about which there would be no difficulty: but that at present his mind was full of other things, also, that if matters went well, he would gladly receive a Consul. He likewise spoke about putting down the Slave Trade: on which I purposely questioned him.

After this, I presented His Royal Highness the Duke of Saxe Coburg's decoration, which was exceedingly well received.

He then wrote the letter to Her Majesty, which I herewith have the honour to forward.

The translation was written by his own interpreters.

He intended also to have written a letter to Mr. Colquhoun, about the Slave Trade, and a letter of appeal to the King of Holland, similar to those he had already dictated, but it was too late.

This morning I was told to leave for Massowah.

I sent a Memorandum to His Majesty, reminding him of the letter for Mr. Colquhoun and stating the advantage he would derive from it.

He replied that he would write afterwards, but assured me that he would stop the Slave Trade effectually—not as a concession to us, but because he hated it himself.

He repeated his expressions of entire confidence in me, and added that he believed I would be a friend to him, as Mr. Plowden had been before.

A Royal Circular of Appeal has likewise been forwarded to France from the camp this day by a Frenchman, whom the King has given 500 dollars for his road-expenses.

It states, like the two others, that His Majesty projects a struggle with the Turks, and wishes to send Ambassadors to France. He requests an answer by the bearer, who is, however, travelling slowly.

One will also go for Russia, with which country His Majesty has been in some communication.

Others are being prepared for the German Powers.

As it is desirable, on every account that we should not be without a correspondence in Abyssinia for a considerable time, I am preparing a letter on the subject to the Resident at Aden, copy of which will herewith be inclosed.

There seems to be no necessity for irritating the King further at this moment about the 1,000 dollars.

I will hand them over to the Negadderass of Adowa, send your Lordship a receipt in Arabic, and write to His Majesty, telling him what I have done, and sending a copy of the paragraph in the Consular Instructions bearing on the subject.

But I must here state that Mr. Plowden was more than once placed in the same difficulty with myself, by the King's presenting him with money, which he generally accepted, to avoid explanations—making a present of larger value in return

The sooner, however, the King now understands our feelings on this subject the better, and my manner of settling the matter will, I hope, prevent such presents for the future.

I propose to proceed hence to the neighbourhood of Bogos, whose inhabitants have been long under our special protection, and for whom we formerly interceded with the Egyptian Government, on the occasion of certain predatory inroads, which, from intelligence I have received, may again be renewed.

I will also write to the Pashas of Kassala and Matemma, in order, if possible to check mischief. This, and writing occasionally to the King, in order to hold him to his promise, is all I can do, until I receive further instructions from your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 343.

*Consul Cameron to King Theodore.**

May it please your Majesty, *Godjam, October* 22, 1862.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Majesty's message of this morning, informing me that I had better leave at once for Massowah, in order to ascertain, for your Majesty's information, whether I would be able or not to pass certain Ambassadors or Messengers whom you are anxious to send to England.

On this point I believe myself justified in repeating the reply I made to your Majesty on the same subject in my last interview, viz., that if Egypt was at war with your Majesty, it would be impossible to pass such Ambassadors or Messengers through, without her

* Laid before Parliament. 1866.

consent. If, on the other hand, there was peace, that I could conceive no possible obstacle.

I will, however, send a Messenger immediately to Aden, informing the Resident there of your intention, and requesting him to send you an answer direct in Arabic, without reference to me.

Your Majesty ought, however, now to inform me of the number of people of which your Majesty's Embassy, if it goes, will consist, the exact date it will be at Massowah, or, if you wish, Hallai, and the character of the presents they are to take; as if there are any horses intended to be sent, as I hear, it will be necessary for me to write this beforehand, so as to insure accommodation; if, indeed, it is possible to afford accommodation on board a steamer.

It might be desirable, too, to speak with me as to the objects of the Embassy, supposing them to be more than what you told me loosely the other day, viz., to appeal to England with regard to certain differences between yourself and Turkey, as also Egypt. We might then consult on those differences before your taking so serious a step as to bring them before an European Power.

My being an European, and one versed, in some degree, in public affairs, as conducted among us, may perhaps assist you.

Besides which, I may remind your Majesty, that my appointment has obliged me to think much over everything connected with Abyssinia.

If your Majesty wishes much business to be done by talking, it would be fitting to choose such a person as the head of the Embassy, as may be thoroughly versed in the matters to be spoken about, and one who would give a favourable opinion of the intelligence and civilization of your people, as well as of your Majesty's character, both of which have been greatly misrepresented by your Majesty's enemies.

The accompanying retinue also ought to be the smallest possible, a sufficient retinue being always to be obtained in England.

I would say that one, or at most two, heads of the Embassy, and an Interpreter, with a Secretary, if necessary, would be amply sufficient, each with a single native servant.

Having given your Majesty my opinion with regard to an Embassy, as far as I can do so in writing, there is only one point further to discuss with your Majesty, viz., whether your Majesty wishes to avail yourself of my being here, to make out a draft of a Treaty for the consideration of my Queen, which, if your Majesty thinks proper, can be signed conditionally, and notice of it now sent on by me, while the draft itself, with the provisional signatures, can accompany your Ambassador,

I have a copy of the Treaty made through Ras Ali with the former Emperor, which can be made the base of such a document, if your Majesty wishes; and I now send it you, with certain alterations, for your Majesty's consideration.

As I am anxious to finish whatever I have to say to your Majesty in this letter, as far as I can do so in writing, I may observe at once, that I know that the points on which your Majesty made a difficulty in your conversation with Mr. Plowden on this subject were:— 1. The acceptance of a Consul. 2. If he were accepted, whether he should have jurisdiction as agreed in the former Emperor's Treaty.

On the first point, I can only ask your Majesty whether Mr. Plowden's stay here was not a positive advantage, in so far as he acted as a mediator and friend generally, but particularly as a protector to the unfortunate Abyssinian tribes laid open to Egypt, while those who ought to have looked after them were cutting each others' throats; whether he did not testify his anxiety by word and deed, that your Majesty, as the most noble and enlightened of Abyssinian Chiefs, should become sole master. Lastly, whether he ever showed a disposition to do anything contrary to the interest, honour, or independence of Abyssinia.

Some arrangement, at any rate, on this point will be necessary, if your Majesty really wishes to keep up a close friendship with England. I feel certain too, that if English artizans were to come here, as I have heard is your Majesty's wish, it would be impossible for them to stay, unless there was an officer of some kind, either Envoy or Consul, to look after them.

It would be well if, now that there is an opportunity, your Majesty gave a frank decision on this subject, particularly as your Majesty has now had many years to think it over.

As regards a Consul's flying a flag, this is by no means necessary, nor would my Government even wish it, if, as I hear, your people might misunderstand it.

In regard to jurisdiction by a Consul, this is in your Majesty's hand, not ours, to decide. England wants to insure justice and good treatment to her subjects, and nothing more. If your Majesty can explain to our Government what I believe to be your Majesty's

opinion, viz., that such separate jurisdiction would be impossible to carry out, and is also unnecessary where the laws are so mild as in Abyssinia, this would be sufficient for the present. But it seems to me that a few hours' conversation would settle these matters, either one way or the other.

As your Majesty is now, by God's grace, master of Shoa, I would gladly know whether your Majesty has any intention of opening a trade through Zeyla, in opposition to Massowah. In the mean time, I can only point it out to your Majesty as worthy of attention.

If I could have some assurance with regard to the stopping of the Slave Trade in this country, which has again been opened, I believe, without your Majesty's knowledge, I feel certain that satisfactory information on that point would be received with much pleasure by my Government.

A clause in the Treaty, on this subject, would be still better.

I can only thank your Majesty now for the courteous manner in which your Majesty has received the presents I brought, of which as well as of the distinguished manner in which I have hitherto been treated, I shall write immediately to England.

It is my duty, however, to add that if your Majesty wishes me to stay until I have finished everything thoroughly, I can dismiss my people, if they are too many for a camp, and stay till you are quite done with me.

I owe it to my Government to tell you this.

I am now about to write to the Pasha of Massowah, telling him that if he commits any aggression on those under your Majesty's rule from where he is on the coast, I feel certain that his conduct will be greatly disapproved of by my Government.

I will also write to my Government, mentioning your Majesty's wise resolution not to give either Egypt or Turkey any ground for attack, which, I feel sure, will do much to confirm its opinion of your Majesty's prudence as well as courage.

Your Majesty has many enemies besides the Turks and Egyptians, who will rejoice in putting your Majesty in the wrong, and who will rejoice especially, if your Majesty gives them an opportunity of doing so.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON,
Her Britannic Majesty's Consul for Massowah.

Inclosure 2 in No. 343.

Consul Cameron to the Political Resident, Aden.

Sir, *Godjam, November* 2, 1862.

I CAN hardly estimate the importance of the despatches herewith inclosed, or that of the appeal to Great Britain among other countries which accompanies them.

It appears possible that the questions involved, mixed as they are with the problem of the integrity of Turkey, on the one hand, and falling in as they do with alleged plans of France, on the other,—may excite a desire in the latter Power, as also perhaps in Russia, to complicate our relations with this country as much as possible.

It seems to me that we want a permanent English influence more than ever in Abyssinia.

King Theodore has marked out work for me, by asking our Government to allow me to go to England with his Embassy, and assist his Ambassadors in putting his case. But even if I do not go, I can be of no further use here until the return of His Majesty's Embassy.

There were certain presents sent, I believe by the Bombay Government, to King Theodore, of which he has no clear idea.

He asked me, on my arrival, whether I had come from the same people who sent those presents, or from the Queen of England; and remarked rather strongly on presents being sent from one Government to another without a friendly messenger or letter of courtesy.

Feeling doubtful of their import, and afraid of a snare of some kind, he said that he was nearly sending them back. I explained to His Majesty that the blame lay with Mr. Barroni.

I would beg, however, that you would suggest, on my part, to the Indian Government that it might be desirable just at the present juncture that an Envoy should be sent from India with more presents, and to explain the mistake; but with authority to remain as a Representative of Great Britain in the event of King Theodore's desiring it. He might

be accompanied by medical men, carefully selected, to be placed, if things were favourable, at the disposal of the King. These, if sent, should be plentifully supplied with surgical instruments and medicines.

His Majesty also wants an engineer to make roads for him. Such a gentleman might likwise be sent, and placed at his disposal.

I have suggested medical men and an engineer, because I think that they would be highly appreciated and retained—always supposing that no suspicion was excited by the conduct of the Mission, or by foreign Agents attached to the King; while the political Envoy would most probably be sent back after his immediate business was finished.

Without any political Mission, such persons would keep up our knowledge of what was passing, and certainly exercise an important influence on the opinions as well as conduct of the King, especially if they did not aim at this as their principal object. Besides which, we would have placed him under an immediate and serious obligation.

It might be stated that I had written these as the principal wants of Abyssinia; and it might be asked that they should be accepted out of Christian friendship, if wished for, while His Majesty's appeals were pending.

I lay these views before you just as they have risen in my mind to-day, although they have been the subject of serious reflection before.

I see no more effectual way of meeting our possible difficulties until His Majesty accepts a regular Envoy, to whom, however, such independent Englishmen settled in the country would be a great assistance. But, if sent, they should be despatched before any other Power has time to send a mission here.

The French answer to the King's letter will, it is estimated by the bearer, be here in about six months.

I may state that there need be no fear of bad treatment for such gentlemen as I have mentioned.

There are lay-missionaries here, as well as others for the conversion of the Abyssinian Jews, who are very liberally dealt with, as far as the character of the Government and the state of the country will admit.

The service I have indicated would require men of great tact and patience, and whose bearing would be entirely conciliatory and unpretending; as much, in short, like lay-missionaries as possible.

Indian tents, silks, mortars, rockets, small cannon, grenades, fire-arms, and ammunition are acceptable presents for this country. The King wants mortars especially.

Letters may be written in English and Arabic. The King speaks the latter language. No guard should accompany an Envoy.

A liberal allowance should be made for presents in money to interpreters and others, attached, under various pretexts, to a Mission by the Royal command.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

P.S.—You will perceive by my despatch of the 31st of October to the Foreign Office,* that I am about to proceed to Bogos, which I hear the Roman Catholic missionaries have abandoned, in apprehension of an invasion from Egypt.

I do not trust the population of Massowah; nor am I sure whether the excitement on the coast, together with a knowledge that it is my determination to restrain Mussulman aggression, if necessary, may not cause a rising similar to that of Djeddah.

I must leave it to your judgment to decide whether a vessel had not better be permanently stationed at that port, with distinct orders to support Mr. Walker in any remonstrances he may have to make, as also to act, in the event of violence being meditated or practised, as regards the Consulate.

The fact of orders having been given to act will, I think, if made no secret of, prevent the necessity of action.

C. D. C.

Inclosure 3 in No. 343.

King Theodore to Her Majesty the Queen.—(Received February 12, 1863.)†

(Translation.)

IN the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God in Trinity, chosen by God, King of Kings, Theodoros of Ethiopia, to Her Majesty Victoria, Queen of

* No. 343.

† Laid before Parliament, 1866.

England. I hope your Majesty is in good health. By the power of God I am well. My fathers the Emperors having forgotten our Creator, he handed over their kingdom to the Gallas and Turks. But God created me, lifted me out of the dust, and restored this Empire to my rule. He endowed me with power, and enabled me to stand in the place of my fathers. By His power I drove away the Gallas. But for the Turks, I have told them to leave the land of my ancestors. They refuse. I am now going to wrestle with them. Mr. Plowden, and my late Grand Chamberlain, the Englishman Bell, used to tell me that there is a great Christian Queen, who loves all Christians. When they said to me this, "We are able to make you known to her, and to establish friendship between you," then in those times I was very glad. I gave them my love, thinking that I had found your Majesty's goodwill. All men are subject to death, and my enemies, thinking to injure me, killed these my friends. But by the power of God I have exterminated those enemies, not leaving one alive, though they were of my own family, that I may get, by the power of God, your friendship.

I was prevented by the Turks occupying the sea-coast from sending you an Embassy when I was in difficulty. Consul Cameron arrived with a letter and presents of friendship. By the power of God I was very glad hearing of your welfare, and being assured of your amity. I have received your presents, and thank you much.

I fear that if I send Ambassadors with presents of amity by Consul Cameron, they may be arrested by the Turks.

And now I wish that you may arrange for the safe passage of my Ambassadors everywhere on the road.

I wish to have an answer to this letter by Consul Cameron, and that he may conduct my Embassy to England. See how the Islam oppress the Christian!

No. 344.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received February 12, 1863.)

My Lord, *Godjam, November* 1, 1862.

WITH reference to my despatch of yesterday's date,* reporting the details of my Mission to King Theodore, I would beg to bring your Lordship's notice that there is a great want of natives conversant with English in this country.

I would venture most respectfully to suggest whether it would not be desirable to ask King Theodore to intrust our Government with a fixed number of lads who might receive a certain education, and be afterwards instructed in some useful trade.

This was a favourite scheme of M. Guizot's, but was interrupted by the last French revolution.

Its partial carrying out has been, and may hereafter be, a great advantage to France.

It might also be well if His Majesty were invited to send to England with his Embassy a few of his young officers, who might be put in a position to carry back with them some notions of gunnery and engineering.

I trust I may be pardoned for stating that the value of such as offer, if approved, would be greatly enhanced if it were made by Her Majesty herself, in the event of her writing a reply to King Theodore's letter; or otherwise, by your Lordship directly, in Her Majesty's name, as was done in my letter of introduction, which, I would remark, has been of great value to me.

The want of some document of the same kind nearly led to certain costly presents from the Indian Government being sent back, as may be seen by inclosure No. 2 in my despatch of yesterday.

His Majesty might also, perhaps, be informed that Great Britain will always be ready for such acts of friendship, independently of her decision on his appeals, which must, of course, rest on other grounds.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

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* No. 343.

No. 345.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received February 12, 1863.)

My Lord, *Godjam, November* 1, 1862.

WITH reference to my despatch of yesterday,* giving a narrative of my Mission to King Theodore, I would beg to state that it seems to me useless now to enter into any examination of the pretensions of His Majesty.

The question he wishes to bring forward at present is simply whether Her Majesty will receive an Embassy from him or not, assuring it safe passage on the way.

The point as to the reception of an Embassy was decided favourably in Mr. Plowden's time. With regard to safe passage, it might be desirable to accept in entire good faith His Majesty's declaration to me that he would not make war until he had received an answer to his appeals from Europe ; and to make use of it to obtain a similar assurance from Turkey.

I would suggest that His Majesty should be limited as to the retinue of his Embassy, but that all his presents, some of which may consist of horses, should be accepted. Their being refused on the score of inability to convey them, might give him an impression of our poverty, as compared to other nations, or be construed into indifference to his friendship.

An invitation for his Embassy, written by Her Majesty herself, would, I feel certain, have a good effect.

I would beg to receive instructions as to whether I shall return to His Majesty with the reply from my Government, or accompany His Majesty's Embassy to England, according to the requests contained in his letter.†

In the event of the latter not being thought necessary, I would beg most respectfully to be allowed to return for a short time to Europe.

I have now suffered incessantly from fever for four years, and am so shattered by the attacks I have had in this country, that a very brief residence on the coast would kill me.

Nor can I be of any further use in the interior until the return of the Embassy.

In the event of my going back with an Embassy I would beg to be allowed to bring my own interpreter, as a check to any other.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 346.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received February 12, 1863.)

My Lord, *Godjam, November* 1, 1862.

WITH reference to my despatch of yesterday, giving details of my mission to King Theodore, I would beg that I may be instructed whether I shall again press His Majesty regarding a Treaty.

My own impression is that a new one should be submitted, including some arrangement about commerce with Shoa, of which country he is now entirely master, and leaving out altogether the article regarding separate jurisdiction of a Consul.

The latter, I feel sure, will never be granted by the King—besides which, I believe that if he granted it, neither himself nor the Consul could carry it out.

Suggestive information on this point will be found in Mr. Plowden's despatches written after the ratification of the Treaty with Ras Ali.

It might be worthy of your Lordship's consideration whether a Resident Envoy would, not be better than a Consul.

If Abyssinia allows a Consul to England, she might find it difficult hereafter to refuse one to France, who has subjects in the Country, a settlement in the neighbourhood, and a Catholic mission here under her protection.

An article regarding the slave-trade might be inserted in the new Treaty.

If England and Abyssinia engaged to put down the Slave Trade together, one on the coast, and the other in the interior—I believe that such an arrangement properly worked, would assure us all the political advantages we seek in this country

It would, however, involve the abandonment of the Coast by Turkey, whose only profit from its possessions there, lies in the Slave Trade.

* No. 343. † Inclosure 3 in No. 343.

On the other hand, it would bring the whole coast-line, as well as Abyssinia, under our legitimate protection or supervision—the slave-trade being carried on by the tribes between the uplands and the sea—and at the expense of their Abyssinian neighbours.

I submitted this point of a mutual arrangement one day to His Majesty. He said he would discuss it afterwards.

I would beg to state that unless answers to my despatches of to day and yesterday are forwarded soon, next rainy season, which begins in April, may arrest the projected Embassy, and put off everything for another eighteen months—which time may be profitably employed by others.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 347.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(*Received February* 12, 1863.)

My Lord, *Godjam, November* 1, 1862.

HIS Majesty of Abyssinia having requested me to forward certain presents for His Royal Highness the Duke of Saxe Coburg,* in return for his decoration, the acceptance of which I have already reported—I would respectfully beg permission to have them transmitted to England together with those of His Majesty.

I will otherwise encounter many difficulties in carrying out His Majesty's wishes.

I would also beg to have conveyed a few animals of harmless character for His Royal Highness by the same opportunity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 348.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(*Received March* 9.)†

My Lord, *Axum, January* 1, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to report that I have been intercepted in my journey coastward, by the sudden rising of a rebel on my road.

His object was to possess himself of my person, strengthen himself with my arms and ammunition, and then proceed to the plunder of Adowa.

He is supported by 300 followers.

Intelligence of this having reached me, I remained on my guard at Adowa.

The Governor, at the same time, sent out a hasty levy, to put down the insurgents.

These were beaten back, after a sharp skirmish, and arrived at Adowa at midnight, when I was hurried away by the officials, barely carrying with me my money, ammunition, some clothes, and writing materials.

I am now lodged at Axum, whose church enjoys privileges of sanctuary, similar to those of mediæval Europe.

My person is, therefore, safe. My property left behind is, I trust, equally so, being deposited in the church at Adowa.

This movement has no political significance. The rebel in question, whose name is Lidj Cassa, is a mere robber. His father Atto Goldja, was also a noted brigand, though of influential family. He was slain before Adowa two years since, with two of his sons, while preparing an attack on the town—and his remains were contumeliously buried, a great insult in this country. The object of the surviving son is revenge and plunder.

One of the causes which have laid this province open to so daring a defiance of authority, is King Theodore's having lately sent for the Grandees of Tigré to pay him homage—who have drained the country of their military followers.

This result will, I hope, have one good effect, in shewing His Majesty that he has much to do before he can meditate any but defensive foreign wars.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

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* No. 343.

† Laid before Parliament, 1866.

No. 349.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received March 9.)

My Lord, *Axum, January* 1, 1863.

WITH reference to my previous despatch of this day's date,* stating that the present disturbance in Tigré, though not of importance politically, may at least have the effect of diverting His Majesty King Theodore from any lurking desire to act offensively towards Egypt, I would beg to remark, on the other hand, that reports are still rife, with regard to stated gatherings of Turkish troops at Kassala and Matemma; also to the effect that the Turks have actually attacked the neighbouring Shangallas, on their way to Abyssinia.

These reports, whether true or false, will certainly continue while the questions which King Theodore is going to bring before the European States are being mooted, and can only lead to a continuation of those predatory, butchering excursions, which, unsanctioned by one Government or the other, have discredited both, without national advantage to either.

Such irregular attacks, besides, may give a pretext for more formal hostilities, in which it will be exceedingly difficult to prove the attacking party entirely in the wrong, while immediate mediation will then be put out of the question, till the trial of strength be determined.

I have done what I could, by writing to the British Consul at Khartoum, and to the Pashas of Kassala and Matemma—and by offering to go to Bogos, to keep the Arab tribes there in check, if necessary.

The latter, however, in the present unsettled state of Tigré, is impossible—nor could my surveillance, under any circumstances, have been more than temporary and extremely limited.

I trust that, if it be the intention of our Government to meet King Theodore's appeal in the judicial spirit which it may require, I may be pardoned for suggesting that a commissioner may be sent with advantage, to take up his residence at Bogos, passing to Kassala and Matemma as the seasons would permit, until some decision had been come to—and that King Theodore should be informed of this, and of the object of the appointment: but at the same time warned that this friendly mediation may only damage his cause, unless he keeps his own governors honestly in check.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 350.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received March 9.)

My Lord, *Axum, January* 1, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to report that the letter of appeal to the Emperor of Russia, which I stated in my despatch of 31st October,† that King Theodore projected sending, left his camp about the same time as myself, by a native pilgrim.

That for the French Emperor reached Massowah three weeks since.

With regard to the latter, I am justified in stating that it is accompanied by a secret message, asking back King Theodore's war-saddle.

This was one of His Majesty's paraphernalia, and was stolen from the Royal armourer's at Adowa by the rebel Negoosee, and forwarded through the Roman Catholic Mission as a present to the Emperor Napoleon. He accepted it, sending a return gift of pistols and a sword, which were lost by shipwreck; and some hundred muskets presented in their place through the Mission, in His Imperial Majesty's name.

This was at the same time that French armourers and other Frenchmen were openly engaged and forwarded to Negoosee's camp through the same agency, as reported in Mr. Plowden's despatches of that date.

I saw one of these armourers at Devra-Mai; his life having been spared by King Theodore, he is now in his service.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

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* No. 348. † No. 343.

No. 351.

*Earl Russell to Consul Cameron.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 22, 1863.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 31st of October last,† I have to state to you that it is not desirable for Her Majesty's Agents to meddle in the affairs of Abyssinia, and you would have done better if you had returned to your post at Massowah when the King told you to do so. This it will be right that you should do at once, and you will remain at Massowah until further orders.

You will, of course, keep Her Majesty's Government fully and accurately informed of French proceedings in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 352.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Merivale.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 5, 1863.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you herewith a despatch and its inclosures from Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia,† being a narrative of his Mission to that country.

The inclosed papers being sent in original, I am to request that they may be returned to this office when done with.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 353.

Report by Vice-Consul Walker on the Commerce, &c., of Abyssinia for the year 1863.‡

HAVING recently returned from the coast of Abyssinia, after a residence there of many months, and thinking your Lordship would be glad to be informed of the present state of commercial affairs in that neighbourhood, I have the honour to transmit the following Report, in the hope that it may not be unacceptable to your Lordship.

Most of the commerce of this country, which would be considerable if there were no drawbacks thereto, it being so richly endowed by nature, is brought to Massowah, an island on the coast, which is merely a coral rock not more than a mile and a quarter in circumference, and which is about 200 yards from the mainland. This island is governed by a Kaimakam or Governor, who is subject to the Pasha of Djeddah.

It consists of his residence, which is almost the only tolerable house in the place,—a ruinous fort or tower,—a few warehouses of stone belonging to the Banians (who have transacted business with the Abyssinians for some years); a custom-house of stone in a most dilapidated state; a residence of stone belonging to the Jesuits, and a church which that fraternity are at present constructing; one or two ruinous mosques; a small stone house consisting of two miserable rooms which have been used latterly as the Consulate of Her Britannic Majesty; two dilapidated houses used for similar purposes some years back by the French and Austrian Government; a dirty bazaar, and a numerous collection of miserable straw huts inhabited by the Arab and small Turkish population.

The whole of the export from the interior is brought down by porters, who are employed by the merchants twice a year, viz., in the end of February or commencement of March, when the rains are subsiding on the coast; and before the rains have set in in the interior another caravan, in the end of August, which leaves before the rain commences again on the coast.

These caravans, when they arrive at a place called Ailat, which is situated on the plains of the low country, and about two days' journey from the coast, discharge their porters; their pay from Adowa to Ailat is a dollar a-head.

* Laid before Parliament, 1865. † No. 343. ‡ Laid before Parliament, 1863.

The country about Ailat consists of low sandy plains, which allow of their goods being safely conveyed on camels, mules, and oxen, to the coast, when they are at once unloaded on a kind of stone quay which projects into the sea opposite the island, and immediately shipped across to Massowah, where they are detained in the custom-house till the proper tariff, which consists of 8 per cent., is levied on them.

We have no English merchant-vessels at any time trading with Massowah. Two Indian or Banian vessels visit it during the year. No Turkish vessels go there at all, neither naval nor merchantmen, but about thirty Arab bugalows are continually going backwards and forwards to Djeddah, Suez, Hodeida, and Mocha, and occasionally to Aden during the year. These boats are open, without a deck, with one or two latteen sails, some made of mat, some of canvas, and they seldom, if ever, lose sight of the land, but are constantly hugging the shore. and when night sets in come to an anchor.

The articles of commerce which are brought from the interior of Abyssinia consist of small quantities of negro gold, ivory, musk, coffee,. ghee (or rancid butter), hides, cotton, and a kind of coarse grain called dourah, much used by the natives for making their bread (there are two kinds, the red and white; the latter is most expensive), honey, and wax.

The quantities of these articles brought by the two caravans during the year, as far as I was able to ascertain, consist of—

The large caravan:—

Gold.—Great difficulty to ascertain the quantity that is brought from the interior, as a great deal is smuggled in to avoid the duty.

Ivory.—13,000 lbs.

Musk.—560 lbs.

Coffee.—10,000 lbs.

Ghee.—No tariff; constantly arriving from the frontier.

Hides.—Constantly arriving.

Cotton.—Small quantities brought to the coast, cultivated more for home consumption.

Corn, Dourah, Honey.—Always arriving in small quantities; great difficulty to ascertain the amount.

Wax.—10,000 lbs.

The annual number of mules brought from the interior is about 1,200; their loads averaging from 250 lbs. to 280 lbs. each. Butter, honey, and hides in small quantities at all times in the year. Corn and dourah also.

The value merely of goods arriving from the interior is given, not the weight.

The whole of the gold is bought up by the Banians of Massowah, as is also the ivory.

The gold is sold by the Maria Theresa dollar weight, viz., 1 dollar weight of gold is sold for 16 dollars.

The *ivory* is sold at a dollar per rottolo, which is equivalent to our English pound.

The whole of this article is also bought by the weight, either for specie or barter.

The *musk*, which is brought down in small quantities on account of its scarcity, is consequently very dear, about 12 dollars the ounce.* The price of *coffee* all depends on what quantity there is in the market; when the large caravan arrives from the interior in the end of August it averages from 8 to 9 rottoli the dollar. The price of *ghee* is about 3½ robeit the dollar. The robeit is equivalent to 1½ lbs.

The price of common *hides* averages from ¾ of a dollar to a dollar a-head.

Spotted Panther skins at 1 dollar and 1½ dollar each.

Cotton, which is brought down in small quantities, is sold from 8 to 9 rottoli the dollar.

Corn is sold by the kale,† and generally runs from 9 to 15 kale the dollar.

The price of *dourah* is the same as the corn.

Honey and *wax* are sold at the following prices:—the honey is sold at 3½ robeit the dollar; the wax at 1*s.*, or 6 piastres, the cake, which is round, and about the size of a saucer.

There are about fifteen to twenty Banian merchants on the Island of Massowah, and they are, in fact, the only men who possess any money on the island. They have two vessels of their own, which are built similar to the bugalows, but far larger, which trade between the island and Bombay twice in the year. About 20,000 dollars yearly is expended in the country, money being scarce, the rest of the mercantile transactions is carried on by way of barter by the Banians, who seem to monopolize the whole of the trade.

Imports into Massowah.—These Indian merchants generally bring to the island quantities of red damask silk and coarse white cloths called bafta (which the natives residing on

* The dollar is equivalent to 4*s.* 4*d.* of our English money

† The kale is equal to about 4 quart measure.

the coast wear thrown around their bodies; the Abyssinians spin their own togas); they also import moist sugar, sugar candy, printed cottons, coloured beads, and rice.

The dwellings of the three Consuls, English, French, and Austrian, as also of the one or two Europeans, have always been situated on the mainland about three miles from the island, at a place called Moncooloo.

The whole of this low sandy plain to the length of sixty to seventy miles is under the power of the Turks, who have a small garrison to the amount of 100 men, chiefly Arabs, stationed at Arkeeko, which is about three miles by water from Massowah, and about ten across the plains. These men are under the command of the Alimanaga or Colonel; there are now very few, if any, Turkish soldiers, almost the whole of them having been sent back to Jeddah.

The Naib of Arkeeko, who in the time of Bruce's journey to Abyssinia was quite a powerful Prince, is now nothing else but a mere puppet under the power of the Governor of Massowah, who orders him about as an ordinary vassal; his jurisdiction extends over the Arab and Bedouin Arab population around the coast to the extent of thirty to forty miles, and he at times marches his men up on the high table-land in the direction of Bogos, which lies on the frontiers of Abyssinia, and levies a tax on the inhabitants; this tax is levied either by persuasion or by force.

The low country is inhabited by Arabs and Bedouin Arabs, who live in miserable huts; most of these tribes have large herds of cattle and flocks of sheep on which they subsist.

The rainy season commences on the coast at the latter end of October or commencement of November. The rainy season in the interior begins about the end of February or commencement of March; and from the end of April to the commencement of September and October the River Tekazzee, which divides the province of Tigré from Abyssinia Proper, is so swollen by the rains that it is impossible to be forded.

The whole of the low-lands during the summer months are completely devoid of vegetation, the stunted shrubs and grass being completely burned up in fact, neither are there any leaves on the trees, nor is there a blade of grass to be seen; all the cattle are driven away from the coast up to the high country, even the mules will not survive the heat. The temperature on an average during the hot summer months runs from 115 to 120 in the shade.

The island and all the coast around can be compared to nothing but a vast furnace where there is nothing to enliven the eye, and where it is impossible to find rest either by day or night. The Abyssinians from the interior cannot live in this climate for any length of time during the continuation of this heat; and to give an idea of the climate, a horse that I bought from an Abyssinian just arrived from the interior survived the change for two months, and then gradually sank under it. In fact the climate here, without any exaggeration, is not adapted for any European constitution.

The rainy season commences on the coast, as I have mentioned before, in the latter end of August or commencement of September, and then commences a frightful succession of fevers throughout the whole native population on the coast till the rainy season has completely set in.

To give an idea of this my wife and self, during the one year we were resident on the coast, had a succession of fevers one after the other; my wife was attacked eight times, myself five. The weakening effect these fevers have upon the system takes a long time to eradicate its evil effects.

After the rains have completely set in the grass commences to spring again, the leaves appears on the trees, and nature seems once more to revive after this lengthened and severe drought; but the herbage which springs up at first contains some poisonous matter till it has grown a sufficient height, and I have known from five to ten mules to die in a night in the village from the effects of this poisonous food.

At no time of the year are there any vegetables to be had on the island with the exception of a few tomatos and onions, which are imported there, and Europeans are in consequence attacked by a running sore, which is somewhat similar to the dead-mark of Bagdad.

Neither the French nor Austrian Government have had any Representatives on the island for the last year or two, and during the year that I was resident on the coast only one French man-of-war touched at the island.

The French during the time I was resident at Massowah, purchased a place situated between Zeilah and the Babelmandel coast, by name Obokh, from the Dunkalie Chief, for which they gave 10,000 dollars. The Chief of the village after receiving the money disappeared, and his successor did not countenance the claim or right of the French to purchase this site of land, nor of the Chief to dispose of it, and the few huts that were

erected by the French on that coast whilst occupied in surveying, after their departure were thrown into the sea by the natives.

I need hardly mention that there is a good roadstead for ships, and also good water here, as most likely your Lordship must have seen Captain Dayman's (of Her Majesty's ship "Hornet") account, who called there some years since to take soundings. But the place is devoid of vegetation, and if the natives were to turn restive, great difficulty would be found in obtaining food by the settlers, for at least some little time, until a certain amount of dread was thrown on the natives by troops that would have to be brought there for that purpose.

No Romish priests, either French or Italian, are now tolerated in the interior of the country of Abyssinia; there are a few on the frontier, in the neighbourhood of Bogos, and also on the Island of Massowah.

There is very little trade done between Massowah and Souakin: most of the traders from Khartoum send their caravans to Souakin in lieu of Massowah; on one account, owing to the distance being less and the route more convenient, and again because they are able to obtain a better market for their goods.

Before concluding, I may mention that the population of Massowah does not consist of more than 1,000, mostly Arabs, and a very few Turks. It is not fortified in any way; there are one or two rusty old cannons lying on the beach, but dangerous to be used; in fact the last time they were brought into requisition, on the arrival of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, they were found extremely deficient and I may say almost useless, owing to the neglectful manner in which they had been allowed to remain for years.

During the time of the large caravan, which is in the months of September and October, the Abyssinian merchants and their followers live on the island. They are all armed with lances and knives. They hate most fiercely their Mahomedan entertainers. The few troops of the Kaimakam are quartered at Arkeeko, on the mainland.

The Abyssinians feel that Massowah, the only port there is for their goods, is in the hands of the infidels, and the Christian and Mahometan hatred runs so high that the Abyssinians will not eat anything that has been killed by the Mahometans, nor, *vice versâ*, the Mahometans the meat that has been killed by the Christians.

The *Slave Trade* is carried on in Abyssinia by the Mahometan population, though the King does not sanction it himself, and droves of from 30 to 40 men, women, and children are brought down to the coast, are secreted in the Arab villages round Massowah, and, under cover of night, put in small boats and dropped down by the tide to the larger crafts that are awaiting a little distance below the island. They are then immediately put on board, and are taken across to Djeddah, Mocha, or Hodeida, where they are kept till a fair price is obtained. In Massowah slaves are sold secretly, the Pasha pretending not to sanction it; in Djeddah in the public market.

As I have mentioned before, small quantities of *Cotton* are brought down from the interior.

I may observe, before concluding, that the country of Abyssinia is extremely endowed for the cultivation of this article, and large quantities most likely would be cultivated for exportation but for the uncertain and disturbed state the country is always in; and, until some settled government be established, it would be useless to do anything with a view to the extension of the growth of this staple source of wealth.

June 5, 1863.

No. 354.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received July 5.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, June* 25, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to inclose despatches received this day through Aden from Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah.

My maps of the country are very imperfect, and I should be glad if any map exists whose accuracy can be depended on, to have one in the archives of this Agency. A great point to be ascertained will be the line of Turkish frontier, as then any action could be brought to bear on the Turkish Pasha or authority from Constantinople.

Captain Cameron's packets generally reach me at the moment of the English mail leaving, or I should have had them transcribed for the information of Her Majesty's Ambassador; and in writing next mail to Captain Cameron I shall request him

to send such despatches as may be of interest, in duplicate, for communication to Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

No. 355.

*Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received July 5.)**

(Extract.) *Bogos, Abyssinia, March* 31, 1863.

WITH reference to my despatch of 1st January,† I have the honour to state that King Theodore having sent one of his generals to Tigré to break up the force of the brigand Cassa, the latter has been stripped of everything, and has taken refuge in the Turkish territory.

The road being thus once more rendered safe, as I had received a very doubtful reply from the Pasha of Kassala to my despatch, pointing out to him the necessity of restraining the predatory incursions of the frontier Arabs on Abyssinia, I considered it my duty to proceed to Bogos, which, as well as the neighbouring country, has long been under our protection.

This was the more necessary as a number of the cattle of which the natives had been stripped in Mr. Plowden's time, and only a portion of which had been returned on his application to the Egyptian Government, still remained to be handed over, and the inhabitants looked to me to see the work of my predecessor brought to a close.

As the fate of Cassa had not then been quite ascertained, and the recent disturbance n Tigré had raised many robber bands, who availed themselves of the confusion to plunder on their own account, I applied to the authorities, who furnished me with an escort of 5,000 men across the River Mareb.

The strength of the escort was regulated by their own fears, as the King had previously written to say that if anything happened to me he would reduce Tigré to a desert, and he would have kept his word.

After a stay of some days at Hamazeyn, where I had the satisfaction of settling a local feud, which threatened to throw the whole province into confusion, I proceeded to Bogos, where I found matters much in the state I had anticipated in the conclusion of my despatch of 31st October.‡

The Shangallas under the Egyptian rule had come down, and swept away 300 head of cattle from there, and the Roman Catholic Missionary, Stella, who resides at Keren, had gone to the Shangalla country to effect, if possible, their return. The remaining inhabitants had driven their flocks and herds into the mountains.

Within the last week, the Shangallas have again been down, plundered twelve villages of their cattle, and killed nine of the inhabitants, leaving three more wounded.

A complaint has been made to me by a Chief of Barka, that his brother, an undoubted Abyssinian subject, and a favourite of King Theodore, has been carried away, and is now in prison at Kassala.

This on the Kassala side. On that of Massowah, the Naïb of Arkeeko has given shelter to the brigand Cassa, and has been collecting tribute in every direction, while seven of the principal inhabitants of the Halhal have been tied by his Wakil, and sent to the Habab.

The country is in such confusion in consequence, that a messenger whom I sent to the Wakil, begging him to be careful of not levying tribute on Abyssinian subjects, has been obliged to return.

A statement of these facts is being carried to King Theodore by his representative here, who persists, with his master, in viewing the Turkish claim to the Bogos, Halhal, and Habab as illusory.

Whatever the claim in question may be worth, it only asserts a right to levy tribute, and makes no pretence either to furnish protection to the inhabitants, ameliorate their condition, or keep them in restraint.

I have written to King Theodore twice since my last despatches to the Foreign Office; once telling him that I had forwarded a letter to the Pasha of Kassala, to insure tranquillity on his side, and that it was now a point of honour with His Majesty to do the same by his own Governors, and a second time, from here to day, putting the best colour I can on facts which it is impossible for me to ignore, recommending him to establish a regular Government of some kind here, which can easily be kept in check by my *locum tenens* for

* Laid before Parliament, 1866. † No. 348. ‡ No. 343.

Massowah, and telling him that I will go to Kassala myself, in order to settle everything there as far as possible.

My letters from Kassala assures me that I will have no difficulty in doing so, which I have also told the King, in order to prevent his making any hostile movement.

What effect the news from here may have on a character at once so passionate and politic, it is impossible for me to say.

He may either allow his grievances to accumulate, in order to lay them before Europe hereafter, or at once take violent measures to compel the Turks to a certain amount of decency in their transactions on his frontier. He will, however, do nothing without seeing his way.

But for his having called away the principal nobles of Tigré, of which I before informed your Lordship, serious local hostilities would already have commenced, His Majesty having given orders to the Governor of Hamazeyn, immediately to resent any aggression on the part of the Turks. I reported this in my despatch of 22nd July last.*

I have to-day written a letter to the Pasha of Massowah, in which, without entering on the vexed question as to what part of these Provinces belongs to Abyssinia, what to Turkey, I have recommended him to keep watch over his collectors of tribute, whose irregularities are great, and to set at liberty the Chiefs made prisoners by the Naïb Wakil, unless he is quite sure that the Wakil was in the right, as all these matters may soon be laid before Europe, and it may tell mischievously for his country, if he is proved in the wrong.

I have alluded to the rebel Cassa's being in his district, but left it to himself to act as he thinks most wise.

I shall proceed to Kassala as soon as I receive answers to my despatches of 31st October.

I would leave at once, but the country on that side too is unsettled, and the bearer of my next batch of letters might be killed or captured.

No. 356.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received July 5)†

My Lord, *Bogos, Abyssinia, March* 31, 1863.

I HAVE stated in my previous despatch of this day's date that, while on my way here I was employed at Hamazeyn in settling a local feud.

The circumstances are as follows:—

After being escorted across the march, I was handed over for safe-conduct to the Governor of Hamazeyn, Dejaj Imam.

Dejaj Imam is a young man and representative of one of the proudest feudal houses of Tigré.

After treating me with the most disinterested hospitality for some days, he informed me that he was going to escort me himself, with some thousand followers, as far as Bogos.

This was by no means necessary, as the country beyond Hamazeyn was quite safe.

I had been privately informed of his motive in making the proposal.

There was an old dispute pending between himself and a certain Cantiba Bahit, one of his subordinates. The object of Imam was to enforce his superiority by quartering his retainers in mass, in my name, on the Cantiba, and chaining him if, as was certain, he refused to supply them with provisions.

I was unwilling to be made a convenience of, on such a score. I told this plainly to the young Chief, at the same time pointing out to him that, under the stern rule of King Theodore the course he was pursuing might bring ruin upon himself and his family.

Imam, on finding that his object had been read, insisted that he would proceed alone and chain the Cantiba without further ceremony.

Fortunately, he is greatly attached to me. After much soothing and remonstrance, I got him to dismiss his followers, who were already mounted, and elicited a promise that he would do nothing further for the present.

The next step was to find Asterakis, or Peace-makers.

This office of Asteraki is in universal requisition throughout Abyssinia—nor can anything better evince the extent to which the true spirit of Christianity has permeated a people by nature so litigious.

* No. 341.

† Laid before Parliament, 1866.

In domestic disputes the family priest commonly acts as Asteraki. Divorce is never sued for until his attempts at reconciliation have failed. A servant dismissed will seek a friend of his master to act as Asteraki. Law-suits are often evaded by a similar appeal. And in civil wars, or intestine dissensions, the efforts of the clergy and nobles, in the capacity of Asteraki, are no less formal than continuous.

I sent the King's officer who accompanies me and my major-domo, an old man much respected here, as Asterakis to the Cantiba, to persuade him to visit me and let me see matters settled before I left.

He foolishly refused to do this.

Next evening, I found that Imam had stolen away, levied all his followers secretly, and was then in full march on the demesnes of the Cantiba.

Mounting immediately, I overtook him late at night.

The next day I persuaded the Cantiba to come to me at once. Many priests from the neighbouring villages gathered to assist me in my mission; and, after some hours passed in subduing passion, on the one side, and obstinacy on the other, I succeeded in establishing a reconciliation.

Each of the contending parties, with their principal vassals, was sworn separately on the scriptures, a cross, and the picture of Saint George, to keep the peace. They then kissed each others' feet in token of contrition and humiliation; when, after a few brief speeches from the priests and men of standing, the whole community adjourned to a general merry-making.

I thus had the satisfaction of saving some hundred lives, restoring tranquillity to a province already torn to pieces by former convulsions, and rescuing the scion of an old and respected family from probable destruction.

I would not, however, have thought it necessary to report the matter, which was only an episode, and not in the regular course of business, but it has forced a question on me, regarding which I had already thought of writing to your Lordship:—

Namely, whether, in future, an Envoy should not be formally directed to purchase what he may require whenever possible.

The advantages of this would be as follows:—

It would release the Envoy in a great measure from the control of the officers attached to him, call Balderabbas, whose interference with his movements, espionage over his actions, and underhand intermeddling with his affairs both public and private, are as mischievous as they are disagreeable.

It would prevent those officers, as well as others attached by the King's order to the Mission, from dragging about with them large suites, and eating up the country in the Envoy's name.

It would check much secret extortion of money by them from the peasantry in lieu of provisions, which the Envoy is thus forced, after all, to purchase for himself.

It would be more in accordance with the general conduct of Englishmen in foreign countries, and so place our national character in a fairer light.

It would be a boon to the poor country people, and greatly tend to make us popular, as I had reason to prove when last at Adowa and Axum.

Both these towns have municipal privileges, which I did not consider that a stranger like myself was justified in breaking through.

My moderation was the theme of every tongue.

It would establish a practical independence of the local Government, which it has always been the principle in this country not to accord to strangers; and so help to break through the old system of things.

Finally, it would prevent the name of the Envoy being made use of to gratify ill will, for which there are many facilities, as may be seen in the case now reported.

The one disadvantage would be an increase in the expense of the Mission, and I confess that I shrink before this, when I consider the amount of money I have been forced to spend here, and this with every sense of the necessity of economy.

Our relations, however, with this country may some day require to be defined.

I wish this despatch to stand among the archives, and will furnish minute details hereafter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 357.

Earl Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1863.

I TRANSMIT for your Excellency's information the accompanying copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Cameron,* on the subject of the Turkish aggressions on the frontier of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL

No. 358.

Earl Russell to Consul-General Colquhoun.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 24, 1863.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 25th of June,† I transmit, for your information, the accompanying copy of a despatch from Captain Cameron* respecting the state of the frontier districts of Abyssinia; and I also transmit, in accordance with your request, a map of Upper Nubia and Abyssinia.‡

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 359.

Mr. Murray to Consul Cameron.§

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 13, 1863.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 31st of March last,‖ suggesting that you should be formally authorized to purchase what you may require, whenever possible, with the view of freeing yourself from the interference of the King of Abyssinia's officers.

In reply, I am to refer you to Lord Russell's despatch of the 22nd of April last,¶ and to state to you that as you have been ordered to return to and remain at Massowah, your proposal need not be considered.

I am also to remind you, with reference to the expressions "Envoy" and "Mission," which repeatedly occur in your despatch, that, as Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, you hold no Representative character in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 360.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(*Received August* 28.)

My Lord, *Gadarif, Soudan, May* 18, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to state that, in consequence of my late *locum tenens*, Mr. Walker, having been appointed to the Vice-Consulate of Tripoli, I have selected a gentleman named Speedy to supply his place.

Mr. Speedy was formerly Lieutenant in Her Majesty's 81st Regiment, and served some time in India doing duty as Adjutant with the 10th Regiment of Punjab Infantry. I inclose a certificate to that effect.

He voluntarily sold out, and came to Abyssinia in order to make some arrangements with King Theodore for his disciplining his troops.

The King's mind being occupied with other matters, he left on good terms with His Majesty. I found him in Kassala elephant shooting, and have taken advantage of his being here to bring him on with me as far as this. His instructions are to collect all the information possible with regard to the frontier tribes here; their relations with Abyssinia, Turkey, or Egypt; their strength, character, &c. This he will put into the

* No. 355. † No. 354. ‡ By Keith Johnston. § Laid before Parliament, 1865.
‖ No. 356. ¶ No. 351.

shape of a political Report; so that in the event of the settling of a boundary line for Abyssinia—so long pressed by my predecessors—being forced on Her Majesty's Government, the latter may have some data to go upon.

He is then ordered to proceed to Massowah, to arrange matters there, and afterwards to return to Bogos, in order to put an end to the continually recurring raids on either side, and check the unjust levying of tribute by the Turks, until the further pleasure of Her Majesty's Government be known.

His place at Massowah is occupied for the present by King Theodore's Interpreter, whom I sent there to bring up your Lordship's replies to my despatches of the 31st of October last.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure in No. 360.

Certificate.

Peshawur, December 7, 1860.

LIEUTENANT T. C. S. SPEEDY, 81st Foot, has been Adjutant of the 10th Regiment Punjaub Infantry from August 1858 to this date.

The manner in which Lieutenant Speedy conducted his duties, his intelligence and his zeal, have always been such as to attract notice, and merit praise in the highest degree.

In all the duties of instruction which fell to his share as Adjutant, he has been particularly prominent and successful.

Lieutenant Speedy's patience and good temper with the men has been one of the most satisfactory points in his claim to merit; and he now leaves the regiment to settle in New Zealand, as much regretted, both by officers and men, in his absence, as his presence in the regiment was valued and appreciated.

(Signed) G. HUNTLEY GORDON, *Captain,*
Commanding Her Majesty's 10*th Regiment Punjaub Infantry.*

No. 361.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received August 28.)

My Lord, *Gadarif, Soudan, May* 18, 1863.

WITH reference to my previous despatch of this day's date,† stating that I had selected a gentleman named Speedy to act as my *locum tenens* at Massowah, I would beg once more to press upon your Lordship the advisability of erecting that post into an unpaid Vice-Consulate.

In support of this suggestion, I may observe that your Lordship will perceive, by the despatch already referred to, that I have directed Mr. Speedy to exert his utmost influence to check violence and injustice on the Turkish side of the Abyssinian frontier—a difficult task, unless his hands are strengthened by the Home Government, and one which must constantly recur, until we have decided as to whether we shall abandon or continue our protection of the Christian tribes of Bogos, &c., to which we are still partially committed.

Besides this, the Slave Trade is more rife than ever at Massowah; and I find a disposition to deal summarily with Christian Abyssinians, either residing at the coast, or passing through Massowah, which requires to be strongly resisted: in order to which, some higher authority than that of a private Secretary left in charge would seem to be necessary.

I will write to your Lordship further with regard to putting this somewhat undefined Consulate on a permanent footing, after I shall have received your Lordship's replies to my despatches of the 31st of October last. My present suggestion will sufficiently meet all exigencies for some time to come.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

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* No. 343. † No. 360.

No. 362

*Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received August 28.)**

My Lord, *Kadarif, Soudan, May* 20, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to inclose for your Lordship copies of four despatches of mine to our Consul-General at Alexandria. As the public service may require that you should be acquainted with some portions of their contents as soon as possible, I shall do myself the honour of reporting to your Lordship hereafter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 362.

*Consul Cameron to Consul-General Colquhoun.**

Sir, *Kadarif, Soudan, May* 20, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to state that my late *locum tenens*, Mr. Walker, having left Massowah, I have requested a gentleman named Speedy, to take his place.

His orders for the present, are to communicate directly with Her Majesty's Consul at Djeddah, in any cases which may arise between himself and the Kaimakam of Massowah, I would beg, that if you approve of this arrangement, you will as soon as possible inform Mr. Speedy of your approval. My experience has shown me that direct reference to Djeddah is the only way open of dispatching the business of Massowah, during my absence.

If you agree with me, he might be furnished with some document to the Turkish authorities, which would give him an official standing in their eyes.

I have determined to return to Abyssinia by Matemma, in order to make myself acquainted with the state of affairs on that side of the Egyptian frontier. The confusion there seems as great as at Bogos, on the south-eastern side whence I have just come. My object in coming to Soudan was to visit Kassala, whither the Roman Catholic priest, Stella, who at present enjoys paramount influence at Bogos, had gone to reclaim certain cattle lately taken from the inhabitants of that country by the neighbouring tribes under Egypt, also to inquire, what had been done in regard to the cattle and people, swept away from thence by a former Pasha of Kassala in 1854; and which, on our representation to the Pashalic of Egypt, that Government promised to restore. Finally, to do my utmost to prevent such irregular attacks for the future. With regard to the first of these objects, you are aware that, during the late troubles in Abyssinia, Mr. Plowden assumed the protection of the tribes of Bogos and others in the neighbourhood. A step which, although I cannot refer to archives, I must suppose was known to, and not disapproved by Her Majesty's Government.

I do not feel justified without further instruction in relinquishing an influence which has already done much, to prevent the absorption of these friendless people into Islam. To avert from them those more material evils that everywhere follow Mussulman predominance on this unhappy continent, and which may be of political importance to us hereafter.

Taking this view, and finding that Père Stella's application had been neglected by the Pasha of Soudan, who was then at Kassala, I have written the latter the enclosed letter informing him, that I still consider Bogos under British protection, and that if he cannot or will not return the cattle in question, before the end of August, Mr. Speedy is directed to forward to you a detailed report on the subject, with a statement of the value of the property taken, when it will rest with others, according to the character of the report, to decide whether to press the matter or not.

I have taken this ground because, I expect it will be alleged, that there have been counter aggressions on the Abyssinians' side, and that these must be settled before the claims of the Bogos people can be met.

To which it may be replied, that whatever may have been done by others, the people of the protected provinces have never been accused of aggression. They are, in fact, too weak to protect themselves. There may be other excuses which Mr. Speedy's report will explain.

The fact is, the Egyptian Government is totally indifferent on the subject, and cares little if its frontier people plunder or are plundered as long as they pay their tribute. The best way to rouse it to a sense of its responsibility would be to make a money claim on

* Laid before Parliament, 1866.

behalf of these protected tribes. If it only had the effect of preventing further irritation of King Theodore, until the return of his Embassies from Europe, the advantages of such a step would be great.

In regard to future aggressions on the protected provinces from the Egyptian side, I have directed Mr. Speedy to remonstrate strongly in every case, and to assess property taken, as he has been ordered to do in the present instance, forwarding the assessment to you; whether urged or not such documents may be useful for reference hereafter.

As regards the Abyssinian side, I have done my best to impress on King Theodore, the necessity of restraining these aimless and unauthorized expeditions, and shown him how mischievous they may be to his cause.

I have not hitherto been without success, and will continue the same course as I have opportunity.

As regards the second object I had in view, viz., the claims of the people of Bogos, for the individuals and cattle taken in 1854, the case is clear, and may easily be gathered from my predecessor's letters lodged in your archives.

A Pasha of Kassala, inflamed by fanaticism, and who makes no secret that Islam ought to be advanced by the sword, falls upon an inoffensive Christian people, under our protection, carries into slavery 350 men women and children, and distributes among his followers 1,800 head of cattle, besides goats and sheep.

His Government, on the report of our representative here, repudiates such barbarity The people taken are subsequently returned. In the meantime our representative leaves for the Interior, and never returns. The local authorities, profiting by the want of pressure from without, have delayed the return of the cattle to this day. Having formally taken this matter over on the part of the people of Bogos, my course is plain. I will have nothing to do with the local authorities who are of a stamp, to throw disgrace on any power pretending to the slightest civilization, nor will I have anything to do with payment in cattle, which may delay all settlement indefinitely.

Taking Mr. Plowden's statement in his despatch of 19th October, 1855,* as a base, I have assessed the value of 1,800 head of cattle at the Bogos price, with the average loss, to their former proprietors, from the date when they were taken to the present time. I annex the assessment to this despatch, to be dealt with as you may think proper.

In regard to my third object, viz., the using my official influence to prevent further aggression, I would beg to state, that I have already seen several of the frontier chiefs between this and Bogos, and remonstrated with them on their lawlessness, explained to them that they may be made to return what they have taken from Abyssinia, and have at the same time spoken or written to various authorities here on the subject, and I shall continue doing this until I re-enter Abyssinia.

I have also requested Mr. Speedy on his way to Massowah, to visit as many chiefs as possible, formally in my name with the same object.

He has further orders to consider the *statu quo* of the hitherto protected provinces, when Mr. Plowden left them, as the true one, until further instructions from you; and, taking it for granted that they belong to Abyssinia, who levies tribute from them, to remonstrate strongly against any double levying of tribute on the part of the Turks of Massowah, and he is directed in this case likewise to assess the amount of tribute taken by the Turks from the time of Mr. Plowden's leaving until now, for lodgment in your archives in the event of its being thought necessary to press repayment.

I have informed the Kaimakam of Massowah of this, so that if he chooses to act as he has hitherto done on this point, he will at least be doing so with a knowledge of possible consequences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 362.

Consul Cameron to the Pasha of Soudan.†

Excellence, *Kadarif, Soudan, le* 19 *Mai,* 1863.

PERMETTEZ-MOI d'abord d'exprimer mes regrets que je n'ai pas eu le plaiser de vous trouver à Kassala.

Mon but principal en visitant le Soudan était de consulter avec les autorités ici, afin qu'ils fassent cesser les incursions féroces des peuplades sur la frontière Abyssinienne, qui vous payent de tribut, et qui se jettent sur l'Abyssinie pour piller et tuer les Abyssins dans leur voisinage.

* Not in the Foreign Office. † Laid before Parliament, 1866.

Personne ne sait mieux que votre Excellence que les vrais intérêts, aussi bien que la réputation du Gouvernement Egyptien, souffrent par ces incursions irrégulières. Ils souffriront encore plus, si de tels faits sont publiés en Europe.

J'espère donc que vous prendrez des mesures sévères pour restreindre autant que possible ces brigandages pendant que, de ma part, je ferai mon mieux à mon retour chez le Roi Théodorus, pour les empêcher de l'autre coté, comme, en effet, j'ai fait déjà, et avec quelque succès.

Il y a encore un point sur lequel je me fais l'honneur d'écrire à votre Excellence.

Quelques semaines avant mon arrivée à Bogos les gens de Bisha et des Bareas assujettis à l'Egypte ont enlevés 300 vaches des gens de Bogos.

Les gens de Bogos ont été sous notre protection spéciale pendant les guerres civiles qui déchiraient l'Abyssinie jusqu'à l'élévation du Roi actuel au trône, et quoique Sa Majesté est aujourd'hui assez puissant pour garder ses propres domaines, l'amitié qui existe entre mon Gouvernement et le vôtre, aussi bien que les liens qui nous attachent à l'Abyssinie, me justifient, dans ce cas-çi, en vous priant de faire payer ces vaches à mon aide, M. Speedy, qui restera à Bogos jusqu'à la fin d'Aôut pour les recevoir.

S'il n'a pas une réponse avant ce tems-la, il a des ordres à faire un rapport spécial à Alexandrie, accompagné par une schedule représentant la valeur en argent des vaches volées des gens de Bogos, afin que mes supérieurs décident si elles ne doivent pas être remboursées par votre Gouvernement.

Il faut s'en souvenir sur ce point que les tribus de Bogos sont parmi les plus inoffensifs de l'Afrique ; mais, s'ils ne l'étaient pas, je ne puis pas croire qu'un pays comme le vôtre voudrait encourager un système de brigandage, qui ne fait qu'empêcher l'établissement d'une entente cordiale entre les deux nations.

M. Speedy a des ordres à visiter les chefs, ou Egyptiens on Abyssins, qui se trouvent entre ici et Massowah, afin de les conseiller de cesser à attaquer l'un l'autre.

J'ai prié votre Wakil à Kassala de lui fournir un officier quelconque pour le supporter dans ces efforts amicals.

Mais j'espère bien que vous agirez fortement aussi, comme je vous ai déjà promis de faire de ma part.

J'ai, &c.

(Signé) C. DUNCAN CAMERON,
Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Massowah.

Inclosure 3 in No. 362.

ASSESSMENT of Value in Maria Theresa dollars of Cattle due by the Egyptian Government to the Inhabitants of Bogos, in lieu of those plundered by the Troops of Kassala, on the 23rd of February, 1854, with Estimate of Loss to Proprietors in consequence of non-payment from that date to the present.*

Number.	Desciption.	Average price in Maria Theresa dollars.	Total of price.	Remarks.
1800	Oxen and cows	3 per head	5400	
	Estimated loss in increase, &c., allowing for casualties	2 per head	3,600	
Grand total ..	..	..	9,000	9000 Maria Theresa dollars.

Kadarif, Soudan, May 20, 1863.

I hereby certify that I have carefully investigated the above claim, that I believe the number of cattle to be approximately correct, and that the estimated loss has been expressly fixed by me at a lower rate than the truth.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON,
Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Massowah.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1866.

Inclosure 4 in No. 362.

Consul Cameron to Consul-General Colquhoun.

Sir, *Kadarif, Soudan, May* 20, 1863.

WITH reference to my despatch of this day's date, inclosing an assessment of the value of cattle due by the Egyptian Government to the people of Bogos, I have the honour to state that I have been informed by Monsignor Stella, the Roman Catholic Missionary there, that the French Consulate at Alexandria has obtained 18,000 francs on this score, which is to be distributed by his vicar, Monsignor Biancheri, on his projected visit to the Mission station.

The Roman Catholic Mission stands so ill with King Theodore, on purely political grounds, that I have told my *locum tenens*, Mr. Speedy, on his return to Bogos, to avoid allowing himself to be mixed up in any manner with this distribution, but to ascertain how the money has been divided, and to write to you on the subject.

The sum granted is totally inadequate to the loss, and I do not think that the matter should be allowed to rest there. Besides the claim I have made, there will be one for sheep and goats, for which I have no data.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON,
Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Massowah.

Inclosure 5 in No. 362.

Consul Cameron to Consul-General Colquhoun *

Sir, *Kadarif, Soudan, May* 20, 1863.

WITH reference to my despatch of this day's date, stating that Mr. Speedy is directed to go down to Massowah, visiting as many native chiefs on his way as he can, I would beg to mention that he has expressed a desire to open friendly relations with the tribes called indiscriminately Barea, Basa, and Shangalla.

The service is not quite safe, but I have left it to himself, and placed some articles at his disposal as ransom for any Abyssinian slaves he may meet there, presents, &c.

Mr. Speedy in a late shooting excursion penetrated farther among the adjoining tribes than any European has hitherto done, and I have no doubt that the report on the tribes of the Egyptian frontier which he has been directed to draw up will be replete with interest.

One of the most advantageous results of his succeeding in establishing a friendship with this people will be the checking of the slave trade which they carry on in Abyssinian Christians, an object which, in accordance with instructions issued to my predecessor, may be possibly hereafter effectually arrested by Treaty.

Another advantage will be that a communication will have been opened with these tribes, in the event of the settling of the Egyptian and Abyssinian frontiers, in which they form a third and most important party, being forced upon our consideration. In regard to the traffic in slaves, I would beg to draw your attention to Mr. Plowden's despatch to you of the 19th October, 1855,† and his suggestion that the Pasha of Egypt should be urged to cause all the Christian Abyssinians in Soudan to be sent back to their country as an act of grace. If we could effect this, I know nothing that would give a stronger idea alike of our good-will and the benefit which may be derived from it, on both which points I think that King Theodore is inclined to doubt. As regards the Basa, I may add that they inhabit the country to the north-west of Tigré, on which they are continually making inroads. They are plundered of what is called tribute in these countries by both Egypt and Abyssinia, but never without fierce resistance.

They acknowledge no master, nor could they be induced to submit to either of their more powerful neighbours by any diplomatic intervention.

They are a handsome race, with long crispy hair, admirable warriors, republican in their form of government, simple and austere in domestic life, and in their political singularly honest and true to their word.

They are said to muster only 6,000 spears, and preserve their independence without the aid of guns or horses, neither of which they possess.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON,
Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Massowah.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1866.

† Not in the Foreign Office.

Inclosure 6 in No. 362.

*Consul Cameron to Consul-General Colquhoun.**

(Extract.) *Kadarif, Soudan, May* 20, 1863.

YOU will have gathered from my despatches of this day's date, that Mr. Speedy will not be fixed at Massowah during my absence.

The fact is that the affairs of the Abyssinian frontier, have fallen into confusion, principally in consequence of Mr. Plowden's agent at Massowah being of necessity tied to the spot for the transmission of letters, money, &c.

My communications are at present kept up through one of the King's interpreters, whom I sent down to bring the answers to my despatches of 31st October last.

It will give you an idea of the slowness with which my Government correspondence is carried on, when I state that I do not yet know whether those letters have reached England or not, yet I have received a packet from Massowah to day.

No. 363.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received August 28.)

My Lord, *Kadarif, Soudan, May* 28, 1863.

I HAVE had the honour to receive a despatch dated January 8, 1863,† from your Lordship, requiring me to forward you a report on the trade of Souakin, in reference to a projected Consular establishment there.

I have made arrangements for the collection of the necessary information.

In the meantime, I have received an application from a Greek gentleman named Austides Pateraki, for the unpaid Vice Consulate of Souakin.

Mr. Pateraki served as Second Class Interpreter with the Bashi Basquk Corps, formed during the Russian war, from 11th November, 1855, to 30th September, 1856, and was honourably mentioned for his services in general orders of 11th and 17th November, 1855, while at Varna, by General Havelock.

He is at present merchant here, and also represents the Greek firm of Count Paleologos, established in Manchester, London, and Cairo.

His principal establishment is at Kassala, which he is going to extend to Matemma, to which place he is now accompanying me, in order to see his way. The firm of Paleologos is the only one which is endeavouring to forward British commerce between Suez and Zanzibar.

This alone, and the fact of his being a solitary pioneer here for our mercantile interest, would give Mr. Pateraki a claim to your Lordship's consideration.

I may, however, state that I have seen enough of Mr. Pateraki to be assured that he would not abuse the trust reposed in him.

Such a Vice Consulate, if established, should be under Djeddah, to which Souakin is subordinate.

I have written to our Consul at that place, informing him of Mr. Pateraki's application, so that he may make any comments on the matter generally that he may think proper, as well as on the contingent expenses, connected principally with the Slave Trade, which such an appointment might entail.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 364.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received August 28.)

(Extract.) *Alexandria, August* 17, 1863.

THE last boat from Djeddah brought me the four despatches, here inclosed, from Captain Cameron,‡ the first two respecting the nomination of Mr. Speedy as Unpaid Vice-Consul at Massowah.

The third contains copies of four despatches Captain Cameron has addressed to me. There are many points in these letters on which I require to be instructed by your Lordship—the protection afforded to Bogos by the late Mr. Plowden; the claiming a

* Laid before Parliament, 1866. † No. 342. ‡ Nos. 360 to 363.

tolerably large sum from the Egyptian Government for cattle seized so far back as 1854. The former, if put forward as Captain Cameron does, in his letter to the Egyptian Pasha of Kassala, may justify pretensions on the part of others but too eager to secure a footing in or near Abyssinia. By a few words the Egyptian Secretary of State let fall some days ago, previously to my having received Captain Cameron's letter, I am now led to believe that the Pasha of Kassala has already applied here for instructions; the Minister asked me "if Mr. Speedy was a subordinate Agent of our Government." On my replying, "I did not know him, and asked why he put the question," he answered that a person of that name had addressed the Governor-General of Soudan in an official tone. I told him the simple answer would be for the Governor-General to desire that all communications should be made through Her Majesty's Agent in Egypt.

I much doubt if Ismail Pasha be disposed to accept the assessment of value in cattle as laid down by the Consul, Captain Cameron.

No. 365.

Earl Russell to Consul-General Colquhoun.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 8, 1863.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 17th ultimo,* inclosing four despatches from Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, and requesting instructions for your guidance in regard to Captain Cameron's proceedings.

I have to state to you that those proceedings are not approved. Indeed, so far back as April last, I informed Captain Cameron that it was not desirable for Her Majesty's Agents to meddle in the affairs of Abyssinia, and that he would have done better to have returned to his post at Massowah when the King of Abyssinia told him to do so, and to remain there until further orders.

I inclose a letter to him again desiring him to return to Massowah;† and you will have the goodness to forward it to its destination.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 366.

Earl Russell to Consul Cameron.‡

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 8, 1863.

I HAVE received from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt your despatches of the 20th of May last,§ and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government do not approve your proceedings in Abyssinia nor your suggestions founded upon them.

I have only to desire that you will abstain from all interference in the internal affairs of that country, and that you will remain at your post at Massowah, whither you were ordered by my despatch of the 22nd of April last to return and reside.‖

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 367.

Sir H. Bulwer to Earl Russell.—(Received October 6.)

My Lord, *Therapia, September* 19, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a note from the Porte complaining that Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah refuses to recognise the district of Habab as a dependency of the Sandjak of Massowah, and that he encourages the Abyssinians to claim possession of that district.

I have transmitted a copy of this note to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt with a request that he will call upon Mr. Cameron to reply to the statement made to me by the Porte.

I have, &c.
(For Sir H. Bulwer),
(Signed) E. M. ERSKINE.

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* No. 364. † No. 366. ‡ Laid before Parliament, 1866. § Nos. 360 to 363. ‖ No. 351.

Inclosure in No. 367.

Aali Pasha to Sir H. Bulwer.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Sublime Porte, le* 16 *Septembre*, 1863.

LE Consul Britannique, M. D. Cameron, en prétendant que la contrée de Habab dépendait du Sandjak de Massowah faisant partie de la Province de Djeddah, appartienne à l'Abyssinie, a adressé plusieurs lettres au Gouverneur de Massowah pour l'inviter à s'abstenir de lever des impôts dans cette contrée et à faire restituer ceux qui y auraient été déjà perçus. Il a de plus fait entendre aux Abyssiniens, soit dans ses écrits, soit dans son langage, que Habab leur appartient en effet.

Vous comprenez, M. l'Ambassadeur, que ce procédé est inadmissible sous un double point de vue. En premier lieu, Habab fait partie du district de Massowah depuis un temps immémorial, et ce n'est pas en dernier lieu que des impôts ont commencé à y être prélevés. En conséquence, M. D. Cameron n'a aucun caractère de contester un droit qu'il ne lui appartient pas de juger en aucune façon, en adressant des lettres officielles. En second lieu, déclarer aux Abyssiniens que Habab leur appartient, c'est vouloir provoquer un conflit de ce côté, car ces derniers ne demanderaient pas mieux que d'élever des prétentions à cet égard basées sur le témoiguage de l'Agent d'une grande Puissance. Je n'ai pas besoin de m'étendre davantage pour faire ressortir la nécessité qu'il y aurait que M. Cameron reçoive des instructions propres à faire redresser sa manière d'agir vis-à-vis le Gouverneur de Massowah et ses appréciations erronées à l'égard de Habab.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) AALI.

No. 368.

Consul-General Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received October 6.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, September* 25, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt, this morning, of your Lordship's despatch of the 8th instant,* inclosing a despatch for Mr. Consul Cameron, instructing him to proceed to Massowah, and there take up his residence. Your Lordship's despatch shall go forward to Aden by next mail.

A German Missionary, Mr. Eipperle, who passed through Alexandria a few days ago, brought word that Captain Cameron had recently been at Matemma, the north-west frontier of Abyssinia and Soudan; but I presume that the gentleman he had recommended as Vice-Consul at Massowah will know where to find him. Reports have reached us of the King Theodore having laid hold of and imprisoned the French Consul; it is strange Captain Cameron makes no mention of this. There have recently, as I heard from the Foreign Secretary, Cherif Pasha, been raids committed by Abyssinian bands into the Soudan; but the depredators retreat before the Egyptian soldiery, who have strict orders not to pass the frontier.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

No. 369.

Baron Gros to Earl Russell.—(Received October 8.)

M. le Comte, *Londres, le* 7 *Octobre*, 1863.

D'APRÈS les dernières informations parvenues de l'Abyssinie au Gouvernement de l'Empereur, le Vice-Consul de France à Massowah, M. Lejean, se trouverait dans une position critique. Le Roi Théodore aurait usé des plus mauvais procédés à l'égard de cet Agent et le retiendrait même de force à Debra Tabor.

J'ai été chargé de demander à votre Excellence de vouloir bien me communiquer les renseignements que les Agents de Sa Majesté Britannique lui auront sans doute adressés sur les violences dont on aurait usé à l'égard de M. Lejean, qui n'est peut-être pas en position de faire connaître lui-même sa situation. Le Gouvernement de l'Empereur serait en outre très désireux que votre Excellence voulut bien, dans le cas où elle le

* No. 365.

jugerait convenable, inviter le Consul de Sa Majesté Britannique en Abyssinie à employer, s'il y a lieu, ses bons offices avec toute la prudence nécessaire, pour faciliter à M. Lejean les moyens de se rendre à Massowah, possession Turque de la côte, où réside habituellement l'Agent Français accrédité dans ces contrées.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) BON. GROS.

No. 370.

Earl Russell to Consul Cameron.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 13, 1863.

I INCLOSE a copy of a note which Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte has received from the Turkish Government,* complaining that you refuse to recognize the district of Habab as a Dependency of the Sandjak of Massowah, and that you encourage the Abyssinians to claim possession of that district; and I have to instruct you to furnish me with a full explanation of your proceedings in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 371.

Earl Russell to Baron Gros.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Foreign Office, October* 14, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 7th instant,† and to acquaint you, in reply, that Her Majesty's Government have not received from Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah any report of the treatment which, as appears from your Excellency's letter, the French Vice-Consul at Massowah has experienced at the hands of the Abyssinian authorities.

I have the honour to add that Her Majesty's Consul will be at once instructed to furnish this Department with any information which he may be able to afford in regard to M. Lejean's position, and to employ his good offices, with all necessary prudence, with the view of obtaining his liberation.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 372.

Mr. Hammond to Consul Cameron.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 15, 1863.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you a copy of a letter from the French Ambassador at this Court,† referring to the critical position in which the French Vice-Consul in Abyssinia is at present placed, being forcibly detained at Debra Tabor.

I am accordingly to instruct you to furnish Lord Russell with any information of which you may be in possession upon this subject, and to use your good offices, if you should be able to do so, properly and with due discretion, in order to procure for M. Lejean liberty to return to Massowah.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 373.

Earl Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 15, 1853.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 19th ultimo,‡ I transmit herewith, for your information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Consul

* Inclosure in No. 367. † No. 369. ‡ No. 367.

Cameron,* desiring him to explain his proceedings with respect to his refusal to recognize the district of Habab as a dependency of the Sandjak of Massowah.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 374.

Consul-General Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received October* 15.)

(Extract.) *Alexandria, September* 30, 1863.

SINCE I had the honour of addressing your Lordship on the 25th instant,† I have received private letters from Abyssinia, under dates of April 21st and May 26th, from the Rev. Mr. Stern, which may be of some interest to Her Majesty's Government.

Of the former date, Mr. Stern writes:—

"Since my visit to this country in 1860 and 1861, there has been no improvement in the state of affairs; on the contrary, incessant civil war has augmented the moral and material misery of the people. The King is just now near the border of Godjam, where an old powerful rebel, Dorla Qualu, opposes his power, and defies his claims. This Chief's successful opposition has much roused the pride and passions of the despot, and acts of revolting cruelty are perpetrated at his behest. I once shared the general opinion that Theodore would introduce a new era of peace and prosperity into this bleeding and long distracted empire, but he has himself dispelled the illusion and descended to the common level of all former Abyssinian monarchs. In a few months the King intends to send an Embassy to England, the object this mission seeks to attain is not unreasonable, and if Her Majesty's Government feels disposed, they may oblige King Theodore, and secure to both countries many advantages.

"Monsieur Lejean, the French Consul, who is just now here on a special mission from the Emperor, some time ago got into serious trouble. Weary with Abyssinian life and the still greater hardships of a Godjam campaign, whither he had accompanied the King, he suddenly resolved to request his congé; the despot, not being in a very placid humour, refused to receive his guest, and, as the latter, with equal pertinacity, insisted on having an audience, this exasperated the monarch, and poor M. Lejean was put in chains, and, during twenty-four hours, had leisure to meditate on this novel mode of enforcing Court etiquette; the polite Frenchman, who is now at Gondar, I have been told, keenly feels this ill-treatment."

In the letter of 26th May, Mr. Stern writes:—

"The political affairs of this country are growing worse and worse from day to day, the King is still near the frontiers of Godjam, where his opponent Dorla Qualu is defying his authority; there is a report that a battle will soon be fought between the royalists and and the rebels; I do not believe it, as I am quite confident that neither the King, nor the Godjam Chief, is quite in a humour to expose life and power to the doubtful conflict of faithless hordes. The policy of His Majesty is most tyrannical and capricious, and this, more than the hosts of his opponent, has injured his reputation, and may yet cost him a hard-won crown. I lament that a beautiful country like this should ever continue the scene of misgovernment and disorder."

I have not had an opportunity of conversing with my French colleague on the subject of M. Lejean's arrest. It is to be regretted that the foreign Consuls, hitherto sent to Abyssinia, or rather Massowah, should overstep their functions, and become partisan generals.

No. 375.

Earl Russell to Baron Gros.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Foreign Office, October* 17, 1863.

WITH reference to my letter of the 14th instant,‡ I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I have received from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, an extract of a private letter§ from Abyssinia, dated the 21st of April, in which, among other matters, mention is made of M. Lejean, the French Vice-Consul at Massowah. The writer's statements are to the following effect:—

* No. 370. † See No. 308. ‡ No. 371. § No. 374.

That M. Lejean, who is represented as being charged with a special Mission from the Emperor, had some time previous to the date of the letter, being wearied with Abyssinian life, and the still greater hardships of a Godjam campaign, whither he had accompanied the King, requested his congé, and the King having, as it appears, become irritated on account of M. Lejean's reiterated demand for an audience, caused him to be put in chains for twenty-four hours.

M. Lejean was stated to be at Gondar on the 21st of April last.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 376.

Earl Cowley to Earl Russell.—(Received November 18.)

(Extract.) *Paris, November* 14, 1863.

I HAVE inquired of M. Drouyn de Lhuys whether there is any intention on the part of the Imperial Government to take any steps with a view of obtaining satisfaction for the treatment to which M. Lejean, a French subject, has been subjected in Abyssinia.

His Excellency replied, that if he knew how satisfaction could be obtained, he would take measures for requiring it, but he was afraid that nothing effective could be done.

No. 377.

Consul-General Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received November 21.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, November* 11, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to transmit for your Lordship's information copies of a despatch I have lately addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

The affair of the expedition of a body of French soldiery with the General Count Bisson may assume grave importance, and if the Count's mission be disavowed by his Government, I should be glad to know it, as it has evidently given the Viceroy much uneasiness.

By this week's mail, I shall instruct Mr. Petherick to watch the Count's proceedings in the Soudan, and to report to me regularly the result of his observations. I will also warn Captain Cameron of the circumstances.

If a sort of free Corps be allowed to commit raids from the Egyptian territory, it is sure to engender angry feelings on the part of the Ruler of Abyssinia, who may not be over nice in the reprisals he may be induced to make, and a chronic state of hostility between two parties now tolerably quiet may spring up.

Inclosure in No. 377.

Mr. Colquhoun to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir, *Cairo, November* 8, 1863.

AFTER the discussion on the Suez Canal question this afternoon, the Viceroy told me he was desirous of conversing on a subject which had occupied him much.

He mentioned the arrival here, a short time ago, of a General Count de Bisson, accompanied by about sixty men. This person reached Alexandria about the middle of last month; he reported himself as on a scientific voyage: but the fact of his having in his suite the number of soldiers in uniform alluded to, excited attention. At first, report said M. de Bisson was to go alone to Khartoum, his men to proceed *vid* Souakin; but on M. de Bisson conversing with the Viceroy, the General announced that he had a large number of cases which he required to pass through the Custom-house unopened. Questioned closely, he admitted to the Viceroy he was going to the Abyssinian frontier, and intended making a military settlement there. This was, he said, called for by the conduct of King Theodorus, who had laid violent hands on the French Consul, M. Lejean (as

related by me some time since*). Some of the boxes appear to have been opened, and to contain four small field-pieces and a large number (said to be about 1,000) of rifled muskets, with sword-bayonets, percussion-caps, and ammunition complete. The gentleman said he was acting with the knowledge of his Government. The Viceroy has telegraphed to Paris to Nubar Pasha, who replies that the Government has no knowledge whatever of the matter.

In the meantime, the Viceroy had given M. de Bisson and his men a boat or boats to convey them up to Khartoum, with orders to the Governor of Soudan to treat them civilly, and to assist them so long as they were in Egyptian territory, but the moment they cross the frontier of Abyssinia, to withdraw every native he may have given as porters, camel-drivers, &c.

I have little doubt M. de Bisson will ally himself to the rebel (Dorla Qualo) now in arms against Theodorus, and even sixty men, well armed and equipped as these are described to be, with a few pieces of light artillery, will turn the scale against Theodorus, who, by his folly in sanctioning small raids on the Egyptian territory, has compelled the Viceroy to have a considerable armed force of Bashi-Bazouks, about 2,000 infantry and 200 cavalry, on the frontier to repel the aggressors. I told the Viceroy that I thought he was wrong in sanctioning the passage of arms through his country; that some English subjects had applied to our Consulate at Alexandria to obtain permission to pass arms to the White Nile; that I had declined to sanction such as contributing the means to carry out the nefarious traffic in practice on the Upper Nile. He told me he had adopted my suggestion to create a river police for the repression of the Slave Trade; and he hoped soon to have, in addition to the half-dozen boats, each one bearing a small gun, two or three steamers, which would effectually stop the traffic in slaves from that quarter.

With regard to M. de Bisson, it would, perhaps, be advisable the French Government should be questioned on its sanctioning or knowledge of the expedition, and the Viceroy might then be clearly given to understand that he must not, because he has a troublesome neighbour on his south-eastern frontier, allow measures to be taken by foreigners to harass that neighbour.

With reference to a remark the Viceroy made, that the English Consul had been lately all along the frontier, and even had crossed it, to reach a small tribe to which, he asserted, Egypt had no claim, I informed His Highness that Her Majesty's Government did not sanction acts of this nature, and that I had recently sent to the Consul orders to repair to his residence at Massowah; but that if a sort of free corps was to be allowed to penetrate into Abyssinia by the Egyptian frontier, it would complicate matters very seriously.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT R. COLQUHOUN.

No. 378.

Mr. Erskine to Earl Russell.—(Received December 5.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, November* 23, 1863.

I HAVE mentioned to Aali Pasha the conversation between Mr. Colquhoun and the Viceroy of Egypt, reported in Mr. Colquhoun's despatch of the 8th instant,† respecting the singular expedition, under a Count Bisson, which had passed through Egypt on its way to Abyssinia. His Highness professed complete ignorance on the subject, but promised to write to the Viceroy for explanations as to his conduct in this matter, which he said he disapproved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. M. ERSKINE.

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* See No. 374.

† Inclosure in No. 377.

1864.

No. 379.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received January* 23.)

(Extract,) *Cairo, January* 11, 1864.

A LETTER received a few days ago from Mr. Consul Petherick, dated 23rd November, mentions the arrival at Khartoum, in company with the Governor-General of the province, Moossa Pasha, of the French General Count de Bisson, his lady, two naval officers, and sixty French soldiers; about a hundred more were expected to join him.

Mr. Petherick says, "the destination of the General is to be Abyssinia, but whether by way of Massowah, Taka, or Galabat, and eventually to what part or to what purpose, has not yet fully transpired. It is rumoured the relief of the French Consul, M. Lejean, now stated to be detained in the camp of King Theodore, is the General's object. That he has a letter to that gentleman is certain. Rumours are also afloat of preparations for another attempt on Abyssinia by the Egyptian Government, and shortly, as soon as I shall have gleaned reliable information, I will not fail to report thereon."

I beg to refer your Lordship to my despatch of 11th November last,* on the subject of this Count Bisson's *soi-disant* mission. The Viceroy spoke to me of it as giving him much uneasiness, and he is evidently anxious the French Government should be called on to explain its intentions. He confirmed what he had previously said, that his instructions to Moossa Pasha were precise and positive, not to furnish an Egyptian man or beast to accompany the Consul's party beyond the frontier. He asked me if I had any instructions. I told him I had none; but I did not hesitate to tell him Her Majesty's Government was not disposed to interfere in any internal affairs of Abyssinia; but while last year King Theodore had been solemnly warned not to encourage the slightest measure of aggression on his subjects' part against the Egyptian Government, so we could not sanction any step on the part of His Highness' Government that would give just cause of complaint to King Theodore, and that I considered he would be doing so if he allowed a considerable force, of whatever nature or nation, to organize itself in Egypt to enter Abyssinia from his dominions.

Ismail Pasha told me Count Bisson had offered to enter his service to assist his Governor-General in protecting his Abyssinian frontier. That Moossa Pasha had declined to accept his services; that the Count had then told Moosa that he had acquired by cession, from some tribe whose name he promised to furnish me with, a certain district. I suspect this to be Bogos; that he purposed going thither, taking possession of it, and affording the inhabitants protection from the incursions of the Abyssinians; that he even purposed commencing a line of rail to communicate with the Red Sea for facilitating the export of Egyptian produce.

The Viceroy further told me that M. Lejean, the French Consul, had positively entered the Abyssinian Ruler's service and had consequently ceased his functions as French Consul, as being incompatible with his Abyssinian position.

I warned the Viceroy that there was no tribe of any kind who could legally transfer itself to any one; that all the country down to the Red Sea as far as a little above Sooakin was part of His Highness' dominions; that at that point the Egyptian Territories ran due south, with the exception of a narrow slip of land extending down to the sea-board, which was claimed and garrisoned by Turkey, to a point between the 16th and 17th degrees; that here the Tigré or Abyssinian territory commenced; the boundaries, it is true, being ill-defined, but that certainly none of the holders of the land could dispose of such territory.

His Highness seemed anxious I should take the matter up officially and write to him. This I declined doing, but said, if he would furnish me with a Memorandum on the subject of Count Bisson's proceedings and pretensions, I would, without hesitation, communicate to His Highness my opinion if I felt myself sure of my facts, if not, I

* No. 377.

would submit the affair to your Lordship who would inform me of the views of Her Majesty's Government, but that I was sure that we would not sanction nor tolerate any aggressive conduct, either on the part of King Theodore or of His Highness.

No. 380.

Earl Russell to Earl Cowley.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, February* 4, 1864.

I INCLOSE, for your Excellency's information, copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt,* upon the subject of a French expedition which is on its way to Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 381.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received February 6, 1864.)

My Lord, *Gondar, October* 1, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to report that I have been in Abyssinia, and in the execution of my duties, during the quarter ended yesterday.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 382.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received February 6, 1864.)

My Lord, *Gondar, October* 2, 1863.

I ALREADY had the honour to report† the binding of the French Consul for Massowah, M. Lejean, according to the version of a German missionary who was in the camp, and from whom I took down the details word for word.

How far my account may correspond with that of M. Lejean forwarded to Europe, I cannot now ascertain.

The latter, however, from what I have since heard, may be much stronger, and not without reason; so far that it would appear that King Theodore's language was violent and abusive.

M. Lejean was chained, I am now told, not for trying to leave the camp contrary to the King's orders, but for forcing himself into His Majesty's presence without the usual formalities, and with his sword on, the latter a serious breach of Abyssinian etiquette.

I have now to state, that in the course of last month, King Theodore's messenger to France returned, with a reply to His Majesty's letter, and all the Europeans, myself included, were summoned to Gondar.

Two days since, the King called all of us to him, with the exception of the French Consul and the medical gentleman accompanying him, Dr. Lagarde, who were ordered to wait in a tent outside. It appears that the King's messenger, a Frenchman, named Bardel, had brought a charge of defamation of character against M. Lejean, on the ground that, during his absence, M. Lejean had written to the King certain accusations against him, which had been officially or otherwise forwarded from Alexandria.

* No. 379. † See No. 393.

M. Bardel brought his plaint before His Majesty, as his subject and servant.

King Theodore, when we had assembled, informed us that he had received a letter from the Emperor of France, which he gave me to read aloud.

He then made a sufficiently calm address, in which he said that the letter in question was wanting in respect, and that he considered himself slighted.

The grounds he advanced were as follows:—

1. That his messenger had been refused sustenance at the hands of the French Government.

2. That the Emperor had not answered his letter directly, but through a servant.

3. That the answer had not the Emperor's seal on its face.

4. That the French traveller, M. d'Abbadie, had represented him as a mere brigand to the Emperor Napoleon, and that the French Foreign Minister had expressed this view without contradiction, in the Emperor's presence, to His Majesty's messenger.

He considered the neglect of his messenger, and the style and form of the letter from France, as further expressions of this opinion, and wished to know from M. Lejean, whether the Emperor acknowledged him as King of Abyssinia or not.

M. Lejean gave moderate and conciliatory explanations.

His Majesty afterwards adverted to the charge brought by his servant against M. Lejean, and requested us to settle it, which we adjourned to do, by bringing the two parties together.

The result was that an outward reconciliation was effected; and the French Consul sent in word to the King that it would appear he had been misinformed in regard to certain charges—certain others were acknowledged by M. Bardel.

The King's answer was that M. Lejean should leave.

He replied that he had communications regarding His Majesty's projected Embassy to make from his Government.

The King refused to see him, saying, that he had not applied as a mendicant to the Emperor Napoleon: he had wanted Christian friendship, as from one king to another. It had been refused—and M. Lejean might return to his master.

He left with Dr. Lagarde this morning.

My own intervention in this matter has been confined to writing the enclosed letter, penned when I believed, in accordance with general opinion, that the King's object in calling the Europeans together, was to give his views with regard to toleration of Catholics.

Beyond this, I had no opportunity of doing anything, having been sent for only as a spectator.

The Protestant Missionaries also of necessity kept aloof, except that they said what they could regarding the genuineness of the letter, which the King had professed to doubt to them—as also respecting its being customary for European potentates to write through ministers, whose signature had the validity of a Royal seal.

But this had no influence on His Majesty, whose mind had evidently been made up beforehand.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 382.

M. Drouyn de Lhuys to King Theodore.

Sire, *Paris, le 24 Mars*, 1863.

J'AI mis sous les yeux de l'Empereur mon auguste Souverain la lettre par laquelle vous annoncez à Sa Majesté votre avènement au trône d'Ethiopie. L'Empereur avait déja appris, par la renommée et par les récits de ses Consuls, les évènements qui se sont passés dans votre patrie, et Sa Majesté fait des vœux pour que l'Ethiopie enfin, sous votre règne, se jouisse du repos et de la prospérité dont elle a été privée depuis si longtems.

L'Empereur m'a spécialement chargé de vous dire qu'il accorde, dans l'univers entier, sa protection aux missionnaires Catholiques.

Rien ne peut être plus agréable à l'Empereur que d'apprendre que ces religieux son traités avec les égards qui leur sont dus.

Tous les Gouvernements dignes d'être appelés civilisés ont adopté le principe de la liberté des cultes, surtout quand il s'agit des cultes Chrétiens.

L'Empereur a vu le passage de votre lettre où vous indiquez des intentions belliqueuses. Avant entreprendre une guerre contre des voisins puissants, il faut bien mesurer

ses forces, et prendre garde de ne pas compromettre les avantages déjà acquis, en se précipitant dans des entreprises hasardeuses. Nous prions Dieu de vous inspirer de résolutions conformes aux intérêts des peuples que vous gouvernez, et qui, de notre part, sont l'objet d'une vraie sympathie.

L'Empereur verra toujours avec plaisir l'occasion d'établir entre son Empire et le pays où vous régnez des relations amicales aussi qu'utiles aux intérêts commerciaux.

Je me félicite d'avoir été chargé de transmettre l'expression de la bienveillance de l'Empereur, et je prie, &c.

Le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères d'Empereur,
(Signé) DROUYN DE LHUYS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 382.

Consul Cameron to Mr. T. M. Flad.

My dear Sir, *Djenda, September* 20, 1863.

I UNDERSTAND that, in consequence of a letter received from the Emperor Napoleon, requesting toleration in Abyssinia for Roman Catholic Missions, His Majesty King Theodore is about to summon an Ecclesiastical and General Council, which he has requested yourself and the various other members of Protestant Missions to attend.

My own opinion and feelings, as a Representative of Great Britain, must of necessity be in favour of an entire toleration for all creeds, be it here or elsewhere.

It is, however, necessary that I should press this on the present occasion; the more so, as his Majesty, by not giving me any intimation on the matter, would seem to disclaim my interference.

If publicly required to do so, I shall not hesitate to support the great principle by the light of which England has seen her way through so many religious difficulties of her own, and which I feel certain she would wish to see adopted in all countries as the watchword of that intellectual liberty and progress, to the advancement of which she stands so thoroughly committed.

My belief is, that if pressed by His Majesty, your interests and duty as Protestants alike require that you should also support to the utmost the doctrine of entire liberty of conscience; but that it would be better, as strangers only allowed here on sufferance, to keep aloof from a question involving so many peculiar considerations, social and political, as well as religious, and to leave it to His Majesty, the head of the Abyssinian Church, and the great National Council which is to be summoned, to solve the problem in their own way.

I have no wish that the advice I have given you, or my feelings generally regarding toleration, should be a secret either to His Majesty, or his Holiness the Aboona.

On the contrary, I would wish the latter especially to be impressed as strongly as possible upon both.

You will oblige me by communicating this letter to Mr. Steiger, as head of the Scottish Mission here; also to the members of the Mission of the Bishop of Jerusalem, and to Mr. Sterne, as chief of the Church of England Mission, under which you are employed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 383.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(Received February 6, 1864.)

My Lord, *Gondar, October* 5, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to state that immediately after M. Lejean's dismissal from Gondar, I had an interview with his Holiness the Aboona of Abyssinia.

I took the earliest opportunity of turning the conversation to the toleration of the Roman Catholic Religion in this country. His Holiness stated the impossibility of granting such toleration on the following grounds:—

Namely, that there had been no other State religion than his own in Abyssinia since the days of Socinius, when the Jesuits, having gained over that monarch, and a great portion of the royal family and nobility, pushed their zeal and ambition so far

as to rouse the mass of the people to a rebellion which deluged the land with blood and led to their final expulsion.

The Roman Catholics, he said, aimed at an entire supremacy, by establishing a separate Church and denouncing all other baptism than their own, while he on the other hand, as the Representative of the Chair of St. Mark, was necessitated to hold that the baptism of his own Church was a true one, nor could he, after the experience of the past, allow any other within his diocese.

But this without bigotry, witness the two Protestant Lay Missions now settled for some years in Abyssinia, and who are permitted, on the principle already laid down, to make converts among the Abyssinian Jews, to be baptised, after Protestant instruction, into the Abyssinian Church.

Nor does his Holiness lay any restriction to the circulation of Protestant tracts, convinced as he is, that if they contain the pure doctrine of scripture, as separated from particular Church tenets, it is not in their power to do anything but good.

His Holiness continued that this country was not ripe for further toleration. It could only lead to controversy, and ultimate violence, among clergy and laity.

He then spoke of the conduct of the Roman Catholic Mission, while they had been allowed toleration in Abyssinia in his own time, their introduction of Frenchmen and firearms to the support of the rebel Negoosee; their making the question a political one, by the assistance of French officials, and finally stated that the country was thrown into such confusion by the large bands of marauders, who adopted the Roman Catholic cause, in the hope of finding their profit in the future collision of the two faiths, that he was obliged to be in hiding for some months in the mountain monastery of Debra Damo.

What I have here quoted was delivered in the most temperate tone, and followed by an incidental statement that the Aboona had interceded for M. Lejean with His Majesty King Theodore.

I beg here to submit the following extract. It is from the "Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission," vol. xxiv, No. 1, 1859, signed by the late Vicar Apostolic of Abyssinia, M. Jacobis, and seems not uncorroborative of the Aboona's statements:

"De plus, Negussie, dans le but de détruire le fatal prestige des Cophtes sur la population, et pour les accoûtumer à respecter la religion Catholique, brula la résidence de l'Abuna Salama dans le Tigré, et donna le Gouvernement à un de nos Catholiques.

"A cette même fin, il a préféré l'amitié du Consul Français à Massowah, à celle de toutes les autres autorités de l'île. Il lui à fait, le premier, publiquement, des présents magnifiques. Son aversion est si grande contre les Protestants, et contre leurs agents, depuis qu'il a découvert leurs trames politiques et religieuses, qu'il a arrêté leurs convers, et intercepté leurs correspondances dans l'intérieur de ses états. M. Charvin Bellart, Consul Français, pour lui témoigner sa reconnaissance, s'est cru obligé de lui rendre une visite dans son camp. Il y a été reçu avec des honneurs que les Abyssins ne rendent qu'aux princes du sang, et dans cette circonstance il a travaillé avec lui à la rédaction d'un projet d'alliance avec Napoléon III. A la première occasion on lui adressera ce projet, avec les compositions en langue Ghez faites par nos élèves.

"Le principal objet de l'alliance Franco-Ethiopienne serait, de la part de Negussie, la liberté de conscience pour tous les Catholiques, et la protection de ses propres états."

I may state here that King Theodore believed that the passage in the letter of the Emperor Napoleon, asking for a renewal of toleration to Roman-Catholic Missionaries ought to have followed a formal explanation, and that its being made to precede it was a positive insult.

The importance he attaches to the return of his saddle, as part of the royal paraphernalia, and of which not a word has been said, has also had its effect.

His Majesty still believes it to be in Paris, although the latest accounts state it to be at Rome.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 384.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received February* 6.)

My Lord, *Cairo, January* 20, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship despatches from Captain Cameron,* received by me yesterday.

* Nos. 381, 382, and 383.

Captain Cameron would appear not to have received the despatch of your Lordship,* transmitted by me to him some time ago, requiring him to quit the interior of Abyssinia, and take up his residence at or near Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

No. 385.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received February* 6.)

My Lord, *Cairo, January* 23, 1864.

I HAVE conversed with a French gentleman who has been with M. Lejean, the French Consul in Abyssinia. He informs me that, in the last days of September, Captain Cameron was still at Gondar, he could not say a prisoner of King Theodore, but that His Majesty declined to allow him to quit Gondar; that M. Lejean, as also my informer, had been conveyed under guard out of the kingdom. M. Lejean had been set at liberty on the Egyptian frontier near Kassala; he (M. Labarre) had been conveyed down to Massowah, where he embarked for Jeddah and Suez. I inquired if Captain Cameron had apparently offended the King. M. Labarre said not, but that he had become suspicious of every one about him. This led to acts of frequent violence with all his people. There is no truth in M. Lejean having ever proposed taking service with the Abyssinians.

The Viceroy informed me yesterday that the cession made to Count Bisson, alluded to in my despatch of the 11th instant,† was the Plain of Senhit (? Sana), in the Province of Takka, at the foot of a range of small hills called Kastan. Now, this is on the Tigré frontier on the Mareb River, on which river is situated Kassala, whither M. Lejean has proceeded on quitting Abyssinia. The Takka and Shangallas north of the Bedel Range are claimed by Egypt, and to the east of this is situated Bogos, which pretends to not only a species of independence, but asserts it has enjoyed a certain protection from us.

By Mr. Consul Stanley, I have written the person in charge at Massowah to send at once to Captain Cameron, and I have impressed on him the urgent necessity that he should use every endeavour to quit the interior and repair to the coast.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

No. 386.

Earl Cowley to Earl Russell.—(*Received February* 24.)

My Lord, *Paris, February* 23, 1864.

IN the despatch dated the 8th of November‡ from Mr. Colquhoun to Sir Henry Bulwer, reference is made to a French expedition under a Count Bisson, which was then on its way through Egypt to Abyssinia. I asked some questions at the time of M. Drouyn de Lhuys, who assured me that he had never even heard of Count Bisson's name, but he promised that he would make inquiries.

On the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 4th instant,§ inclosing further papers on the same subject, I made a Memorandum of Count Bisson's proceedings, which I placed in M. Drouyn de Lhuys' hands. His Excellency again assured me that he had heard nothing of the individual in question; but he said that as Count Bisson seemed to have stated that he was acting with the knowledge of the Imperial Government, he would inquire of the Emperor and of the Minister of War whether they had any knowledge of the expedition.

Yesterday his Excellency informed me that the Emperor was in as complete ignorance upon the subject as himself. He had not yet heard from the Minister of War.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

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* See No. 366. † No. 379. ‡ Inclosure in No. 377. § No. 380.

No. 387.

Earl Russell to Mr. Colquhoun.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 25, 1864.

WITH reference to your despatches of the 11th of November and of the 11th ultimo,* respecting the reported French expedition to Abyssinia under a Count Bisson, I transmit for your information the accompanying copy of a despatch from Earl Cowley, reporting the result of his conversation with M. Drouyn de Lhuys on that subject.†

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 388.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received March 8.)

My Lord, *Cairo, February* 24, 1864.

I RECEIVED, some days ago, a packet of letters from Mr. Petherick, under date of 4th January.

One of these contains a letter of some interest, and I think it right to send it *in extenso* to your Lordship, with its German idioms, such as it reached me.

Of course, under existing circumstance, I cannot authorize Mr. Petherick to take any step, but it may be for your Lordship to consider whether the Resident at Aden, Brigadier Merewether, should not be instructed to send some person in whom he has confidence to Gondar, to require from King Theodore the immediate liberation of Her Majesty's Consul, and any other British subjects. For this I shall await your Lordship's instructions, which I may receive about mid March.

I shall inform Mr. Petherick that he need not proceed into Abyssinia; indeed, such is the tardiness of communication with Khartoum, that your Lordship's wishes will be quicker known at Aden than at Khartoum.

Your Lordship will, if you approve the suggestion of charging the Resident at Aden with the rescue of Captain Cameron, let me know whether your Lordship will, yourself, warn the King of the consequences of any rash step he may take, or whether it is the wish of Her Majesty's Government that I should myself do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 388.

Consul Petherick to Mr. Colquhoun.

Khartoum, January 4, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to inform you Mr. Haussmann, a missionary direct from the camp of King Theodore of Abyssinia, arrived at this place on the 31st ultimo.

The inclosed letter just received from him I consider of so important a nature, that with this day's post I forward it to you with the remark, as Mr. Haussmann's duties call him to his post, and he purposes to leave this place for the frontiers of Abyssinia very shortly; if Her Majesty's Government considers me competent, I place myself at its disposal for the execution of any mission to the Court of Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN PETHERICK.

Inclosure 2 in No. 388.

The Rev. C. Haussmann to Consul Petherick.

Sir, *Khartoom, January* 4, 1864.

COMING direct from Abyssinia, where I have been staying for ten months, and having witnessed there some very important events which regard Europeans and English subjects, I have the honour of laying before you a brief report thereof, which Captain

* Nos. 377 and 379. † No. 386

Cameron, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Massowah, staying in Abyssinia at that time, specially requested me to do, as it was impossible for himself to send any written communications out of the country.

Captain Cameron lived at Gondar since the beginning of September 1863, waiting for the answer of the English Government to a letter of King Theodore, which letter had been sent about nine months before. Before, however, this answer, which was said to be on the road, arrived, some very tragical events happened. The Rev. H. A. Stern, of the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, in September 1863, left Djenda, a place near Gondar, where his Mission was established, and where he had been living for nearly six months, in order to go back to Europe by way of Gondar and Massowah. Having stayed at Gondar for some time, he started for Massowah. At Woggere, about two days from Gondar, he passed the King's camp and went to pay the latter a parting visit, the time for which, however, was unhappily chosen, it being evening, and the King having given a great dinner that day.

Mr. Stern had with him two servants, one of whom was to serve him as interpreter. As the servant, however, understood his business very badly, the King got angry, and ordered the servants to be beated, which was done immediately. Mr. Stern not being able to endure this sight, turned round and bit his finger, not knowing that this meant vengeance in Abyssinia. On this the King ordered him to be beaten too. The servants died of their ill-treatment, whilst Mr. Stern, though severely wounded, survived and was cured afterwards. The King went back to Gondar, where he took Mr. Stern and all his servants, all chained. At Gondar, he had Mr. Stern's papers visited, in which nothing, however, offensive was found. The King had hitherto not been Mr. Stern's friend, though he had always treated him as well as the Europeans in general. It is however, doubtless, that his suspicions had by somebody been aroused against Mr. Stern having not only by words, but by writing, insulted him.

Captain Cameron immediately applied to the King, but could not get an interview, and having in a letter to the King alluded to the friendship which had hitherto existed between Abyssinia and England, got only as an answer, the question—Where are the proofs of that friendship? (meaning thereby the answer to his letters to the English Government). Henceforth the King cut off any direct intervention of the Consul in the affair, and unhappily the Treaty existing between England and Abyssinia did not give him any legal authority, he being not recognized Consul of Abyssinia.

Some days afterwards, a second visitation of Mr. Stern's papers was made, and, at that time, several remarks were found against the King, by which the latter was highly offended. Likewise, amongst his papers, were found some of Mr. Rosenthal, Missionary at Djenda, with remarks as offensive as those of Mr. Stern. The consequence of this was, that Mr. Stern's feet were put in chains, and the King's suspicions were aroused againt the other Europeans at Djenda. Some days afterwards, November 11, a considerable military force appeared at Djenda and made all the Europeans prisoners, amongst whom I was myself. We were brought to Gondar with all our property. The King ordered immediately Mr. Rosenthal to be put in heavy chains, whilst he set us at liberty the following day, keeping, however, back our papers. Some days afterwards a Council took place, the King having summoned all Europeans present in Abyssinia, and having promised that they should be judges. This promise was, however, not fulfilled; and thus no result was attained by the Council. The only hope was put in the arrival of the long-expected English letters, which arrived the day after the Council; but as these letters did not contain any answer for the King, not only the fate of the prisoners was not changed, but the Consul himself put in a very awkward position to the King, which was enhanced still more by the rumours generally spread then, that two Egyptian armies were approaching to the Abyssinian frontiers.

When I left Gondar, the 26th of November, the King having given leave to me to go, I left the Consul and all the Missionaries living in the camp of the King, and Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal still prisoners. I arrived at my missionary station, at Matemma, the 5th of December, and the 30th December at Khartoum.

It is not at all likely that the King will set the prisoners free, nor let the English Consul go, until the answer of the English Government to the letters of the King will have arrived. Further, I allow myself the remark that any forcible means to get the liberty of the prisoners, the missionaries, and the Consul, for even the latter is scarcely better than the prisoners, will, in my opinion, and in that of every European in Abyssinia, the Consul included, prove highly dangerous for the surety and even lives of them. The King will prove desperate, and, as he is the absolute Ruler of his country, and the Europeans there actually in his power, peaceable means will, no

doubt, prove more successful. For the present, the King will not likely go to the utmost, but he may do anything. I am not sure, but it is probable, that by some rich presents given to the King, and accompanied with friendly words, this awkward affair might be turned to a good end.

I have to add that it was understood the King would not let any letters touching his person or political affairs leave the country. For that reason it was impossible for the Consul to write himself. I know that in September some letters of the Consul were arrested on the road, whether on order of the King, or only by provincial authorities, I am not aware.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. F. HAUSSMANN, *Missionary at Galabat.*

No. 389.

Earl Russell to Mr. Colquhoun.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 9, 1864.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 24th of February,* and its inclosures, from which it appears that Mr. Consul Cameron and other Europeans are detained by King Theodore as prisoners.

I have to instruct you to communicate as soon as possible with the Resident at Aden, through which place you seem to be of opinion that communications may most surely be sent to Abyssinia, and to request him to apply to King Theodore for the immediate release of Mr. Cameron, and of any other British subjects whom he may hold under restraint, and for permission for their immediate departure for Massowah.

The Resident should plainly intimate to the King that, if he hesitates to comply with this demand, he will incur the very serious displeasure of the British Government, the consequences of which may involve him in great embarrassment, and shake the authority which he at present exercises in Abyssinia.

Although I can only instruct you to demand as of right the release of British subjects, yet the Resident of Aden should use his best exertions to induce the King to set at liberty any other Europeans who may be detained in his dominions against their will.

If any other opportunity should offer itself for communicating directly with King Theodore on the matter, you will of course avail yourself of it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 390.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received March 28.)

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 17, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 25th ultimo,† respecting the expedition of Count Bisson, and inclosing a letter from Earl Cowley, wherein his Excellency informs Her Majesty's Government of the ignorance of the Emperor and of M. Drouyn de Lhuys of all knowledge of the mission in question.

I have thought it necessary to inform the Viceroy of the circumstance. His Highness told me that the expedition was in an unhealthy and demoralized condition, uncertain as to what their movements were to be.

These facts are corroborated by a despatch just received from Mr. Petherick, which I inclose, of the tenor of which I shall inform the Viceroy, warning him against any aggressive acts against Abyssinia, or sanctioning any acts on the part of Count Bisson which may lead to razzias against the unoffending populations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

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* No. 388. † No. 387.

Inclosure in No. 390.

Consul Petherick to Mr. Colquhoun.

Sir, *Khartoum, January* 12, 1864.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 23rd November last,* I now have the honour to inform you that General de Bisson left this place on the 4th instant, with the intention of proceeding to Kassala, where he intends to establish himself, at least for some time.

Two of his men died here, and a great number of the men, viz., one-third thereof, were suffering from agues. A spirit of dissatisfaction had seized them, and it is believed insubordination will take place at no distant period.

Whatever the intention of the Egyptian Government towards the invasion of Abyssinia might have been, I have reason to know Moosa Pasha at Berber, on his return from Egypt, received instructions countermanding offensive measures; and for the present there is no indication of attempt in that quarter.

The Governor-General, Moosa Pasha, a few days ago, with a considerable military force, has left this, and taken a different direction, viz., south, on the left Nile bank, with a view, in every probability, of the execution of a razzia against the Bagara Arabs, for the purpose of obtaining cattle.

General de Bisson, who was to join the Egyptian invading force against Abyssinia, is now diverting his attention towards Bogos, with a view to agricultural pursuits. But in order to supply himself with labourers and cattle, it is his intention to undertake razzias against negro populations, with, perhaps, the assistance of the Egyptian Government.

In conclusion, I have the honour to inform you I have this day informed, by despatch in the charge of M. Haussman, the Consul of Abyssinia of the above purport.

M. Haussman proceeds to his station at Galabat, and, according to circumstances, will be guided with regard to his entering Abyssinia. But, at all events, he will take measures to forward my despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN PETHERICK.

No. 391.

Earl Russell to Earl Cowley.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March* 30, 1864.

I INCLOSE, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt,† upon the subject of the Count de Bisson's expedition to Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 392.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received April 7.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, March* 26, 1864.

YOUR Lordship's despatch of the 9th instant‡ reached me on the 20th.

The Calcutta mail having been detained two days, owing to the non-arrival of the boat from Southampton, I was able to avail myself of that day's departure, and write to the Political Resident at Aden, Brigadier Merewether, in the sense instructed by your Lordship, and sent him extract from your Lordship's despatch to serve for the guidance of the person whom the Resident might send to the interior of Abyssinia. I requested the Resident to inform me by the earliest opportunity of the steps he might adopt for carrying out your Lordship's wishes.

I have at present no other means of communicating directly with Abyssinia, but should such occur, I will not fail to do so.

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* No. 379. † No. 390. ‡ No. 389.

No. 393.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(*Received April* 18, 1864.)

My Lord, *Djenda, July* 1, 1863.

I HAVE the honour to report that the newly appointed French Consul for Massowah, M. Lejean, arrived here in December last, and presented himself at King Theodore's camp in Godjam.

He was received with a salute of three cannon, but no escort was sent out to meet him.

M. Lejean presented a letter from the Emperor Napoleon, offering the King the friendship of France.

On delivering it, he expressed regret that France had been deceived into supporting the late Pretender, Agou Negoosee, and laid the blame at the door of the Roman Catholic Mission at Massowah.

On the King's leaving for the interior of Godjam, he gave M. Lejean the option of going to Massowah, or accompanying his own expedition for scientific purposes.

M. Lejean accepted the latter.

Everything went on well till, on the march, M. Lejean suddenly changed his mind, and appearing before the King in uniform, demanded permission to go to Massowah.

The King refused, on the ground that the road was infested by rebels, and dangerous, which was true.

M. Lejean, in spite of this, attempted to leave, and the Emperor had him fastened with an iron chain for a whole day.

He was then ordered to go to Gaffat, on the western frontier, where he is now under surveillance, but with permission to explore as he pleases in the neighbourhood.

He is to be kept there until an answer arrives to the King's letter to Napoleon, already reported to have left this in November last.

A certain Dr. Lagarde afterwards arrived with a sealed letter, the contents of which I hope soon to furnish.

He interceded, by order, for the influence of King Theodore, on behalf of the Roman Catholic Missionaries shut up in the Galla country, but His Majesty replied that he could do nothing at such a distance.

Dr. Lagarde was at first attached to the King's camp, when he effected a cure on the queen, but has since left, by permission, for Gaffat, where there are several Protestant lay Missionaries settled. He was very ill with dysentery.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 394.

Consul Cameron to Earl Russell.—(*Received April* 18, 1864.)

My Lord, *Djenda, August* 15, 1863.

WITH reference to my despatch of 20th May last,* inclosing letters to the Consul-General of Alexandria, I have the honour to state that I found the Abyssinian frontier on the Matemma side in the confusion I had anticipated.

The Pasha of Soudan had been there with an army of 14,000 men, avowedly with the object of tempting King Theodore to open an attack.

Fortunately the latter did not accept the challenge, and the Pasha retired, after having made an unimportant descent on the country occupied by the Shindy Chief, Wud Nimmer.

Wud Nimmer is the son of the well-known Nimmer, or "the Panther," who burnt alive the son of Mohammed Ali, Ismail Pasha, on the occasion of his great invasion of Nubia.

He inherits the hatred of his sire towards the Turks, and renders himself formidable to the Arabs under Egypt by his predatory attacks.

His country has been for the last four years tributary to Abyssinia, and he is said to be furnished with a contingent of 500 Abyssinian soldiers to support him in his forays.

The Pasha, before leaving Matemma, sent a letter to King Theodore, informing

* No. 362.

him that, unless Wud Nimmer was either given up or held in check, there would be war between the two countries.

Wud Nimmer is at present in hiding in the territory between the Barca, the Egyptian Arabs, and Abyssinia.

King Theodore, since I left Bogos, has been plundering the Barca tribes under Egypt, under pretence of levying tribute.

The account, taking into consideration the incursions from the Egyptian side on Abyssinia, already reported by me, seems thus pretty fairly balanced between the two parties.

Having done my best to point out their duty to the Egyptian Chiefs, and his best interests to His Majesty, I see no possibility of interfering further with good effect.

I am here, awaiting replies to my despatches of 31st October last,* so that I may communicate the result to the King at once, and leave.

I may add that King Theodore, after waiting more than a year for the appreciation of a merciful Proclamation, issued by him when I was with him at Debra Mai, has at last made a rapid movement against the rebel at Godjam, and he killed 15,000 of his soldiers.

The latter, however, still muster about 24,000.

A minor rebel has also been crushed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 395.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received April* 21.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, April* 11, 1864.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th of March,† wherein I reported having requested the Resident at Aden to take measures for conveying to Abyssinia your Lordship's instructions respecting the detention of Her Majesty's Consul by King Theodore, I have now the honour to inclose copy of Colonel Merewether's despatch received this day. The Resident having no vessel at his command, has communicated with Bombay, and awaits instructions.

By to-day's mail I forwarded to the Resident a Memorial from Mrs. Stern to King Theodore respecting the imprisonment of her husband, the missionary, which the Resident will send when he forwards the other documents to Abyssinia.

Mr. Speedy appears to have left Massowah about the 18th of January, without finally communicating with Captain Cameron; but he showed the Resident a letter from the latter (date not given), in which there was no mention of any difficulties with the King. I myself rather incline to the Khartoum Report, as Captain Cameron may not have had the means open of communicating with his residence at Massowah.

Inclosure in No. 395.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Colquhoun.

(Extract.) *Aden, March* 31, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt, by the Calcutta steamer, of your letters dated the 20th of March, and to inform you that copies of them go to Bombay by the mail expected to pass two days hence.

2. I am utterly unable to do anything in the case you mention; there is no Government steam-vessel in the harbour and no man-of-war on the Station. The "Hornet" which was here for a short time, has been recalled to Bombay, and is not, as far as I know, to be replaced.

3. I would beg to point out that I have, properly speaking, nothing whatever to do with Abyssinia, though always ready to afford every assistance in my power to Her Majesty's Consul there when it is asked for. It would only be in a very extreme case, even if the means were at my disposal, that I should be justified in interfering in the affairs of that country, without first seeking instructions from the Government under which I am serving.

* No. 343. † No. 392.

4. These instructions have now been asked for; and the means, if I am to act. On receipt of the former, they shall be promptly communicated to you.

5. I am extremely astonished to hear the reports you had received from Khartoum; for at the end of last month Mr. Speedy, who had been acting as Vice-Consul for Captain Cameron, arrived from Massowah, and when he left nothing whatever had been heard of Captain Cameron's detention.

No. 396.

Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(*Received April* 29.)*

My Lord, 11, *Austin Friars, April* 28, 1864.

I TAKE the liberty of respectfully informing your Lordship that shortly after the date of the distressing occurrences in Abyssinia, of which intelligence has already reached your Lordship's department, a messenger arrived at Gondar from Massowah, with letters which had just been received from Europe.

Owing to the unfortunate position of affairs at that time, the whole of those letters fell into the hands of the King, who had them translated to him; and I regret to say that among them was one from your Lordship's department to Consul Cameron, ordering him forthwith to leave the Court and return to his Consulate at Massowah, than which nothing could have happened more unfortunately at that particular juncture.

Whether Captain Cameron will have been permitted by King Theodore to obey your Lordship's orders is, at the least, questionable. At all events, it is not improbable that some time will elapse before that officer will be able to communicate with your Lordship, especially as Lieutenant Speedy, whom he had left in charge of the Consulate, has, I hear, left Massowah for Australia.

The Rev. Mr. Stern's sentence of death has been commuted for imprisonment for life.

The deep interest I have so long felt in everything affecting the relations between England and Abyssinia, and my sense of the importance of keeping your Lordship advised of all that occurs in that remote country will, I trust, afford a sufficient apology for the present communication.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 397.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received May* 7.)

My Lord, *Cairo, April* 28, 1864.

I HAVE this instant received the annexed letter from Colonel Merewether, the Political Resident at Aden. The inclosed does not bear date nor signature, but the pencil note is clear and precise.

I will communicate with the Viceroy on the subject of the party under Omer Pasha (or Bey). I suspect this to be the *débris* of M. de Bisson's band. Kassala on the Mareb is on the Egyptian territory; the other places, Numur and Duffat, I know not.

It may be difficult to know what steps to advise for procuring the rescue of these persons. Mr. Petherick must at present be near this on his way home, as I learn from a private letter from his wife, or he would, under other circumstances, and when wearing an official character, have been the person to have charged with the matter.

I do not know where Mr. White Baker is at present; I suspect far to the south-west. He would have been well suited to such a Mission, and would have carried it well through. We must, therefore, hope that Colonel Merewether will receive instructions from Bombay which will enable him to act. Though Colonel Merewether's letter is not official, there is much in it which I think should be brought to your Lordship's knowledge, and I, therefore, have ventured to transcribe it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1865.

Inclosure 1 in No. 397.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Colquhoun.

My dear Mr. Colquhoun, *Aden, April* 21, 1864.

INCLOSED is the latest intelligence from Abyssinia, which fully confirms the report of Captain Cameron's imprisonment, and that of Mr. Stern, with others.

Mr. Speedy, to whom Captain Cameron's letter is addressed, left Massowah in January last, and went to New Zealand. You will very probably be acquainted with Mrs. Stern, and would perhaps be good enough to convey the required information to her.

I have not received any reply from Bombay yet, but trust the incoming mail, hourly expected, may bring intimation of the despatch of a man-of-war to this station.

I deeply regret the helpless condition in which we are left here for want of vessels of war. The Indian Navy has ceased to exist, and all the Lords of the Admiralty have as yet given to replace its fleet is one frigate and two or three small sloops, none of which can the Commodore send here to stay.

Directly I am furnished with the requisite means, no endeavours shall be wanting on my part to effect the release of the unfortunate captives. I do not think they are in any danger of personal injury beyond the inconvenience of confinement. I am not aware what letter Captain Cameron refers to in his note to Mr. Speedy; perhaps King Theodore has written to you.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 397.

Latest Intelligence from Abyssinia.

THE country is in a state of revolution; the Abyssinians fight amongst themselves for about ten or fifteen days every month; trade is dull. A party of 200 Europeans of different nations, headed by Omer Pasha, a Turkish officer in the pay of Ismail Pacha, the Viceroy of Egypt, landed on the Abyssinian coast about five months ago; they are now reduced to about forty, and at present are located at Cassara or Cassilla,* but are to move nearer Massowah in a few days. The purpose of this party was to ascertain the strength of King Theodore's force, so as to calculate what number of troops would be required to subjugate the country. King Theodore heard of this, and prevented the party fulfilling its mission. It was also reported to the King that the English and French were in conjunction with the Turks to take the country from him. It was reported the French Consul was in irons for twenty-four hours, but obtained his release by having prevailed upon the King to give him a number of soldiers to fight the intruders at Cassara or Cassilla.* When he arrived near Cassara, he left the soldiers in the lurch, and made his escape *viâ* Neemur. He is supposed to be on his way to Suez. Everybody at Massowah knew that Captain Cameron, Mr. Stern, and several other European gentlemen were in irons, and had been for some time. The inclosed pencil note, with copy attached, contains a list of the gentlemen who are in irons, and those who are at work. It was given by the Pasha of Massowah; he received it on the 21st of March. Another of the same tenor and date, initialled C. D. C.,† arrived at Massowah on the 13th instant. The messenger was eleven days on the journey. He received the note from an English lady two days before he started on his journey. He had a verbal message to the Pasha, asking the Pasha to write a letter to the King, as there will be no release until the King receives a letter. A letter received on the 13th instant, by Mr. Delmonte, the senior Roman-Catholic priest at Massowah, from a brother priest at Cassara or Cassilla, contained the news that the Consul and others had been taken out of irons, but still remained prisoners. Messrs. Stern and Flad are said to be English missionaries; Mr. Bardel, a French missionary; Mr. Cairnes, a German missionary. Regarding the other gentlemen, no information could be obtained.

Copy of Pencil Note (having Mr. Cameron's initials).

Myself, Stern, Rosenthal, Cairnes, Bardel, McCravie, and McKilvie are all chained here. Flad, Staiger, Brandeis, and Cornelius sent to Duffat, to work for the

* Kassala on the Mareb.—R. G. C.

† Cameron.—R. G. C.

King. No release until civil answer to King's letter arrives. Mrs. Flad, Mr. Rosenthal, and children, all of us well. Write this to Aden, and Mrs. Stern, 16, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

To C. Speedy, Esq., Massowah.
Gondar, February 14, 1863.*

No. 398.

Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 4, 1864.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo,† relative to the affairs of Abyssinia, and I am to convey to you the thanks of his Lordship for the information furnished therein.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 398 A.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received May 11.)

India Office, May 11, 1864.

MR. MERIVALE presents his compliments to Mr. Hammond, and begs to return the inclosed papers relating to the affairs of Abyssinia, which were sent to this office for perusal.‡

No. 399.

Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(Received May 18.)§

My Lord, 11, *Austin Friars, May* 18, 1864.

I HAVE been honoured with Mr. Murray's letter of the 4th instant, conveying to me your Lordship's thanks for the information relative to the affairs of Abyssinia, which I took the liberty of communicating to your Lordship by my letter of the 28th ultimo.

Since the date of my said letter, further information of great importance has been received from Abyssinia; but, as I have been given to understand that your Lordship has been made acquainted with all the particulars, it is unnecessary for me to dwell on them here.

But the increased urgency of the subject (which I fear is only likely to go on increasing) emboldens me to address your Lordship again, for the purpose of most respectfully renewing the offer of my humble services, in case they can be of any avail to Her Majesty's Government in the present emergency.

In doing so, I would beg leave to repeat to your Lordship that I resided three years in Abyssinia, visiting its remotest provinces; that I have since been in constant relations with that country, as my frequent communications to your Lordship's Department and to the Board of Trade will testify; and that I am familiar with its language, and intimately acquainted with its affairs, political, religious, commercial, and social.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 400.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received May 23.)

India Office, May 21, 1864.

MR. MERIVALE presents his compliments to Mr. Hammond, and begs to inclose, for the information of Earl Russell, copies of two letters and their inclosures which have been received from the Political Resident at Aden, reporting intelligence from Abyssinia.

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* *Sic in orig.* † No. 396. ‡ See No. 352. § Laid before Parliament, 1865.

Inclosure 1 in No. 400.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

Sir, *Aden, April* 20, 1864.

I DO myself the honour to forward a copy of my latest despatch in this Department, dated this day, to the Government of Bombay.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 400.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, April* 20, 1864.

IN continuation of my despatch of yesterday's date, I have the honour to forward the following latest intelligence from Abyssinia just received:—

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 397.]

Inclosure 3 in No. 400.

Commander Thyne to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Aden, April* 20, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to report the arrival of the schooner "Fanny" from Massowah. I arrived at Massowah on the 11th instant, and left on the 14th instant, and, in accordance with the instructions contained in your letter dated the 6th instant, I obtained the following information:—

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 397.]

Inclosure 4 in No. 400.

M. Delmonte to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, April* 13, 1864.

BEING unacquainted with English, I have been unable to inform the captain of the "Fanny" of all that I wanted to, and which I ought to have done at the same time. I therefore take the liberty of writing you a few lines, to state what I have been requested to by Mr. Cameron, the British Consul in Abyssinia, who informed me of the circumstances through one of his servants, who effected his escape from prison, came to Massowah, and related to me the infamous treatment of the Emperor Theodore of Abyssinia, especially towards the representative of Great Britain. Mr. Cameron has been placed in chains for the last five months by the Emperor Theodore, for no reason whatever. He has not had the good fortune to be able to send his despatches to Europe, on account of their having strictly forbidden him to do so; neither can he receive any from Europe, because Theodore has forbidden anyone, on pain of having his hands and feet cut off, to convey letters to the Europeans who are imprisoned by him. Several times despatches have arrived here from Aden for Mr. Cameron, but they are all here in charge of the Turkish Governor of the island of Massowah, because no one will take upon himself to their destination. Hence Mr. Cameron is unjustly imprisoned, just because Theodore wishes it. He is debarred from all correspondence with his superiors and friends, because superior barbaric force places it out of his power to do otherways: this is not all. Mr. Stern, well known in Europe for his works, after having been unjustly insulted by having his servants beaten, of which two died from the effects, for the only reason that they served the Europeans, has been illtreated himself and placed in irons, where he has been for several months past. All the others, English and French, living in Abyssinia, are also confined, except the following:—Messrs. Schimper, a German; Landes, a German; and Bourgand, a Frenchman. What excites general indignation is, that two English ladies who have

been living for some time in Abyssinia have been insulted and imprisoned in the same manner as their husbands. It seems to me that these barbarous abuses cry for vengeance to God and men. It also appears to me that, in honour, England and Europe ought not to forget these outrages.

It is reported that a military expedition of Egyptian soldiers has been undertaken against Abyssinia in the direction of Matemma. It is also said that a small colony of Europeans of different nations, under the leadership of a certain M. Bisson, a Frenchman, is proceeding towards Kassala with the intention of founding a Colony somewhere. If all this be true it may have tended to annoy the Emperor of Abyssinia, Theodore. I trust, Sir, that you will excuse my talking to you on subjects with which, in my capacity of missionary, I have nothing whatever to do, but I do so solely on account of Mr. Cameron having begged it of me. He has undergone much for some time past, and is unable to raise his voice in the matter; hence it strikes me to be the duty of everyone to speak up under similar circumstances.

I beg of you to accept the sentiments of gratitude and high consideration with which I have, &c.

(Signed) CH. DELMONTE,
Apostolic Missionary and Chief of the Roman Catholic Mission in Abyssinia.

Inclosure 5 in No. 400.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

Sir, *Aden, April* 26, 1864.

I DO myself the honour to forward a copy of my latest despatch in this department, dated this day, to the Government of Bombay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 6 in No. 400.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, April* 26, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to forward translation of a letter received from a missionary at Massowah,* giving some further information regarding the treatment of Captain Cameron and others at the hands of King Theodore.

2. Judging from Captain Cameron's pencil note previously forwarded, I should say the reverend gentleman was mistaken in his statement that the ladies were also imprisoned.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 401.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received May 23.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, May* 10, 1864.

THE annexed copy of a letter from Mr. Petherick with its inclosure from the missionary, Mr. Haussmann, of the 14th February, dated from Matemma on the Abyssinian and Egyptian frontier, has given me much anxiety, as I can see no way in our power of getting at King Theodore.

I expect, by the Bombay boat to-morrow, a letter from the Resident at Aden, informing me of the means the Government of Bombay can place at his disposal for sending to Gondar. From this side, I have none available. Mr. Petherick is now on his way down. Mr. S. White Baker, in whose firmness, courage and decision I have the highest confidence, is away to the westward of the White Nile, carrying out the charge left him by Captain Speke, to examine the Little Nyanza Lake; he would have been the person I would have employed if I could reach him, but all hope of overtaking him is useless.

* Inclosure 4 in No. 400.

Old Mr. Barroni, formerly Acting Consul at Massowah, whose knowledge of the country and persons in Abyssinia, would have been most valuable, died about four months ago beyond Souakim. So that, except from Aden, I really can see no measures feasible, and from thence such could only be of a mild nature, for from the character we have of late of the King, he would appear to have become subject to fits of rage which almost deprive him of reason, and would render all approach dangerous.

Inclosure 1 in No. 401.

Consul Petherick to Mr. Colquhoun.

Sir, *Khartoum, March* 26, 1864.

SEVEN miles from Khartoum under tents, whence I propose starting for Egypt, I yesterday received the inclosed letter respecting the fate of Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, and although my functions as Consul for the Soudan have ceased, I do not hesitate to forward it in an official form in order if possible to ensure its safe delivery, in the hope Her Majesty's Government may as soon as possible be apprised of the ignominious treatment Mr. Cameron is enduring at the Court of Abyssinia. I have also the honour to inform you, Mr. Haussmann the writer of the present inclosure communicated to Mr. Hansel the Austrian pro-Consul, that in consequence of the imprisonment of Her Majesty's Consul no one would take charge of my despatches of November 23, 26, and 28, 1863, to him, for fear of incurring the displeasure of King Theodore. Neither does Mr. Haussmann expect to be enabled to forward them until after Mr. Cameron's release.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN PETHERICK.

Inclosure 2 in No. 401.

The Rev. C. F. Haussmann to Consul Petherick.

Sir, *Matemma, February* 14, 1864.

I HAVE to fulfil a painful duty in informing you that the apprehensions I expressed in the report I directed to you in January, were justified. Having come back to Matemma the day before yesterday, I found the rumour confirmed which had reached me on the road already, that Captain Cameron, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, with all his European attendants, had been put in prison, and so were all the missionaries residing in Djenda and Derne. One of the latter had the opportunity of sending me a servant, who gave me some specialities.

He said that Captain Cameron had asked the King for leave within four days; and the King, after four days, instead of giving him leave, had him tied with all the above-mentioned Europeans. All their money and luggage was taken away, and they were provided with food by the King. The servants were not bound, but in liberty to work for their masters. The King was staying at Gondar still.

Hoping soon to be able to give you more favourable accounts, I have, &c.,
(Signed) C. F. HAUSSMANN, *Missionary.*

P.S.—*February* 17. From Abyssinians coming from Gondar directly, I have got the news that the missionaries were set at liberty again, and ordered to go to Debra Tabor. Her Britannic Majesty's Consul was in prison still. Not from assuming any political character, but from regard of the personal security of the Europeans, I beg to repeat the remarks I have made in my letter of January about the measures to be taken.

C. F. H.

No. 402.

*Major E. Plowden to Mr. Layard.—(Received June 8.)**

Sir, 5, *West Road Terrace, Forest Hill, June 4*, 1864.

WITH reference to the subject of British prisoners in Abyssinia, introduced last night in the House of Commons, I most respectfully have the honour to offer my services to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with the object of obtaining the release of Captain Cameron and other British subjects in Abyssinia.

I beg to inclose testimonials from most distinguished officers and gentlemen, together with a record of my services in India, and I beg to add that I have been selected, on more than one occasion in India to perform duties of a most arduous nature. I continue to be in the vigour of health and activity, and should my services be accepted, I will do my utmost to perform with zeal and ability any duty that may devolve on me.

I am a relative of the present Consul at Abyssinia, and the late Consul, Mr. Walter Plowden, was my first cousin. May I add, as a soldier, I am ready at a moment's call?

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND C. PLOWDEN, *Major*,
Her Majesty's Indian Forces, Retired List.

No. 403.

Mr. Beecroft, M.P., to Mr. Layard.—(Received June 11.)

Sir, 4, *Gloucester Terrace, Regent's Park, June 6*, 1864.

I BEG leave to forward to you a letter I have received from one of my constituents respecting the persecution in Abyssinia of British subjects.

Will you be kind enough to favour me with a reply, and oblige, &c.

(Signed) GEO. S. BEECROFT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 403.

*Mr. Dufton, Senr., to Mr. Beecroft, M.P.**

Sir, *Leeds, June 4*, 1864.

IF you see no objection, I should be glad if you would do me the favour to call my Lord Russell's or Mr. Layard's attention to a paragraph headed "Persecution in Abyssinia of British Subjects," which you will find on page 5 of this day's "Intelligencer," a copy of which I forward you by this post.

It appears from Mr. Layard's reply to a question put to him in the House on this subject last night, that the Government are in much need of direct and reliable information.

My son having spent four months at the Abyssinian Court last year had good opportunities of not only judging of King Theodore's character, but also of ascertaining something of his feeling towards England; and entertaining a lively interest in the welfare of the individuals who are reported to be in chains, many of whom are personally known to him, he is at once prepared to be the bearer of a despatch from our Government to His Abyssinian Majesty.

Apologising for thus troubling you, I am, &c.

(Signed) HENRY DUFTON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 403.

*Extract from the "Intelligencer" of June 4, 1864.**

PERSECUTION IN ABYSSINIA OF BRITISH SUBJECTS.—"A short time ago it was reported that the Rev. Mr. Stern, a missionary, we believe, of the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, had been publicly whipped by order of

* A similar letter was addressed to Mr. Hammond, and laid before Parliament, 1865.

Theodorus, the so-called Emperor of Abyssinia. Later accounts from the same quarter confirm the intelligence, and seem to imply further, that for some cause or other Theodorus has commenced a general persecution of all British subjects within his territories, including our Consul, Captain Cameron.

"The following is a *verbatim* copy of a notice which Captain Cameron succeeded in getting conveyed to Massowah:—'Myself, Stern, Rosenthal, Cairnes, Bardel, M'Craire, and McKilvie are all chained here. Flad, Staiger, Brandeis, and Cornelius sent to Gaffat to work for King. No release until civil answer to King's letter arrives. Mrs. Flad, Mrs. Rosenthal and children, all of us well. Write this to Aden, and to Mrs. Stern, 16, Lincoln's-inn-fields.—Gondar, 14th February, 1864.'

"We are perfectly at a loss to conceive what can have induced so sudden a change of conduct on the part of the Emperor Theodorus. Up to a very recent period he was the sworn friend of the English, who had generally sided with him in the policy which, within the last ten years, has raised him from the rank of a provincial governor to that of supreme ruler over the whole of Abyssinia, including Shoa. In 1860 he paid a large sum of money to ransom our late Consul Plowden from the hands of the rebels in Tigré, who had wounded and seized him while travelling towards the coast. Plowden's death was avenged by the Englishmen Bell, who had long been commander-in-chief of the Abyssinian army. Bell himself fell in the attempt; but the victory which he had gained over the rebels paved the way for the subjection of the whole of Tigré to the authority of Theodorus.

"Such having been the friendly relation between the Emperor and the few Englishmen settled in Abyssinia, we cannot imagine what has caused the present state of hostility, and purposely abstain from publishing the surmises which have reached us on the subject. What we are most anxious to know is, what steps the Foreign Office has taken to obtain the release of our countrymen and countrywomen, who appear to have been in chains at Gondar for the last four months at least."—*Morning Herald.*

Our fellow-townsman, Mr. Dufton (son of Mr. H. Dufton, cloth merchant), in a communication we have received from him, gives it as his opinion, founded on information obtained during a six months' residence in Abyssinia in 1863, during which he had several interviews with King Theodore, that the displeasure of that monarch towards Captain Cameron and our fellow-subjects, though manifesting itself on the occasion of their interference on behalf of Mr. Stern, is really due to the neglect or delay of our own Government in not replying to the letter which the Abyssinian King despatched to Queen Victoria in some part of 1862. The purport of the letter was to ascertain the willingness of Her Majesty to receive Ambassadors from the Ethiopian Court, and also whether such Ambassadors could be guaranteed a safe passage through the territory of the Pasha of Egypt, with whom King Theodore is not on good terms. With the Ambassadors the King also purposed sending some of the richest presents his dominions afforded, including Abyssinian breeds of horses, gold- and silver-mounted saddles and trappings, armour, shields, and spears. Now, the non-receipt of a favourable reply would be apt to present itself to the King as a sign of indifference, if not something approaching to ingratitude, on our part.

His good feeling towards the English nation is unquestionable; this having been fully guaranteed by the faithful services, during more than twenty years, of our fellow-countrymen Plowden and Bell. The King's revenge for the death of the latter was the slaughter of 3,000 of his own people; and he is even now often known to weep at the remembrance of him whom he had made his bosom companion and friend. He has been known to say, in the expressive idiom of the East, that, were an Englishman to present him with poison, he, knowing it to be such, would take it at his hands for the love he bears to the nation. His ambition is very great, and, having gone on hitherto in his conquering career with little check or hindrance, he is prone to look upon himself as having already attained (though such is far from being the case) the object for which he says he lives—namely, the re-uniting of all the territories originally called Ethiopia into one vast empire. His title is King of Kings, or Emperor of Ethiopia! The neglect—for in this light he will certainly view it—of our Government in not replying to his letter must consequently be somewhat offending to his pride, and also liable to excite his indignation, as humbling him in the sight of his people, and thereby endangering the stability of his throne.

These persecutions by the King of Abyssinia were the subject of remark in the House of Commons yesterday (Friday) evening. Mr. Layard, the mouthpiece of the Foreign Office, in reply to Mr. Seymour, said that the Government had received direct information that the King had placed the British Consul and several missionaries in

confinement, and that the French Consul had also been imprisoned, but he had been released. How it is that our own Representative should suffer more than that of France, we shall perhaps learn at some other day. According to what Mr. Dufton says (and we have full confidence in his statement of facts and in the correctness of his inferences), the Palmerston Government is far from being blameless in the production of the untoward state of things which now exists in Abyssinia. Mr. Layard, according to official precedent, assured the House that "the question"—the imprisonment of the British Consul and other British subjects—" was under the serious consideration of the Foreign Office."

No. 404.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Beecroft, M.P.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 11, 1864.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant,* inclosing a letter from Mr. Dufton, offering the services of his son with a view to procure the release of Captain Cameron and other Europeans who are supposed to be detained in captivity by King Theodore of Abyssinia; and I am to request that you will have the goodness to convey to Mr. Dufton Lord Russell's best thanks for his offer, but inform him that other arrangements have been made in this respect.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 405.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Merivale.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 11, 1864.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you drafts of letters which his Lordship proposes to address to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt,† and to the Admiralty, respecting the steps to be taken for securing the release of Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, and of other Europeans who are stated to be detained in captivity by Theodore, King of Abyssinia. These letters explain the course which, as Lord Russell has been advised, Her Majesty's Government should adopt in this respect, and I am to request that you will move Secretary Sir Charles Wood to allow the services of Her Majesty's Officers at Aden to be afforded in this important matter.

Assuming Sir C. Wood's concurrence, Lord Russell would suggest that instructions be given to the Political Resident at Aden to send Mr. Hormuzd Rassam on the mission to Massowah, and if necessary to Gondar; and his Lordship trusts that the Admiralty will be able to forward him from Aden in a ship of war.

Earl Russell has been advised that on arriving at Massowah, Mr. Rassam should forward to Gondar a letter from himself to the King announcing his arrival as the bearer of a letter from the Queen, and should at the same time send the letters from the Patriarch of the Copts, and should await King Theodore's reply before deciding whether it will be necessary for him to proceed in person to Gondar to deliver the Queen's letter, or whether it would be sufficient to send the letter to Captain Cameron; but in making this suggestion his Lordship feels that he must leave a discretion to the person employed, and Mr. Rassam's ability and knowledge of the people will doubtless enable him to judge the best course to be adopted.

I am to add that Lord Russell would be glad to be favoured with an early communication of Sir Charles Wood's decision.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* No. 403.

† Nos. 407 and 408.

No. 406.

Mr. Murray to Major Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 14, 1864.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant,* and to thank you for your offer of services with a view to obtaining the release of Captain Cameron and other British subjects imprisoned in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 407.

Earl Russell to Mr. Colquhoun.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 16, 1864.

THE information which has recently reached this country in a more or less authentic shape, to the effect that Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, and other Europeans are held in confinement, or are detained against their will at Gondar by the King of Abyssinia, has necessarily caused anxiety to Her Majesty's Government; and it is the desire of Her Majesty that every effort should be made to obtain their release.

In so far as imperfect accounts can be relied on, there seems some reason to suppose that King Theodore may have imprisoned Captain Cameron because he had not received a letter from the Queen, which Captain Cameron had led him to expect, in reply to an offer from the King to send an Embassy to England. Her Majesty has now addressed a letter to King Theodore, which I herewith inclose.

I have consulted persons to whom Abyssinia and its people are well known, as to the means of sending the Queen's letter to its destination, and I have been advised that this may best be done by sending a properly qualified person from Aden to Massowah, whence he will communicate with King Theodore.

I am, however, informed that the success of that gentleman's mission will be greatly aided if the Patriarch of the Copts in Egypt would do Her Majesty's Government the favour of rendering his assistance by furnishing the gentleman so employed with letters to King Theodore and to the Aboona at Gondar, entreating the King at once to release his prisoners; and I have accordingly to instruct you to solicit this favour at the hands of the Patriarch.

It will further be desirable that a correct translation into the language of Abyssinia should, if possible, accompany the Queen's letter, of which I therefore send you a copy, for the purpose of procuring such translation.

This done, you will forward the Queen's letter, the translation, and the Patriarch's letters to the Political Resident at Aden, who will receive instructions from the Secretary of State for India in regard to their transmission to Massowah and to King Theodore.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

Inclosure in No. 407.

Her Majesty the Queen to the King of Abyssinia.†

VICTORIA, by the grace of God, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c., &c., to Theodore, King of Abyssinia, sendeth greeting.

We have duly received the letter which your Majesty delivered to our servant Cameron, and we have read with pleasure the friendly expressions which it conveys. We learn with satisfaction that your Majesty has successfully established your authority in the country over which you rule, and we trust that you may long continue to administer its affairs in peace and in prosperity. We do not require from your Majesty the further evidence of your regard for ourselves which you propose to afford by sending a special Embassy to our Court. The distance which separates Abyssinia from England is great;

* No. 402.

† This was subsequently altered. See No. 451.

the difficulties and delays which would attend the journey of your Ambassadors might be hard to overcome; and much unavailing disappointment and regret might result from any accident which might befall your Ambassadors on the road. Our servant Cameron will convey to us your wishes, and he will assure you of our friendship and good-will; and we were glad to learn by your letter that he had been duly received by your Majesty.

Accounts have, indeed, reached us of late that your Majesty had withdrawn your favour from our servant, and had subjected him and many others in whom we feel an interest to treatment which is inconsistent with your professions. We trust that these accounts have originated in false representations on the part of persons ill-disposed towards your Majesty, and who may desire to produce an alteration in our feelings towards you. But your Majesty can give no better proof of the sincerity of the sentiments which you profess towards us, nor ensure more effectually a continuance of our friendship and good-will, than by dismissing our servant and any other Europeans who may desire it, from your Court, and in affording them every assistance and protection on their journey to the destination to which they may desire to proceed. Our servant Cameron will then be able personally to explain to us your wishes in regard to any matters which you may desire to represent to us.

And not doubting that you will do this, we bid you farewell, and recommend you to the protection of God.

Given at our Court at Balmoral, the 26th day of May, in the year of our Lord 1864, and in the twenty-seventh year of our reign.

Your good friend,
(Signed) VICTORIA R.

(Countersigned) RUSSELL.

No. 408.

Mr. Murray to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 16, 1864.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you copies of letters which his Lordship has addressed to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt and to the Secretary of State for India* upon a matter of great importance, involving the lives and liberty of Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, and of other Europeans who are supposed to have been detained for months in captivity at Gondar, by Theodore, King of Abyssinia.

You will perceive therefrom that it is proposed to send a gentleman from Aden to Massowah, charged with a letter from the Queen to King Theodore, but Lord Russell has been advised, on the best authority, that unless this gentleman is conveyed in some state to Massowah, the main object of saving the lives and securing the liberty of the captives will be defeated; and as there are no means at the Queen's disposal of coercing a Ruler in the interior of Africa, Lord Russell does not doubt that the Lords of the Admiralty will concur with him in the expediency of adopting whatever other steps may conduce to the end in view. This, Lord Russell has been informed, may probably be secured by sending the bearer of the Queen's letter from Aden to Massowah in a ship of war, and his Lordship trusts that the exigencies of the service will permit of a ship being placed accordingly at the disposal of the Political Agent at Aden.

I am to request that you will favour me with their Lordships' decision in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 409.

Lord Wodehouse to Mr. Hammond.—(Received June 16.)

Sir, *India Office, June* 16, 1864.

IN reply to your letter of the 11th instant,† I am directed by Sir Charles Wood to request that you will state to Earl Russell that he is quite ready to place Mr. Rassam

* Nos. 405 and 407.

† No. 405.

at the disposal of the Foreign Office for the purposes mentioned in that letter, but that he would wish to be furnished with a draft of the precise instructions which Lord Russell wishes to be given to Mr. Rassam.*

Sir Charles Wood would suggest that these instructions should be sent to this Office, to be transmitted to the Political Resident at Aden by the mail of the 18th instant, who will then be directed to give the necessary orders to Mr. Rassam.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WODEHOUSE.

No. 410.

Mr. Hammond to Lord Wodehouse.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, June* 17, 1864.

I HAVE laid before Earl Russell your letter of the 16th instant† respecting Captain Cameron's imprisonment in Abyssinia, and I am directed by his Lordship to state to you that, in accordance with the suggestion in your letter, he has prepared the accompanying Memorandum of Instructions for Mr. Rassam, which I am to request that you will move Sir Charles Wood to forward to Aden.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

Inclosure in No. 410.

Instructions to be given to Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, on his proceeding to Abyssinia.

THE Political Resident at Aden should inform Mr. Hormuzd Rassam that he has been selected by Her Majesty's Government to hold himself in readiness to proceed to Massowah, and if needful to Abyssinia, with a view of endeavouring to procure the release of Captain Cameron and other Europeans, who are said to be detained in captivity by King Theodore.

In order that Mr. Rassam should be able to judge of the best mode of proceeding, he should be told that the alleged ground for the detention is stated to be the complaint of King Theodore that he has not received an answer from the Queen to a letter which he wrote some time since to Her Majesty, and the Queen has in consequence addressed to the King a letter, of which Mr. Rassam will be the bearer.

A copy of the Queen's letter is annexed for Mr. Rassam's information.

The letter itself will be forwarded to the Political Resident at Aden by Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, who has been instructed to endeavour to get a correct translation of it made into the language of Abyssinia, and who will also endeavour to forward to Aden letters from the Patriarch of the Copts in Egypt to the Aboona of Gondar, as well as to King Theodore, which will probably facilitate Mr. Rassam's Mission.

Mr. Rassam should be conveyed to Massowah in a ship-of-war; and it is conceived that, on arriving at that port, he should forward to Gondar a letter from himself to the King, announcing himself as the bearer of a letter from the Queen, and he should at the same time send on the letters from the Patriarch of the Copts. He should then await at Massowah King Theodore's reply, before deciding upon the question of the necessity either of proceeding in person to Gondar to deliver the Queen's letter, or of sending it for delivery to Captain Cameron; and on receiving the reply he should be guided by his own judgment as to the course to be pursued, always bearing in mind that the release of the persons above-mentioned is the important object to which alone he has to look, and which he must use every exertion to secure.

The above instructions should however not be held to be so binding upon Mr. Rassam as to prevent his adopting any other course which may appear to him in his progress to be more advisable; and he should be specially careful not to place himself in a position which may cause further embarrassment to Her Majesty's Government. Full reliance is placed in Mr. Rassam's ability, discretion, and knowledge of the people; and Her Majesty's Government look with confidence to the success of his Mission.

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* See Inclosure in No. 410.

† No. 409.

No. 411.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Mr. Hammond.—(Received June 18.)

Sir, *Admiralty, June 17, 1864.*

IN reply to Mr. Murray's letter of the 16th instant* respecting the conveyance from Aden to Massowah in a ship of war of the bearer of the Queen's letter to the King of Abyssinia, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to request you will state to Earl Russell that there is no vessel of war at present in the Red Sea or in the neighbourhood of Aden, but if Lord Russell would wish a vessel to be sent from Trincomalee, they will give the necessary orders on the receipt of an intimation of the further wishes of his Lordship.

I am, &c.
(Signed) C. PAGET.

No. 412.

Mr. Murray to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 18, 1864.*

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant† relative to the means at the disposal of the Admiralty for the conveyance from Aden to Massowah of the bearer of the Queen's letter to the King of Abyssinia, and I am to state to you in reply that Secretary Sir Charles Wood has informed his Lordship that it is possible that the steamer "Dalhousie" may be at Aden, and that if so, Sir Charles Wood has given orders for her detention there, and for her employment on the service in question, but as there is a doubt on the subject, and as it is most important that every effort should be made to release Captain Cameron and the other captives, I am to request that you will move the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, if they see no objection thereto, to send conditional orders to Trincomalee through the India Office, who might be requested to order the Political Agent at Aden to forward them on if necessary.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 413.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Mr. Hammond.—(Received June 20.)

Sir, *Admiralty, June 18, 1864.*

WITH reference to your letter of this day's date, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, for the information of Earl Russell, that instructions have been sent to the Senior Officer of Her Majesty's ships at Bombay and at Trincomalee to send a ship of war to Aden, to convey to Massowah the bearer of the Queen's letter to the King of Abyssinia, upon receiving an intimation from the Political Agent at Aden that he has not been able to employ the "Dalhousie" upon the service.

I am, &c.
(Signed) C. H. PENNELL, *pro Sec.*

No. 414.

Mr. Murray to Lord Wodehouse.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, June 21, 1864.*

WITH reference to my letter of the 11th instant,‡ I am directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you, for the information of Secretary Sir Charles Wood, copies of the inclosed correspondence with the Board of Admiralty,§ relative to the conveyance from

* No. 408. † No. 411. ‡ No. 405. § Nos. 411, 412, and 413.

Aden to Massowah in a ship of war of the bearer of the Queen's letter to the King of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 415.

Lord Wodehouse to Mr. Hammond.—(Received June 22.)

Sir, *India Office, June 22, 1864.*

IN reply to your letter of yesterday's date,* I am directed by Sir Charles Wood to forward, for the information of Earl Russell, a copy of a letter from this Office to the Admiralty, from which his Lordship will learn that Sir Charles Wood is willing, if the "Dalhousie" should be at or near Aden when Mr. Rassam is ready to start on his mission, to allow that vessel to convey him to Massowah. As Sir Charles Wood gathers from the correspondence now received, that Earl Russell approves of this course, he will send the necessary instructions to the Resident at Aden by the mail of the 27th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WODEHOUSE.

Inclosure in No. 415.

Lord Wodehouse to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

Sir, *India Office, June 21, 1864.*

I AM directed by Sir Charles Wood to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, stating that it is the wish of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that he should instruct the Political Resident at Aden to inform the senior officer of Her Majesty's ships at Bombay and at Trincomalee, whether he has been able to forward in the Dalhousie" from Aden to Massowah the bearer of the Queen's letter to the King of Abyssinia, and that instructions have been sent to those officers to despatch a ship of war to Aden to perform this service, upon receiving information from the Resident "that he has been unable otherwise to carry it out."

In reply to this I am to state, that Earl Russell informed Sir Charles Wood that he desired to send Mr. Rassam from Aden as the bearer of a letter from the Queen, and intimated that he trusted that the Admiralty would be able to forward him from Aden in a ship of war. His Lordship having been informed that unless the messenger were conveyed in some state to Massowah, the main object of saving the lives and securing the liberty of the captives in Abyssinia might be defeated.

Sir Charles Wood accordingly placed the services of Mr. Rassam at the disposal of the Foreign Office, understanding that the Admiralty had been requested by Lord Russell to despatch a ship of war to Aden for the purpose above-mentioned. Sir Charles Wood at the same time despatched a message to the Political Resident at Aden to detain the "Dalhousie" if she was at that place or in the neighbourhood, in case her services should be required, in consequence of no ship of war being available for the purpose. He is not aware where that vessel really is, but subject to the concurrence of Lord Russell in this course, he will instruct Colonel Merewether if the "Dalhousie" is already at Aden, or on her way thither, to send Mr. Rassam in her to Massowah. He cannot, however, give orders to the Government of Bombay to send her from thence, in substitution for a ship of war.

The Resident will be directed to send a message, to be forwarded by telegraph from Point de Galle to Bombay, stating whether she has conveyed Mr. Rassam or not to Massowah; but the Admiralty must give such orders as seem to them best calculated to meet Lord Russell's wishes in the event of the "Dalhousie" not proceeding on the service in question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WODEHOUSE.

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* No. 414.

No. 416.

Lord Wodehouse to Mr. Hammond.—(*Received June* 25.)

Sir, *India Office, June* 24, 1864.

WITH reference to your letter of the 21st instant,* I am directed by Sir Charles Wood to forward, for the information of Earl Russell, copy of a despatch which he purposes to send to the Political Resident at Aden, by the mail of the 27th instant.

I am, &c.

(Signed) WODEHOUSE.

Inclosure in No. 416.

Sir C. Wood to the Political Resident at Aden.

Sir, *India Office, June* 27, 1864.

ON the 14th instant I despatched to you, through the Consul-General in Egypt, a message, intimating that Her Majesty's Government purposed to send a letter from the Queen to King Theodore, and requesting you, if possible, to detain the "Dalhousie" for the conveyance of Mr. Rassam, as the bearer of that letter, to Massowah, in case a ship of war should not be available for the purpose.

By the mail of the 18th I wrote to you, conveying the instructions† which the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs desired to be communicated to Mr. Rassam, and at the same time I transmitted other correspondence for your instruction and guidance. It is probable that on, or soon after the receipt of this despatch, you will have received from the Consul-General in Egypt Her Majesty's letter, and also the letter from the Patriarch of the Copts, which Mr. Colquhoun was desired to procure, and that, therefore, Mr. Rassam will be in readiness to start upon his mission. If then the "Dalhousie" should be at or near Aden, and should be available for this service, you will at once make arrangements for the departure of Mr. Rassam for Massowah.

You will observe, from the letter of the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 22nd instant, that conditional orders have been sent to the Senior Naval Officers at Bombay and Trincomalee for a ship of war to be sent to Aden, in the event of the "Dalhousie" not being available; and you will, therefore, forward to Point-de-Galle messages to be despatched by telegraph to Bombay and to Trincomalee, informing those officers whether the "Dalhousie" is or is not available for the conveyance of the bearer of the Queen's letter to Massowah.

I am, &c.

(Signed) C. WOOD.

No. 417.

Mr. Reade to Earl Russell.—(*Received July* 1.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, June* 17, 1864.

I RECEIVED yesterday your Lordship's telegram,† communicating Sir Charles Wood's instructions to the Resident at Aden, with regard to the transmission of a letter from the Queen to the King Theodore, and directing me to forward those instructions to their destination, as well as send a copy of them to the Governor of Bombay.

I have duly carried out the above directions of your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOS. F. READE.

No. 418.

Mr. Reade to Earl Russell.—(*Received July* 9.)

(Extract.) *Alexandria, June* 30, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 16th instant,‡ inclosing a letter which Her Majesty the Queen had addressed to King

* No. 414. † Inclosure in No. 410. ‡ No. 407.

Theodore, with a view to obtain the release of Her Majesty's Consul, Captain Cameron, and his companions in confinement at Gondar, and instructing me to forward that letter to the Political Resident at Aden, together with a translation of it in the Abyssinian language, as well as letters which I am to endeavour to obtain from the Patriarch of the Copts in Egypt to the King of Abyssinia and to the Aboona of Gondar, soliciting the immediate release of the prisoners.

Owing to the delay which is unavoidably involved in the preparation of the Abyssinian translation of the Royal letter, it has been found impracticable to forward the correspondence to its destination by the mail which left Suez a few hours after my receipt of your Lordship's instructions.

There is no person here, it appears, sufficiently versed in the Abyssinian language to furnish me with the translation I required. I have consequently confided the negotiation of this matter to the Acting-Consul at Cairo, and communicated to him instructions of a corresponding nature to those I had received from your Lordship. This arrangement is the more convenient from the circumstance of the Coptic Patriarch's being resident at the capital.

No. 419.

Mr. Reade to Earl Russell.—(*Received July 22.*)

My Lord, *Alexandria, July* 11, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to report that, in pursuance of the orders conveyed in your Lordship's despatch of the 16th ultimo,* and the instruction which your Lordship has subsequently communicated to me by telegraph, I this day forwarded to the Political Resident at Aden the Queen's letter to King Theodore of Abyssinia, together with an Arabic translation of it, as well as two letters from the Patriarch of the Copts in Egypt to the above King and to the Aboona of Gondar, which, after some difficulty, I obtained, through the good offices of His Highness the Viceroy.

Of the two last-mentioned documents I transmit herewith a translation in English. guidance of Mr. Rassam, the substance of your Lordship's telegram, in order that the interpreters may explain, if necessary, that the Queen will be happy to receive King Theodore's Mission, if His Majesty should decide upon sending it.

I have not failed to communicate to Brigadier Merewether, for the information or

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOS. F. READE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 419.

The Patriarch of the Egyptian Copts to King Theodore.

(Translation from the Arabic.)

29 *Bawne*, 1580 (*July* 5, 1864).

(L.S.)

[After many prayers for the King's safety, and the usual complimentary preamble.]

WE have the honour to acquaint your Majesty that our respected friend the British Consul-General in Egypt came to this Patriarchate and informed us that Her Majesty the Queen of the English nation is about to send to your Majesty one of Her officers with a letter addressed by Her Majesty to your Majesty, and showing the good feeling and powerful friendship which Her Majesty entertains towards yours. We, therefore, in the exercise of our Christian love, and inspired by a sentiment of duty towards your Majesty, take the liberty of inditing the present friendly letter, recommending the bearer of it, the said officer, Mr. Rassam, to your Majesty's favour. We trust that the representations he may communicate to your Majesty may be graciously received, and that he and those of his friends who may wish to return with him, may do so in peace, safety, and joy.

[Here follows a repetition of prayers and blessings in the usual Coptic style.]

(Signed) DEMETRIOS.

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* No. 407.

Inclosure 2 in No. 419.

The Patriarch of the Egyptian Copts to Amba Salamah.

(Translation from the Arabic.)

29 *Bawne*, 1580 (*July* 5, 1864).

(L.S.)

[After the customary preamble.]

WE have to acquaint your Lordship that our respected friend, the British Consul-General in Egypt, came to this Patriarchate and informed us that Her Majesty the Queen of the English nation wishes to send to His Majesty Theodore, King of Abyssinia, a letter, which Her Majesty has herself indited; that Mr. Rassam, an English officer, is to be the bearer of that letter; and that it would be agreeable to the said officer to be acquainted with your Lordship personally.

We hope that, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, you may be able to demonstrate to His Majesty the love and affection which our Saviour enjoins towards strangers and relations (mankind in general). It would be superfluous in us to repeat our recommendations of Mr. Rassam, inasmuch as we have addressed to the King himself a suitable epistle on the subject, but we trust that, on presenting himself before the King, his wishes may be graciously attended to, and that his friends now in Abyssinia may return with him in peace, safety, and gladness.

[Conclusion in the usual Coptic style.]

(Signed) DEMETRIOS.

No. 420.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Reade.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 26, 1864.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 11th instant,* and to state to you that his Lordship approves the steps which you therein repeat, that you have taken in regard to the transmission of the Queen's letter to King Theodore of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 421.

Lord Wodehouse to Mr. Hammond.—(Received July 29.)

Sir, *India Office, July* 28, 1864.

WITH reference to the correspondence which has passed between this office and the Foreign Department of Her Majesty's Government relative to the measures proposed to effect the release of Mr. Consul Cameron and other Europeans held in captivity by Theodore, King of Abyssinia, I am directed by Sir Charles Wood to forward to you, for the information of Earl Russell, copies of two letters received from the Political Resident at Aden, stating that the steam transport "Dalhousie" is in Aden harbour and available for the dispatch of Mr. Rassam to Massowah with the Queen's letter to King Theodore, and that she will be sent on this service as soon as the letter from the Patriarch of the Copts and other documents are received from Egypt.

I am, &c.

(Signed) WODEHOUSE.

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* No. 419.

Inclosure 1 in No. 421.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

Sir, *Aden, July* 4, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt, by Behar, yesterday of your despatch, dated 18th ultimo, with accompaniments.

2. The translation of Her Majesty's letter with the letter from the Patriarch of the Copts, did not come by the same opportunity, but may be expected by next Calcutta mail due here on the 12th instant.

3. It is hardly possible that a vessel of war can arrive from Trincomalee under a month. The "Dalhousie" is here in harbour, I propose, therefore, to dispatch Mr. Rassam on board of her to Massowah directly the remaining documents are received from Egypt.

4. The "Dalhousie" is a large steam transport but not a man-of-war; but she has two small carronade of her own, and I am having four field pieces made suitable for ship-board use, which will be put on board and give her some appearance of armed equipment.

5. Messengers have been sent to Massowah to try and get authentic intelligence of what is going on in Abyssinia; but nothing trustworthy has been obtained as yet.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 421.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

Sir, *Aden, July* 5, 1864.

I DO myself the honour to forward a copy of my latest despatch in this Department, dated 3rd instant, to the Government of Bombay.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 3 in No. 421.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Anderson.

Sir, *Aden, July* 3, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to report that everything is quiet and correct in the immediate neighbourhood of Aden.

2. I have received no authentic intelligence lately from Abyssinia but by the Calcutta mail which passed through a week ago: the telegram, copy of which is appended,* was forwarded by the Consul-General in Egypt. The instructions alluded to therein have just been received by the Behar, but are too voluminous to be forwarded by this mail, copies will be sent by next; meanwhile, Mr. Rassam will be dispatched in the "Dalhousie" to Massowah to forward the letter from Her Majesty to King Theodore, with full instructions as to his mode of procedure after arriving there.

3. Having the "Dalhousie" here I think it unnecessary to wait for a man-of-war, which could not possibly be here under a month or six weeks.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 422.

Mr. Murray to Lord Wodehouse.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 1, 1864.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to request that you will move Secretary Sir Charles Wood to convey his Lordship's thanks to the Political Resident at Aden for the steps

* Not received at Foreign Office.

taken by him, as reported in your letter of the 28th instant,* to forward the Queen's letter to King Theodore of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 423.

The Rev. H. A. Stern to Mrs. Stern.†

Royal Camp, near Gondar, April 12, 1864.

SAD must have been the tidings that reached you from Abyssinia during the last few months. God so ordered it; and not my will but His be done. All my trials and sufferings I may attribute to my intimacy with the Metropolitan (who has proved a true friend), and to the misrepresentations which were made to the King about me and our mission. Had not a gracious God almost miraculously preserved my life, I might now moulder in a lonely grave as an abject conspirator, and not as an unoffending murdered missionary. Two months ago a Frenchman (M. Bardel) who for a considerable time had enjoyed the favour of King Theodorus, was put into chains, and His Majesty, in doing so, sent all his European prisoners the message that M. Bardel was the cause of all the quarrels between us and him. I believe that to be true. Tell Mr. Goodhart not to credit any report from whatever source it may come.

All the missionary agents were chained five weeks and then liberated and sent to Gaffat. Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal are in a tent close to the one in which Captain Cameron, myself and his party are imprisoned. At present no European here can leave till the King obtains a reply to a letter he wrote to the British Government two years ago. We are all well, and prayerfully hope for tidings of our speedy liberation.

Written under most peculiar circumstances, in a carefully watched prison, and in chains.

No. 424.

Mr. Reade to Earl Russell.—(Received August 15.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, August* 4, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship the inclosed copy of a statement, relative to the proceedings and position of Captain Cameron and his companions in Abyssinia, which I have received from the Political Resident at Aden, and which it appears was made to him by two Abyssinians who had arrived from Gondar.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. F. READE.

Inclosure in No. 424.

Statement of Wadeer, inhabitant of Gondar, Amhara, Abyssinia.

I WAS in the service of Captain Cameron the Consul, and only left it about three months ago, because he said he could not afford to keep such a number of servants. I soon after left Gondar, having no means of livelihood there, and in sixteen days reached Massowah, viâ Tigré and Adowa. Stayed at Massowah about twenty days, and then left for Aden, visiting Hodeida *en route*.

I entered Consul Cameron's service about thirteen months ago; I used to live in his house, and to procure articles he wanted, having always a small sum of money entrusted to me for that purpose. There were four other personal servants, all Abyssinians, living with me in the Consul's house. We received no regular pay, but our food and clothes, and occasionally 10 reals or so. There were five gentlemen living with the Consul, four of these are prisoners with him now, the other, having a knowledge of artillery, was left at large. Two of the four servants are now with the Consul in prison, the other two were discharged with me. The Consul formerly lived in a

* No. 421.

† This letter from the Rev. H. A. Stern to his wife reached Mr. Haussmann at Matemma, on April 18 864, and was sent on by him to Khartoum on April 20. Received in London on August 8.

house allotted him by King Theodore. There was constant intercourse between the King and Consul. About fourteen months ago the Consul got leave from the King to visit Aden viâ Tigre. Instead of that he went to Matemma, held by the Turks, and after staying there for a while, returned to Gondar without going to Aden. Afterwards a report came that the Turks were about to invade Abyssinia from Matemma. Just then the Consul renewed his request to be allowed to go to Aden. The King got angry at this, and said, "I gave you leave before to go viâ Tigré, you went to Matemma and returned; now there is a report of the Turks coming you want to leave again." The King then directed the Consul and all with him to be imprisoned. They were put in irons and kept in a house next to the King's, and the Consul was chained by the hand to one of the King's servants, to prevent escape or the Consul communicating with any one. All were handcuffed, but none had irons put on their legs. The house in which they are confined is not a bad one. They are kept on short rations, but what they get is good—the same as the King has. They are not all in the same room, though in the same house. The names of the prisoners are Kokub, Bardel, Mackelvie, Makerer,* Carran, Dyeth, and Captain Cameron. They are allowed to converse with each other, and the King comes almost daily to see the Consul, and tells him that directly intelligence reaches him about them he will, with the blessing of God, release them. There were two ladies with two little girls and a boy in confinement for two days. They were then released with their husbands and went to Godjam. I know of no other cause of quarrel between the King and the Consul beyond that abovementioned. When the Consul went to Matemma, Bardel and a doctor who was then at Gondar did not accompany the Consul; the other gentlemen who lived with him did. Bardel is in prison, but the doctor managed to escape to Kussara. The Consul took a large quantity of goods with him to Matemma, and sent them or other back to Gondar. He was at Matemma sixteen days, living with the Turkish Governor. He entertained me there on the eighth day after his arrival, and I accompanied him back to Gondar. Matemma is inland, about sixteen days' journey from Souakin, and nearly double that from Massowah. I had gone from Gondar to Matemma on business of my own. King Theodore is ardently fond of sporting and is always out. The Consul also likes it, but I have never seen him out with the King. The King talks Arabic. I dare not talk to the Consul after he was imprisoned, for fear of being killed.

The country is very disordered and tyranny excessive. I left Gondar because affairs were in so bad a state that it was dangerous to remain; besides, my occupation was gone. The Aboona of the country remonstrated with the King on his tyrannical proceedings, and most strongly about confining the Europeans, saying, "As you have imprisoned them, better cut my head off." On this the King ordered him into confinement too. It was said that the King had found a treasonable letter on one of the Europeans, inviting the Turks to invade Abyssinia.

Given before me, this 14th day of July, 1864.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Note.—Another man came with Wardeer from Massowah—an ex-soldier servant of the King's; but he told nothing beyond what is given above. I believe them to be both spies, so that their story will only be partly true—as much as they are instructed to tell. They both seem to be acting a part.

W. L. M.

No. 425.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(*Received August* 16.)

Sir, *India Office, August* 16, 1864.

WITH reference to previous correspondence, I am directed by Sir C. Wood to forward for the information of Earl Russell, copy of further papers received from Aden, regarding the measures to be taken for the release of Consul Cameron, from which it will be seen that the Queen's letter to King Theodore, together with a letter from the Patriarch of the Copts had arrived at Aden, and that Mr. Rassam purposed starting for Massowah on the 20th ultimo.

I am, &c.

(Signed) HERMAN MERIVALE.

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* Stern.

Inclosure 1 in No. 425.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

Sir, *Aden, July* 14, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith the latest intelligence from Abyssinia, obtained from an ex-servant of Captain Cameron.

2. Mr. Rassam is ready to proceed to Massowah in the "Dalhousie" directly the wanting letters are received from Egypt. These did not come as expected by last mail from Suez.

3. A telegram was sent to Rear-Admiral King by the steamer which passed through on the 12th, that the "Dalhousie" would be used to convey the Mission to Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 425.

Statement of Wandeer, inhabitant of Gondar, Amhara, Abyssinia.

[See Inclosure in No. 424.]

Inclosure 3 in No. 425.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

Sir, *Aden, July* 20, 1864.

I DO myself the honour to forward a copy of my latest despatch in this Department dated 20th July, 1864, to the Government of Bombay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 4 in No. 425.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, July* 20, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to report that the translation of the Queen's letter with the letters from the Patriarch of the Copts to King Theodore, and the Aboona came by the "Jeddo" last night from Her Majesty's Consul in Egypt, a copy of Mr. Reade's forwarding letter is annexed, and another copy has been furnished to Mr. Rassam, who will leave this evening in the "Dalhousie" for Massowah.

2. There is nothing from the interior to report by this mail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 426.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received September 5.)

Sir, *India Office, September* 3, 1864.

IN continuance of previous correspondence on the same subject, I am directed by Sir Charles Wood to forward, for the information of Earl Russell, copy of a letter from the Political Resident at Aden, in which the rumoured release of Consul Cameron is reported.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HERMAN MERIVALE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 426.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

Sir, *Aden, August* 3, 1864.

I DO myself the honour to forward a copy of my latest despatch in this Department, dated the 1st instant, to the Governor of Bombay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 426.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, August* 1, 1864.

I HAVE nothing of importance to communicate with reference to the immediate neighbourhood of Aden.

2. On the 29th ultimo, through the kindness of the French Consul, M. Conil, I became acquainted with a report that Captain Cameron, and the party with him, had been released by King Theodore.

3. The report was brought by a French workman who Captain Beytes of the "Governor Higginson" found in distress at Hodeida, and to whom he charitably gave a passage to this place.

4. The Frenchman left Massowah on the 9th July, and there it was said that Captain Cameron and the others had been released, that Captain Cameron was still at Gondar, but was about to return to Massowah.

5. I expect daily to receive confirmation of this from Mr. Rassam, as he was instructed to dispatch a boat from Massowah immediately he arrived, if he found there was any important intelligence regarding Captain Cameron.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 427.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Mr. Hammond.—(Received September 5.)

Sir, *Admiralty, September* 3, 1864.

WITH reference to your letters of the 16th and 18th June last,* I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, to state, for the information of Earl Russell, that Her Majesty's sloop "Pantaloon" left Trincomalee for Aden on the 9th July, and that the Indian steamer "Dalhousie" left Aden for Massowah with the Mission to Abyssinia on the 15th July.†

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. G. ROMAINE.

No. 428.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received September 30.)

Sir, *India Office, September* 29, 1864.

IN continuation of previous correspondence on the subject of the release of Mr. Consul Cameron and his companions in captivity, I am directed by Sir Charles Wood to forward to you for the information of Earl Russell, copy of a letter which he has received from Her Majesty's Political Resident at Aden, containing a report from Mr. Rassam on the steps which he has taken to carry out the instructions of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the liberation of the prisoners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HERMAN MERIVALE.

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* Nos. 408 and 412.

† 20th. See Inclosure 4 in No. 425.

Inclosure 1 in No. 428.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, September* 6, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith copy of a report from Mr. Rassam, with accompaniments, received on the 3rd instant by buggalow, which left Massowah on the 21st of August.

2. The statement made by the former nakoda, that he left Massowah on the 28th of July, and no steamer had then arrived, was false. The "Dalhousie" reached Massowah early on the 23rd, two and a-half days only after leaving this; and no buggalow left that port afterwards till the one which brought the papers now submitted. A buggalow had left on the 17th of July—evidently the date of sailing was wrongly given.

3. Her Majesty's steamer "Pantaloon" returned yesterday morning, bringing intelligence from Mr. Rassam up to the 1st instant. He had heard nothing more certain about the condition of the prisoners than he reported in the first instance. All manner of contradictory statements were daily given to him—none more trustworthy than the other.

4. He had, however, received intimation that the messengers despatched by him to the King on the 24th of July were on their way back, and he expected them in a few days. He knew of their coming, from some people who left Gondar at the same time, and, coming the direct route, had reached Massowah. The messengers with the King's reply had received orders to take a longer and safer route by a ford higher up the river, which was between the coast and capital. They had nearly lost their lives on the way up, crossing this river when in high flood from the rains. They were also bearers of letters to the Governor of Tigré—the district opposite to Massowah—containing directions for him to furnish the necessary escort to take Mr. Rassam to Gondar. From this it would seem that the King had sent for Mr. Rassam; he would probably be able to leave Massowah about the 10th instant.

5. I regret to state that scurvy has shown itself on board the "Dalhousie." There are no fresh vegetables procurable at Massowah; but I have directed Lieutenant Morland to do his utmost to get some from the interior, where they ought to be grown for use. I am sending as many potatoes and onions as can be procured here; but, unfortunately, just now the supply is very limited.

6. The heat in the Red Sea is now excessive. I do not propose asking Captain Purvis to return there for the present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 428.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *"Dalhousie," Massowah, August* 19, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of Government, that I arrived at this port in Her Majesty's steamer "Dalhousie" on the morning of the 23rd ultimo, after a voyage of two days and six hours from Aden.

2. Having had no time to pass the dangerous reefs before dusk on the 22nd, we had to anchor near the Island of Ajooz, about fifty miles to the south-east of Massowah, where we remained all night.

3. In the afternoon of the same day I, in company with Lieutenant Morland and Dr. Blanc, paid a formal visit to Purtoo Effendi, the Kaimakam (Vice-Governor) of Massowah. We found him sick in bed suffering from low fever, consequently the arrival of a skilful physician was a source of great joy to him; and as he showed a great desire to receive medical aid, Dr. Blanc took him forthwith under his care. He has not quite recovered yet, but is feeling somewhat better.

4. He kindly volunteered his services to me in everything I required; and hitherto he has cheerfully rendered me every assistance in his power both in procuring provisions for the "Dalhousie," and in obtaining for me the requisite information regarding Abyssinia.

5. The first thing I did on arriving here was to try and find trustworthy messengers to send up to Gondar with a letter from me, together with the one from

the Patriarch of the Copts, to the King of Abyssinia; but in consequence of the dread every one here has of approaching that Potentate, I only managed, after a great difficulty, to despatch the letters on the evening of the 24th, the day after my arrival at Massowah.

6. I also wrote a letter to the Bishop of Abyssinia, and inclosed therein the letter from his Patriarch. A translation of this, as well as of the one I addressed to the King, are herewith attached.

7. I deemed it advisable to send two messengers with the letters to Gondar: firstly, to ensure the safe delivery of the packet; and, secondly, that they might assist each other on the road in case of sickness or accident.

8. The messengers told me that in consequence of the present wet weather in Abyssinia, and the overflowing of the River Takazee, they could not possibly go to Gondar and return to this place under a month. Moreover, they said, in case they found the river too high to cross (as is very often the case this time of the year), they might be detained two or three weeks on its bank, either in going or coming back.

9. Contradictory reports are brought down daily from Abyssinia concerning the state of Captain Cameron and the other European prisoners at Gondar. Some travellers say that the Consul has been set at large, and others declare that he is still confined, but has been released of his fetters. However, all reports agree regarding the wretched condition of the poor missionaries, who are said to be still chained one to another; and the Rev. Mr. Stern (against whom the wrath of the King appears to be mostly pointed) is loaded with chains. Also, that all the prisoners (even Captain Cameron) have been ordered to discontinue to wear the European attire, and that the King has supplied them with the common Abyssinian cloth instead.

10. A Mr. Lawrence Kerans, (a cousin of Mr. Speedy who had acted here for a few months as Vice-Consul), has also been seized and imprisoned with the other Europeans while travelling for his own pleasure in Tigré; and it appears that King Theodorus has now quite determined not to allow any Europeans to penetrate into the interior of Abyssinia without his special permission.

11. Undoubtedly this place is much hotter than Aden; for, with the exception of two hours one morning, we have never had the thermometer under 93°, both day and night, since our arrival. I am told that the cool weather will not begin at Massowah till the middle of October; and September is reckoned the hottest month here.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 428.

Mr. Rassam to King Theodore.

(Translation.)

(After compliments). *Massowah, July* 24, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Majesty that I arrived at this port yesterday, bearing a letter to your address from Her Majesty our British Queen (may God protect her!); and as I am desirous to deliver the letter into your hands, I shall await your answer here.

If your Majesty will accede to my coming to your parts for the purpose of making over the letter to you, verily that would be as I desire, as I am extremely anxious to do myself the honour of seeing you, and to enjoy the felicity of being present at your happy Court. In that case, I shall feel obliged by your sending me one of your followers to escort me to your city (the defended).

But if you deem it unadvisable for me to come to you just now on account of the rains and the difficulty of the journey, I hope that you will oblige us by releasing and sending to us to this place, under your protection, the Consul Cameron and his imprisoned companions.

Please also to send with the Consul a trustworthy individual, that I might deliver to him the said Queen's letter.

I am further directed to acquaint you, that if you desire to send an Embassy to our Queen as you had intimated in your letter to Her Majesty, she will be glad to receive it. If you can send the Mission down before my return to Aden, I will take steps to have it sent to England in safety.

I inclose herewith three letters, one of which is addressed to your Majesty from the Patriarch of the Copts in Egypt, and two to the address of Aboona Salama, the Metro-

politan of Abyssinia, one from the said Patriarch, and the other from me. If you send their answers to me, I will forward them to their destination.

I hope that your Majesty will favour me with an answer, as I am longing to have the pleasure of perusing its pleasing and most gracious contents. May you remain ever preserved, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 4 in No. 428.

Mr. Rassam to the Aboona Salama, Metropolitan of Abyssinia, &c.

(Translation.)

(After compliments.) *Massowah, July* 24, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to acquaint your Lordship that I have come here bearing an epistle from Her Majesty our British Queen (may God defend her!) for His gracious Majesty King Theodorus, the Emperor of Abyssinia.

As I cannot proceed to Gondar without His Majesty's protection, I have written to him to send me some one that might accompany me to your parts. I wish to confer with His Majesty about the release of the Consul Cameron and his imprisoned companions; and, God willing, as soon as I receive an answer, I will come to you under the guidance of our Heavenly Father.

I hope that, through the mercies of the Most High God, I shall behold the light of your countenance in prosperity, and will have the pleasure of seeing you, and meeting the august King.

I send you a letter from the respected father his Grace the Patriarch of your Church in Egypt. If it require an answer, please give it to the King Theodorus, that he might forward it to me by the bearer of this letter.

I trust that you will remember me in your good prayers, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 429.

Mr. Ayrton to Earl Russell.—(Received October 11.)

My Lord, *Cairo, September* 19, 1864.

I HAVE obtained from the Rev. Mr. Haussmann, of the German Pilgrim Mission, arrived here from Matemma, on the Egyptian frontier of Abyssinia, the day before yesterday, some information regarding Captain Cameron and his fellow captives and Abyssinia, which is sufficiently interesting to induce me to send it to your Lordship.

Although I have delivered up the Cairo Consulate, and Mr. Rassam's mission with Her Majesty's letter is generally known, I prefer addressing this information to your Lordship in consequence of my having had the honour, while acting as Consul, to have been charged with the translation of that letter into Arabic, and the preparation of the letters to accompany it from the Coptic Patriarch, and to have submitted a memorandum on what appeared to me the best way of dealing with King Theodore and extricating his prisoners, and also in consequence of all authority in the proceedings for their release being with your Lordship, and information, therefore, being more available with your Lordship than with any one else; moreover, if information on Abyssinia is published, it reaches King Theodore, and, if not agreeable to him, is visited vindictively on his prisoners.

If your Lordship has at hand a map exhibiting Abyssinia and the district of Khartum (at the junction of the Blue and White Niles), about 150 miles above Khartum, on the east bank of the Blue River, may be observed a place named Abu-l-Haras, or Haraz; I have heard it pronounced both ways; and about 120 miles to the east of the parallel of Abu-l-Haras, but a little southerly, the town of Kadarif, pronounced by the Arabs, Gadarif. Four days south of Kadarif is Matemma, the Egyptian frontier town. From Matemma by Wahrry to Gondar is about 180 miles, or from eight to ten days' march.

The town of Matemma is the Missionary Station for the neighbouring parts, of the

German Pilgrim Mission, of which the head-quarters are at Basle on the Rhine. It was also at Matemma that Musa Pasha lately massed a large Egyptian force for a demonstration against Theodore, and then, in consequence, I believe, of the remonstrance of Her Majesty's Government, withdrew it back to Kadarif, giving out locally, that the force had gone to Matemma by mistake or without his authority.

Mr. Haussmann arrived, for the first time, at Gondar, from Matemma, in the beginning of March, 1863, and left it again on the 26th of November of the same year for Matemma and Khartum. From Khartum he returned to the Missionary Station at Matemma and remained there, with an intention of re-entering, if practicable, Abyssinia, till the end of June last. During his stay, on this last occasion, at Matemma, he had continual communication with Missionaries in Abyssinia, from whom, learning that it would not be prudent for him then to re-enter the country or to present himself to the King, he gave up the idea and left Matemma towards the end of June, 1864, for Khartum and Berber, with the object of proceeding by way of the Desert, called the Atmur Abu Hamed, to Korosko, and thence by the Nile to Cairo, and on to Jerusalem. On arriving at Berber on the 15th of August, 1864, he could not obtain camels for the Atmur and turned towards Suakin, on the Red Sea, which he reached on the 29th of August, and crossed over to Djeddah, which he left by an Egyptian steamer, on the 10th instant, and reached Cairo, as mentioned, on the 17th, which was the day before yesterday.

The following is Mr. Haussmann's record of events.

M. Lejean, who had been appointed French Consul at Massowah, left Matemma at the end of November 1862, for the purpose of proceeding to his post through Abyssinia, and of delivering, *en route*, to the King some presents with which he was charged from the Emperor of the French, but was detained by the King in Abyssinia until September 1863, when he was allowed to proceed to Massowah, which he lately quitted for Djeddah, whence he sailed on the 15th of August, for Suez and passed through Cairo, eight days later, on his return to France.

M. Bardel returned to Abyssinia, with the answer from the Emperor of the French to King Theodore's letter to His Imperial Majesty, in August 1863. He has since been thrown into prison.

The Rev. Mr. Stern was beaten at the end of September or beginning of October 1863. The cause, as has been repeated in print, was, on seeing his servants cruelly flogged, his biting his thumb, which was interpreted by the King as an indication by Mr. Stern that he thought the King's proceedings unbearable. Mr. Stern was again beaten and tortured in May 1864. This torture consists in cords, tied tight round the arm near the shoulder and near the wrist, and the limb being retained bound until, Mr. Haussmann said, the blood oozes through the fingers.

Your Lordship's despatch to Mr. Cameron, ordering him to return to Massowah, reached him at Gondar on the 23rd of November, 1863. On his showing the letter to the King, His Majesty merely shrugged his shoulders and observed, that there was no letter for him.

In November 1863, statements which displeased the King having been discovered in the Rev. Mr. Rosenthal's journal, which the King had ordered to be examined and translated, MM. Rosenthal, Haussmann, Steiger, and Cornelius Jephson, were brought from Genda, about twenty miles south of Gondar, to Gondar, and imprisoned for a few days.

Mr. Rosenthal was again imprisoned and beaten and tortured, in the manner described in the case of Mr. Stern, in May, 1864.

Captain Cameron was first imprisoned on the 2nd of January, 1864. In May 1864, he was beaten and subjected to the torture of the cords round his arm.

The King has able translators from the English, French and Arabic, and himself speaks Arabic, which is known by many persons in Abyssinia. The chief translator from the French and English is an Abyssinian named Madarakal, who was formerly taken from Abyssinia by M. Lefevre, if I recollect rightly. As he evinced talent, he was for three years in a Jesuit Establishment at Paris. That life not suiting him, he fell into English hands, and was, for some time, at the Protestant College at Malta, and, afterwards studied with Mr. Lieder of Cairo, having been absent, altogether, from Abyssinia thirteen years. He is said to be capable of writing well in English, French and Amharinya, his own tongue, and must likewise know Arabic. He is kept in great subjection by the King. There is also another Abyssinian of the name of Dieu, or of a similarly sounding name, who was educated in a college in Bombay, and knows English.

Mr. Haussmann is, notwithstanding these barbarities inflicted on Captain Cameron

and the Missionaries, still of opinion that the King has redeeming traits, and even elements of greatness in his character.

He attributes the King's severities in these instances to his idea of the necessity of his upholding his power, and of his not allowing his dignity to be compromised before his own people. He was also annoyed about his letters to France and England, and may have thought that the writings of the Europeans in the country had something to do with his communications not having obtained the attention he had allowed himself to anticipate from them. Another cause of irritation to him was the continued revolts of local Chiefs against his Government. He was on an expedition for reducing one of these Chiefs to the south of the Abai, when the news of Musa Pasha's movements at Matemma reached him, and caused him suddenly to break up his camp beyond the Abai, without having subdued the refractory Chief, and to return to Gondar.

The usual place of abode of the King is at a hill, or mountain, near the north-east corner of the Tsana (Dembea) Lake, named Debra Tabor, where he has a considerable store of fire-arms and some small mortars with their projectiles, which he has lately succeeded in having cast and manufactured on the spot.

The number of men the King can call under arms is estimated as high as 150,000, and not less than 100,000. He prefers to equip them for local warfare with the spear and buckler, but arms some with fire arms, and has enough muskets for arming in that way, a very considerable force.

A threat of force for the relief of the prisoners, Mr. Haussmann thinks, from his knowledge of the King's disposition, would prove fatal to them. Under any circumstances, menace from a distance could be of no service. The roads from the Red Sea into Abyssinia, are represented to be exceedingly difficult, and that from Matemma to lead in one part of it, for some distance, along the side of a very deep and steep defile, impassable for artillery or anything but mules and men in single file. It is said that a couple of small guns presented by the late Said Pasha to King Theodore were abandoned somewhere on the Matemma Road in consequence of the difficulty of transporting them. The military action of the Pasha of Egypt on Abyssinia would also lead to a marauding style of warfare and inconvenient complications. All that remains for us is smooth words and diplomacy, which, used to advantage, it is permitted to hope, from the King's character, will be effectual.

Mr. Haussmann considered that, if the King promised Mr. Rassam a safe conduct, he would keep his word; but that if the liberation of the prisoners was made too bluntly a condition precedent to the advance of Her Majesty's Messenger, the King would only laugh at him.

This is all that I have learnt bearing on the King's character, and his proceedings and the liberation of his prisoners. But, I ought not to withhold from your Lordship, some further information on the state of the Slave Trade, and which I had intended partly to have anticipated in my Memorandum of the 4th of July, mentioned at the commencement of this letter, but, under pressure of time, then omitted to notice.

Mr. Haussmann estimates the number of slaves, principally Gallas, who passed from Abyssinia through Matemma during the last twelve months, in destination for Egypt, and by Suákin for Djeddah and Yamb'u, at 10,000, and thinks that 3,000 more may have passed to Arabian ports from Massowah, but he believes such a number in one year to have been exceptional. When I was at Djeddah, in the winter of 1858-59, my inquiries resulted in information that the annual importation of slaves into the Arabian ports was about 5,000. By the Arabs of the sea-port towns these slaves are employed in trade, domestic offices, and in boats; by those of the interior in house and agricultural service; and by the Bedouins as assistants in their nomadic pursuits. Throughout the Red Sea coasts, female Abyssinians are much sought in lieu of wives. An intelligent Arab, of Mekkeh, once told me while looking at a procession of the ladies from the Sultan's palace at Constantinople, that he would rather have an Abyssinian female slave than the whole of the fair inmates of the imperial harem. Male domestic slavery is much reduced in Egypt; but it is generally asserted that the Viceroy's forces in the Soudan (which, in this sense, implies the Egyptian territory south of the cataracts of Assouan), are largely recruited from slaves. In Abyssinia the trade in slaves is principally in the hands of the Mohamedan residents. The slave trade on the White River, above Khartum, is said to be the most abominable. From want of provisions, the captives are brought down to Khartum and Berber in a wretchedly meagre state; and for each one of either sex arriving from the White River it is calculated that one other has perished. It is impossible that this extensive traffic in slaves in the country dependent on Khartum can go on without the Governor of the district countenancing, perhaps profiting by it. What I would add is, that considering the large sums annually

spent by Her Majesty's Government for the prevention of the slave trade on the Mosambique and west coast of Africa, the extent of the trade in connection with Abyssinia seems to suggest a legitimate motive for cultivating influence with King Theodore, for the purpose of inducing him to use his power for stopping, as far as he can, the supply of slaves from or through countries dependent upon him.

Slavery, with the Mohamedans of the Turkish empire, becomes a religious question, and a very irritating one, if opposed with too much zeal; but, in the case of King Theodore, who is a Christian, there are no religious prejudices to offend, and, if he can be brought to act with a good will in opposition to slavery, so many fewer slaves will reach the Mohamedans of neighbouring countries without a direct and hostile issue with our policy as to the supply of slaves, which would so be stopped, being raised, besides such a course being a very cheap mode of action for us, and tending very much to raise the character of Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRED. AYRTON.

No. 430.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Ayrton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 15, 1864.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to convey to you his Lordship's thanks for your communication of the 19th ultimo,* respecting Captain Cameron and the missionaries who are kept in confinement by the King of Abyssinia, and also respecting the trade in slaves carried on in the White Nile.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 431.

Memorandum by Mr. Cooley.

ABYSSINIA, though converted to Christianity already in the fourth century and possessing a written literature of at least equal antiquity, has yet made no progress in civilization. It is by nature a garden exceedingly rich and various, in which nevertheless profusion and famine may be constantly seen side by side, and where man and the hyena exercise nearly equal dominion.

The chief causes of this backwardness of a people apparently not deficient in intelligence and docility, seem to be—1st. The geographical isolation of the country or the difficulty of access to it. On the north it is barred by deserts, flooded plains, and insalubrious forests. Its western side, accessible from Sennar, is remote from the highways of commerce. On the east it is separated from the shores of the Red Sea by mountains 8,000 feet high, over which the carriage of merchandize is troublesome and expensive, and when these barriers have been passed the trader has still to ascend a second and still loftier range of mountains before he reaches the heart of the kingdom.

2ndly. The great number of ambas or Hill Forts, generally precipitous sandstone or trachytic ridges, complete the evil of inaccessibility, as they help to keep alive the incessant rebellions, civil wars, and petty feuds, which render everything insecure and extinguish the hopes of industry.

Hence it is that the commerce of Abyssinia makes little figure in history although in the variety and value of its productions, that country, if its industry were developed, would probably exceed most others. While the Romans obtained great quantities of aromatic produce from the eastern angle of Africa, they seem to have drawn nothing from the Abyssinian highlands. The ivory brought from the interior to Adulis, was properly the production of the forests on the northern frontier. An interesting account is given by Rosmas Indicopleustes (530 A.D.) of the trade in gold-grain carried overland from the country of the Agows (*Αγάω*) near the source of the Nile† to Adulis. This gold however was obtained from the country on the western side of the Blue River, and the peculiar circumstances which stopping the usual and natural channel of this

* No. 429.

† *περὶ γαρ τὰ ἐστὶν κορυφὴ τοῦ Νείλου* ("for in that quarter is the head or watershed of the Nile.") Thus it appears that the discovery made by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, and claimed by Bruce in the eighteenth, had been already plainly indicated in the sixth.

trade, diverted it into a circuitous course over the highlands to the Red Sea, were of course but temporary, and we hear nothing more of the gold-trade of Adulis. Yet evidence not only of its existence but of its importance still remains, for it may be demonstrated, I think, that the countries, Dankali on the Abyssinian coast and Dongola on the Nile, had originally the same name (نقلة) Dankala,* derived from the gold-grain (*ταγγάρα*) which at different periods figured as a chief article in the markets of both.

The great wealth and power ascribed at one time to the Emperor of Abyssinia were wholly fabulous. The Jesuit Almeida describing that country in the 17th century did his utmost to dispel the delusion, by assuring us that Abyssinia compared with Europe presents nothing but abject poverty (*pura miseria*). Yet it is remarkable that Arab writers of an early age agree in attributing great prosperity and commercial wealth to that part of Abyssinia which faces the Gulf of Aden. In the country of Jabart or Gabart they say were ninety-nine (that is a great multitude of) Kings with large towns, all enriched by commerce. From the name Gabart is derived the denomination Gabarty or Ghibberty, now given in Abyssinia to merchants in general. The same name also serves to explain to us the Mons Garbata of Ptolemy's map.

It appears certain, therefore, that the south-eastern slope of the Abyssinian highland, including the Province of Efat, once enjoyed a high degree of commercial eminence, which may be naturally ascribed to the advantages of its position not far removed from the sea-coast, nor separated from it by physical obstructions. How it came to lose the fruits of its natural advantages, and relapsed into the barbarism of a neglected province, may be easily explained. The Turks having seized several ports on the coast of the Red Sea, took care, while encroaching on Abyssinia, to awaken the fanaticism of the Maritime and Mahomedan population. The formidable Gran, Sultan of Zeila, sorely pressed the Christian Kingdom, till the Portuguese having come to its aid, the tide of victory turned. Gran fell, and peace was restored, or rather the flames of war were succeeded by a smouldering enmity; while the Galla tribes, placing themselves between the highlands and the coast, more effectually cut off all intercourse between them. When the monks, F. Machado and P. Bernardo, attempted, in 1623, to enter Abyssinia from Zeila, they were put to death as Christians and spies at Auca Gurcle, only four days from the coast.

It may be that serious obstacles to intercourse between the sea-coast and the region in question no longer exist, but the commercial habits of the people have become extinct, and where the vital powers of progressive humanity are so low, those habits can hardly be revived unless by some happy accident, such as the arrival among them of an intelligent European, who may recognize and make known to them the capabilities of their country.

We may conclude that the country of Gabart, facing the Gulf of Aden, owed its former commercial eminence to its accessibility, no great mountains nor extensive deserts intervening between it and the sea. The River Hawash, descending from Ghoa till lost in the sands at a distance of forty or fifty miles from the coast, separates it on the east and south from the utterly inhospitable maritime tract. The River Anazo on the north, flowing from Angote, and absorbed in like manner before it reached the sea, divides it from the Mountains of Tigré; but respecting the course of the latter river, there is little known. It seems likely, however, that along the common watershed of these rivers may be found a gradual assent to Efat and Yejon, and thence a comparatively direct and easy road to Amhara. Hitherto, Europeans entering Abyssinia from the seaboard have chiefly gone by way of Massania or Arkeeko at its northern extremity, and have had to cross two formidable mountain chains before reaching the heart of the kingdom. A few, as Harris, Rocket, Beke, &c., have travelled from Tajurreh to Shoa, a month's journey south of the Hawash, through a rugged desert, before they reached the hospitable highland at the southern extremity of Abyssinia. Yet from Tajarrah to Arica (or Awasa), where the desert terminates in the west, is a journey of only three or four days, and thence direct to Amhara, there is no ground for surmising that the country may not be easily traversed. The Portuguese Missionaries were told that on the direct road down to Zeila there were but two days of desert.

Intercourse is incontestably the main spring of civilization; and the discovery of an easy road to Central Abyssinia would probably put an end to the stagnation which has so long hindered the social progress of a lively, intelligent people. It would lead to the general construction of roads and bridges throughout the country, and thereby effectually aid its internal organization. On the coast whence the proposed route starts,

* The Arabs habitually substitute *l* for *r* in foreign names. Dankaly and Danâkil, the names now in use on the coast are, the former the adjective singular; the latter the plural of Arabic form.

the English now exercise considerable influence. The Ruler of Auca Gurcle is not so far inland as to think of defying the master of the sea; and, indeed, it is not likely that he would reject advances obviously made only with a view to trade. It might, indeed, be found impossible to open the proposed route at once; yet it would be worth while to make the experiment, since if any intercourse with the interior were once established in that direction, it would be sure to win its way by diffusing benefits, till at last the desired goal be reached.

No. 432.

Acting Consul Calvert to Earl Russell.—(*Received November* 21.)

My Lord, *Jeddah, November* 4, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that M. Pellissier has received a letter from the French Consul at Massowah, dated 11th October, stating that Mr. Rassam was still awaiting there a reply to his letter to King Theodore, and that Captain Cameron was still in confinement.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY H. CALVERT.

No. 433.

Mrs. Stern to Earl Russell.—(*Received December* 15.)

My Lord, 73, *Sussex Road, Holloway, December* 13, 1864.

THE inclosed extract from "Christian Work" for the present month having just been brought under my notice, I take the liberty of forwarding the same for your Lordship's perusal, and as a wife deeply distressed for the insults and sufferings to which my inoffending husband and his companions have been subjected during the last thirteen months, I would humbly ask whether more vigorous measures could not immediately be taken to rescue, ere it be too late, these unfortunate sufferers from the cruel gripe of that despotic monarch, Theodorus.

Trusting the anguish of heart under which I labour will be a sufficient apology for thus intruding myself on your Lordship's notice, I beg, &c.

(Signed) CHARLOTTE E. STERN.

Inclosure in No. 433.

Extract from the "Christian Work" of December 1, 1864.

CONTINUED IMPRISONMENT AND TORTURE OF MESSRS. STERN AND ROSENTHAL.—Being aware of your readers taking a great interest in Messrs. Stern, Rosenthal, and the British Consul, who continue to be held in captivity by the despotic Monarch of Abyssinia, I may be allowed to transmit to you a few items from a letter I received yesterday from a friend who arrived in September last at Cairo from the confines of Abyssinia, viâ Khartoum, Souakim, and Jeddah.

From this letter I gathered the melancholy news that no change for the better has taken place in the state of Abyssinian affairs. The captives, Messrs. Stern, Rosenthal, and the English Consul, have not only not been set at liberty, but have suffered from great violence. According to information received from different authorities, the prisoners find themselves placed in the most pitiful condition, as the rainy season has gravely affected their health. The ostensible cause of ill-treatment on the part of the King seems to lie in the discovery which His Majesty made in the journals of Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal as to his maternal descent. Mr. Stern mentioned in his confiscated papers that the King's mother had been a vendor of kosso, a medicinal fruit which is continually used by Abyssinians. Mr. Stern was quite right in his assertion, for it is true that the King's mother was a seller of kosso, whereas his father was a relation of Dejaj Comfoo, the Governor of Dembea, who beat back several times the Egyptian troops that came from Sennar. In the beginning of his reign the King (who was then a kind and liberal man, and not a despot as he has become since the death of Mr. Bell, his Adjutant, who kept him in a moral check) often used to say, "If I do

not help the poor people they will complain of me before God, for I myself have been a poor man." Had Theodoros been a man of Napoleon's stamp, he would not have felt ashamed of his descent, nor would he have had recourse to the absurd idea of being descended from King Solomon, who had a son, as the Abyssinians say, called Menelei, who was sent to Ethiopia, which was then subjected to the Queen of Sheba. Hence the Royal Family of Abyssinia consider themselves to this day as the lineal descendants of Solomon, an idea to which King Theodoros attaches the greatest importance, and which he is said to have stated strongly in his late correspondence with Napoleon,—to outdo the latter in respect of genealogy. Theodoros, very angry at Mr. Stern's assertion, wished to know the source from which he had derived his information. As he would not mention the name of his informant, the King ordered him and Mr. Rosenthal to be beaten and put to the Abyssinian rack, *i.e.*, the wrist of the hand and upper part of the arm of both gentlemen were firmly tied with ropes, in consequence of which the blood was forced out of the tips of the fingers. After the prisoners had confessed, the rack was removed, but we may imagine how dreadfully they suffered. Whether the efforts made by the English Government in behalf of the prisoners will not be too late, and whether they will lead at all to a satisfactory result, is still doubtful.

The mission at Jeddah and Darna among the Jews is for the present entirely suspended, as the missionaries have been ordered by the King to proceed to Gaffat, to work for him in connection with the Pilgrim Missionaries whom His Majesty continues to honour for the mechanical labours which they have performed to his satisfaction. True, the direct mission-work is for a while interrupted, but the seed of the Divine word which the brethren have disseminated cannot be choked. It has taken so deep root in some of the converts that it will be impossible to alienate them from the living communion with Christ, who has promised that none shall pluck his sheep out of his hand. When the Abyssinian mission will have passed the present fiery trial, we may confidently anticipate the second period of joy, which will be attended with joyful success arising out the seed time of tears.

In Western Abyssinia famine is raging to a fearful extent, as the royal army has entirely exhausted the provinces. New rebels rise everywhere.

The missionaries at the Matamma station are all well and in good spirits. Their work requires much patience and self-denial, and though it may not present immediate and visible results, seed will from that locality be scattered to distant regions of the Mohametan world by pilgrims passing through Matamma eastward to Arabia, and westward to north-western Africa.

The external work which the brethren had to do before the rainy season, consisted in the construction of a mill, and in improving a water-wheel, by which the whole machinery might be turned to better advantage. The profit of the water-wheel was for the first year satisfactory; the expenditure incurred for construction was covered, and a small surplus left. With God's help, and if the commercial station at Khartoum be prosperous, we trust the Matamma station will support itself after a few years. The financial circumstances of the Matamma station have been, however, very unfavourable this year, owing to the dearness of provisions throughout Soodan.

At the important station at Khartoum the brethren have opened a school for boys, whom the well-known Dutch lady, Miss Tinne, who came down the White River, had intrusted to their care for instruction and education. A few other boys from town have joined these foreign youths as schoolfellows. Khartoum being a central point for Africa in every direction, this station is of the utmost importance. It is the nature of a healthy tree to stretch out its branches in every direction; the same is the case with the development of a healthy mission. The Khartoum station would already have advanced along the White River had the Pilgrim Mission been able to supply the requisite means, and had the projected intermediate stations between Cairo and Khartoum been taken up. The world has means enough for accomplishing the most gigantic plans, but when the objects of God's kingdom are concerned, how long does it require and how much pains need to be taken before a few hundred pounds are forthcoming.

I left Khartoum on the 9th of August, and reached Berber in five days in a Nile boat. At Berber I learned that no camels were to be had for prosecuting my way to Korosko through the desert of Tadmor, wherefore I resolved upon traversing the desert to Suakin, on the Red Sea, which I reached after fifteen days. Thence an Arab vessel carried me over to Jeddah, where I embarked on the steamer for Suez. On the 17th September I arrived at Cairo.

In transmitting the above communication to you, I subjoin a few considerations relative to England's position to Abyssinia, which doubtless will soon be drawn into the current of the European world.

1. Is it not strange that England should be insulted by the very country which the British Government long ago defended against the grasp of Mohamet Ali, the celebrated ruler of Egypt, who, but for the interposition of England, would have conquered all Abyssinia?

2. Is it not most ungrateful, yea, shameful, on the part of Abyssinia to insult and ill-treat the official Representative and some inoffensive and private individuals of that very England which made friendship with several Abyssinian rulers by sending them handsome presents at a considerable cost? Who does not know that England first dispatched a mission, under Mr. Salt, to the Court of Ras Wolda Selassie, the ruler of Tigré? and who is not acquainted with the costly Embassy which was, under Major Harris, sent to Sahela Selassie, the ruler of Shoa, with whom a Treaty of Amity and Commerce was stipulated, according to which every English subject should have free and unmolested access to, and residence in, the country, to carry out his respective business.

3. Never did any Abyssinian ruler himself use personal violence against an European, least of all against an Englishman, as the overbearing King Theodoros has done now, in opposition to his own principles which he followed in the beginning of his liberal and hopeful reign in 1855.

4. Has England given the King the least cause for dissatisfaction? Far from it. In consequence of the Treaty made with Sahela Selassie, the late King of Shoa, the English Government would have been justified in taking up arms against Theodoros, who dethroned the descendants of Sahela Selassie, and annexed his dominions to those of Amhara and Tigré. England did not take up the cause of Shoa, for which Theodoros ought to have been very grateful. England might easily have marched an army of 6,000 men from Tadjoura (opposite to Aden) to the banks of the River Kawash at Aoosa, thence on level ground along the Kawash to the frontiers of Shoa, whose people would readily have joined the invaders. A great number of other Chiefs, dissatisfied with Theodoros, would have aided with them to overthrow the man who has upset all Abyssinia, reduced her to the brink of ruin, and dishonoured her for ever in the eyes of Europe by torturing an English Consul and English subjects.

5. England has shown herself of late very weak in Europe, for which, however, she may be praised, as by her conduct in the continental affairs she has avoided a general European war. But will she allow herself to be insulted by barbarous and uncivilised nations, merely from a motive of saving money rather than her honour? Will not only European but even uncivilised nations say, the English lion has got old, and lost his powerful teeth? England may be sure that she will lose the respect of Eastern nations if she allow an unprincipled despot to ill-treat her own Representative and subjects with impunity. Neither France nor Russia would endure such an insult.

(Signed) J. L. KRAPF.

Kornthal, near Stuttgardt, November 1864.

No. 434.

Mr. Hammond to Mrs. Stern.

Madam, *Foreign Office, December* 17, 1864.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, and to inform you in reply that all proper measures have been taken by Her Majesty's Government with a view to obtain the liberation of your husband from captivity in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 435.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received December 29.)

India Office, December 29, 1864.

MR. MERIVALE presents his compliments to Mr. Hammond, and forwards to him herewith, for the information of Earl Russell, those inclosures to a letter recently received from the Political Resident at Aden, dated the 21st November, which relate to the progress of Mr. Rassam's mission in Abyssinia for the release of Mr. Consul Cameron and other European prisoners.

Inclosure 1 in No. 435.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, October* 10, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that on the 4th instant I went on a trip in Her Majesty's steamer "Dalhousie" to the Island of Dissee, situated about twenty miles to the south-east of this place, for the purpose of returning the visit of its Chief, who had called on me a short time ago.

2. I found on my arrival there that the Chief whom I wished to see was away from the place, so I only spent the night there and returned to Massowah the following day.

3. I find that the Island of Dissee had been ceded to Turkey soon after Sir W. M. Coghlan visited it in 1859, and that the French Government has now given up all pretensions to it.

4. As the chief merchant of Gondar, Iasfa Hailo, who is at present here, expressed a wish to have a cruize in the steamer, I asked him, with some other Abyssinian merchants, to accompany me on the voyage. I was glad that I had it in my power to pay them this civility, inasmuch as the chief merchant amongst them was one of those who had contributed to the liberation of the late Consul Plowden by subscribing for his ransom when he was taken prisoner after he was wounded, a few days before his demise.

5. However, an hour before we started, they sent to say they could not come for fear of their King, as some mischief-maker might report to him that they had cruized in an English vessel for the purpose of plotting against His Majesty, whereby they might lose their property, and perhaps even their lives.

6. I certainly do not blame them for their timidity, considering the present ruthless temper of King Theodorus and his distrust of everybody.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 435.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, October* 12, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, since the date of my letter to your address, dated the 19th August last, no intelligence of any importance has been received from Gondar relative to the object of my mission.

2. Indeed, with regard to mere reports, I cannot say that I have not received any, as unfortunately there is no lack of fabricators of false rumours in Abyssinia, who are always ready to invent stories for the sake of pleasing their hearers.

3. Although it is now nearly three months since I sent the messengers up to the King of Abyssinia, the only reliable information I have received concerning them is, that they had reached Gondar safely, and had delivered my letter to the King, who, agreeably to standing usage, had appointed one of his followers to take care of them until he would be pleased to dismiss them.

4. In consequence of the edict said to have been published by King Theodorus, prohibiting every one of his subjects from serving the Europeans, it was rumoured that my messengers had been imprisoned for carrying my letter to the King; others reported that they were received very well by his Majesty, and that he had sent them back with an escort to take me up to Gondar. The above contradictory reports have been found to be unworthy of credit; but the interdiction against serving Europeans is said to be quite true.

5. I am told that the reason the King has not yet replied to my letter is, because he has a peculiar propensity of not answering a letter expeditiously, and he considers it below his dignity to use diligence in granting a request, whether it be for his benefit or otherwise.

6. For some fault he found with the inhabitants of Gondar, he ordered the best part of the city to be sacked, and had the houses of the chief families destroyed. This, with the epidemics of small-pox and typhus fever, which appeared there at that time, has almost ruined the capital. Most of the residents have left the place, and went to seek shelter elsewhere.

7. It is also reported that the King has now no friend in the country, as he has behaved very cruelly towards his best friends for some whim of his, and that even his soldiery are deserting him daily.

8. There is no doubt that His Majesty is now in great trouble on account of the rebellion said to be raging in Kwalawagara; and Jisso Gabazai, the leader of the insurgents, has defeated the royal army twice in pitched battles. The very last news brought down from Abyssinia was to the effect that no less than 5,000 of the King's troops had joined the rebels within the last two months.

9. As the delay of the messengers seemed to me rather extraordinary, I despatched a messenger, privately, on the 17th ultimo to Adowa, the capital of the old kingdom of Tigré, in the hopes of his bringing me some intelligence regarding my messengers and Captain Cameron. I regret to say that he came back, after fourteen days' absence, with scarcely any fresh news, as no one had arrived from Gondar to Adowa for three weeks before his arrival there.

10. Some attribute the stoppage of the communication between the capital of Abyssinia and Tigré to the rise of the River Takazzee, and others fancy that the King had prohibited the people from journeying about to prevent the spreading of bad news.

11. With the messengers, I sent a note to an Abyssinian Christian, named Mircha Warkie, who had been educated in some English school at Bombay, and asked him therein to send me some news. He was afraid to answer my note, lest his letter should fall in the hands of the King's followers, whereby his life would be endangered; but he told the messenger that he was in daily expectation of fresh intelligence from Gondar, and as soon as he received it he would come down himself and inform me of everything.

12. His not replying to me by letter shows what a dread there is amongst all the Abyssinians of having anything to do with us, in consequence of the breach existing between their King and the British Consul.

13. If I do not hear anything from the King this month, I shall write to him again; but I fear I shall have a great difficulty in finding any trustworthy person to take up my letter in consequence of the rumoured imprisonment of my messengers. It is much easier to get men to go up and bring down what news they can collect privately—of the latter I have already sent two, apart, and unknown to each other.

14. Two Abyssinians, who had formerly been in the service of Captain Cameron, came to me, within a fortnight of each other, with messages from Captain Cameron. One said that the Consul had sent him down to ask the British Representative at Massowah to write a very civil letter to the King in case he intended to treat for the release of himself and the other European prisoners. The second one said that the Consul had sent him down for some money and sugar. These two men disappeared the very next day after they had an interview with me; and, although I asked the latter to wait a few days until I made some inquiries regarding him, he decamped forthwith, notwithstanding my promise to maintain him all the time he remained at Massowah.

15. It is generally believed that these two men were sent as spies by the King, as it appears there is a foolish notion afloat that England intends to coerce him for his misbehaviour in having imprisoned the Consul and the missionaries, and that thousands of troops are ready at Aden to be sent to Massowah.

16. From all the inquiries I have made I find it is quite impossible for me to communicate with Captain Cameron, as he is confined with the other prisoners in a tent next to the King's, and no one is allowed to speak to them save those who are placed to guard them.

17. The story of Captain Cameron requiring money and sugar is, in my opinion, totally unfounded. The man was either sent by the King as a spy, or he thought that he could easily impose upon me in getting me to give him a few dollars which he might be able to pocket.

18. It is rumoured that two of the European prisoners, Messrs. Rosenthal and Kerans, have died in prison at Gondar; but I dare not vouch for the truth of the report.

19. Purtoo Effendi, the Kaimakam of Massowah, left this for Jeddah on his way to Constantinople on the 16th ultimo; although he quite recovered from his long-standing malady, through the attendance of Dr. Blanc, he could not gain his usual strength, for his weak frame required a change of air, and, on the recommendation of Dr. Blanc, he quitted the place on a sick certificate.

20. He has appointed Abdallah Khaleel, the chief merchant of the place, to act

for him during his absence, or until such time as his Government may be pleased to appoint his successor.

21. Before his departure, he recommended me to his *locum tenens*, the members of the Massowah Council, and the Turkish officials, and he told them that he expected them to treat me with the same honour and respect as they had ever shown to him. He also wished them to give me every assistance in their power, being, as I am, the representative of the British Government, which is the staunch ally of the Sublime Porte, and for which he entertained great regard and respect.

22. I owe it to Purtoo Effendi, and the rest of the Massowah officials, to state that I have experienced nothing but kindness and assistance from them ever since my arrival amongst them, and I trust that Government will be pleased to acknowledge the friendly attention of the former by presenting him with a token of their regard.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 435.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, November* 4, 1864.

IN continuation of my letter of the 12th ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of Government, that I have written again to the King of Abyssinia, and sent my letter through Mahommed bin Abdar-Raheem, the Naib of Arkeeko, the hereditary Chief of Sambar, or low-land of Abyssinia.

2. In paragraph 13 of my letter above alluded to, I mentioned that, if I did not hear from the King before the end of the month, I would write again to him; and the only difficulty I apprehended was, the finding of messengers to convey my letter safely to the dreaded Monarch.

3. On a conversation I had, soon afterwards, with the said Naib, he suggested to me the possibility of my letter not having reached the King. He advised me not to lose any time in writing again to His Majesty, and promised to forward my letter safely to him. Consequent upon his friendly offer, I wrote at once a suitable letter, a translation of which is herewith appended, and on the 19th ultimo the Naib despatched it up to Gondar by two of his followers; and with it, he wrote a letter himself, wherein he explained the reason of the despatch of the second letter, and concluded by intimating to His Majesty that the sole object of his having undertaken the conveyance of it was, his sincere desire to promote good friendship between him and the British Government.

4. I must mention here, that although this Chief was once imprisoned by the King for some trivial matter, while he was on a visit to him, he has been on very good terms with him ever since his liberation.

5. He showed me a number of letters which he had received at different times from King Theodorus, which all evince that he is held with a great esteem by His Majesty.

6. He told me that the King was the most fickle person he ever had anything to do with. For instance, nearly a year ago, he sent two messengers up to him with a letter regarding some business, and up to this time he has received no answer; whereas, six months after the despatch of those messengers, he had an occasion to write again upon some other matter, which was promptly attended to, and the messengers were sent back three days after their arrival at the King's Court.

7. I regret to say that up to this date nothing worthy of notice has been received from Gondar beyond a repetition of what I have already reported.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 4 in No. 435.

Mr. Rassam to King Theodorus.

(After the usual compliments.) *Massowah, October* 17, 1864.

BE it known to your Majesty, that it is now nearly three months since I arrived here, bearing a letter to your address from Her August Majesty our British Queen, and

the day after my arrival I despatched you a letter by two messengers, named Mahommed Abawass, and Mahommed Sa-eed; and up to this time I have received no answer thereto. I hope that the cause is favourable.

Different reports reach me daily regarding the delay; and there has been a rumour going about, that the messengers did not come to you, in consequence of some people having intimidated them on the road against approaching you. It is also suggested that perhaps the letter was handed over to some individual who had not delivered it to you. For this reason I am now writing to you again; and in case my former communication did not reach you, I will inclose a copy of it in this that you may learn its purport.

As the Naib, Mahommed bin Abdar-Raheem, has proved to me a faithful adherent and a sincere friend to your Majesty, I am sending this letter through him; and agreeably to the regard he entertains towards you and our great English Government, he has undertaken to send it to you safely and speedily.

I beg you to honour me with an answer soon, and let me know what your intention is regarding the duty on which I have been sent by our English Government, and by that, I shall feel greatly obliged to your Majesty, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 5 in No. 435.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Rassam.

Sir, *Aden, November* 13, 1864.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letters dated 10th and 12th October, and 4th November, and to thank you for the very interesting contents. You were perfectly right in sending the "Dalhousie" to Aden. She will return to you to-morrow, bringing supplies to last her till she is relieved by the "Victoria," which will probably be about the end of this month.

2. You acted very properly in again addressing King Theodorus in the manner you did. But should no answer be received in reply thereto, you should write a third letter to the King, informing him that you can no longer consent to remain at Massowah, and that if some communication and explanation is not received from him by a certain date, giving sufficient time for an answer to come, you will be compelled to withdraw the Mission and return to Aden.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 436.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.—(*Communicated by India Office, December* 1864.)

Sir, *Aden, December* 10, 1864.

I DO myself the honour to forward a copy of my latest despatch in this Department, dated 10th December, 1864, to the Government of Bombay.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 436.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, December* 10, 1864.

I HAVE the honour to forward the last correspondence, received per "Dalhousie," from Mr. Rassam, on special mission to Abyssinia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 436.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, December* 2, 1864.

IN paragraph 13 of my letter to your address, dated the 12th October,* I mentioned that I had despatched two messengers privately up to Gondar, for the purpose of collecting some information regarding the European prisoners, and about the messengers I had sent up to the King of Abyssinia more than four months ago; one of these secret messengers has returned, and herewith I have the honour to inclose his statement for the information of Government.

2. From the fact of the messenger having stated that Captain Cameron required sugar, rice, and money, which he undertook to take up to him, I thought I could not do better than to send him the articles asked for, inasmuch as I had once before received a message to the same effect; accordingly I supplied the messenger with two donkeys laden with sugar and rice; I gave him also 50 German crowns in cash, and sent him up privately on the 28th ultimo.

3. The messenger felt quite confident that he would manage to convey these things safely to their destination, and promised to bring me a letter from Captain Cameron. I sent a few lines by him to Mr. Flad (one of the Europeans who is in the employ of the King and said to be a friend of Captain Cameron), wherein I acquainted him with the despatch of my first letter to King Theodorus, and asked him to favour me, if possible, with the cause of his not replying thereto for so long.

4. The letter which the messenger said he had brought from Captain Cameron was addressed to M. Munzinger, the Acting French Consul of Massowah, and therefore he had to leave it for him at Bogos in Hamasain, the first Abyssinian district, about sixty miles to the west of this place, where M. Munzinger generally resides. That gentleman had gone to Kassala, the first Egyptian district on the northern side of Abyssinia, to settle some feud existing between the Christians and Mahometans of the neighbouring tribes. As he is not expected back here for the next twenty days, I have sent a special messenger for the letter, which is said to have been written in the Amharic language, and if I receive it before the "Dalhousie" starts for Aden, I will forward you a translation of it by her.

5. If the messenger's statement is correct that Captain Cameron does not wish me to go up to Gondar for the present, it must be founded on the supposition that I intended to do so whether I received an answer from the King or not. My doing so before receiving a reply from the King will be simply to thwart all hopes of ever gaining the release of the prisoners; and, furthermore, it may subject me and my companion, Dr. Blanc, to a worse calamity than that which befell Captain Cameron and his fellow prisoners, and would inevitably complicate matters more than ever.

6. The report which reached the King about the intention of the Franks to occupy Hamasain, must be founded on the current rumour that the well-known adventurer Count de Bisson, a Belgian, and who calls himself a French General, has returned from Egypt, and is now in the vicinity of that district, with an Egyptian Commissioner and a French gentleman from the French Consulate at Alexandria, trying to establish some exorbitant claim against the Egyptian Government for the losses he alleges to have sustained last year in endeavouring to establish a Colony on the northern frontier of Abyssinia.

7. About fifteen months ago he came to this neighbourhood with about forty European adventurers, whom he had collected from different parts of the continent, to assist him in his colonizing scheme. He also brought abundance of warlike stores, like guns, muskets, powder, &c., but on finding that neither his intrigue nor martial strength could avail him much, in consequence of the opposition he met with from the natives of the country wherever he went, he returned to Egypt and left his followers to go back to their country in the best way they could. He provided them with neither money nor provisions, consequently they were nigh starving and could only manage to leave this part of Africa through begging.

8. I believe that extraordinary expedition stirred up the wrath of King Theodorus against all Europeans, and made him feel jealous of their movements. It also proved, most probably, the main cause of the apprehension and imprisonment of Captain Cameron and the missionaries.

9. I fear the return of this Count de Bisson just now to these parts will have an

* Inclosure 2 in No. 435.

injurious effect upon our interests; and very likely his having appeared again in the vicinity of Abyssinia has made the Emperor rather suspicious regarding our intention.

10. Moreover, I apprehend that some evil disposed person here has been deceiving His Majesty with regard to the object of my Mission; because I am certain that a great number of the inhabitants of this country, both Christians and Mahometans, do not wish us to be on good terms with the Abyssinian Monarch; on the contrary, they would rather see him brought to his senses by force of arms. This feeling, I regret to say, is shared by a number of the Europeans in this country, as they think that by his being humbled they will be able to carry on their different plans without molestation.

11. From all the reports I have received lately, I fear that the rumoured imprisonment of my first two messengers is but too true. I cannot believe, however, that they were confined for carrying my letter to the King, because they were at large some days after their arrival at his court. It may be that after they had waited some time for an answer, they were intimidated, and tried to run away, or (as it has been suggested to me) they might have importuned His Majesty for their dismissal. It is well known that nothing annoys him so much as to be asked repeatedly to do that which he is slow in accomplishing.

12. I had sent three private messengers, through different parties, to collect information. The first, who has arrived, was sent for me by M. Munzinger, the acting French Consul of Massowah; the second by the Naib of Arkeeko; and the third by a Gondar merchant. I expect the return of the last two daily.

13. As the movements of these messengers are unknown to each other, it will be very important to find whether the intelligence they bring down will tally. I shall then be able to judge what further steps I can take for carrying out the wishes of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

14. It seems to me that there remains now only one hope for attaining the desired object, and that is, the King of Abyssinia may yet change his bad temper, and send me an answer to the second letter I forwarded through the Naib of Arkeeko. But if the messengers of that Chief will also be subjected to the same treatment as mine are said to have met with, there will only be two ways left open for me,—either to appoint some one here to receive any communication which the King may ultimately send, and return to Aden, or to wait here patiently a few months longer and try some other means for obtaining the release of the prisoners.

15. Whether the King imprisons the Naib's messengers or not, it will not only be useless to address him again, for the present, on the subject of my Mission, but it may prove injurious to the prisoners. Moreover, I do not believe that other messengers could be found to carry another letter safely to the King, in case it is found out that the Naib's messengers have met with the same fate as mine.

16. There is no doubt that the Emperor has been crazy for the last two years; and for the safety and ultimate release of Captain Cameron and the other European prisoners precautionary measures have to be adopted for realizing our wishes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM,

First Assistant Political Resident at Aden, on Special Mission to Abyssinia.

Inclosure 3 in No. 436.

Précis of Intelligence brought from Gondar by Waldee Mariam bin Fantah, a Secret Messenger sent up by M. Munzinger, the Acting French Consul of Massowah, on the 11*th October,* 1864.

I WAS formerly in the service of Consul Cameron, and after he was imprisoned I was sent down by him to inform Mr. Speedy of the circumstances, but on coming here I found that he had left for Aden.

About a month and a-half ago I was sent up by M. Munzinger to Gondar, to collect some information regarding the European prisoners and the messengers you had sent up with letters to the King. It took me fifteen days to go up to Gondar. While I was there, I spent two days with the servants of Consul Cameron at the King's encampment, outside Gondar. The Consul still retains five domestics, who bake bread and cook for him. All the European prisoners are confined in one tent, and consequently I managed to see them all daily. Captain Cameron is chained to two men—a

Copt, and a follower of the King; and the Reverend Mr. Stern is chained to Mr. Rosenthal. The Consul had heard of your Mission, but did not know what had been done. I told Captain Cameron that I had been sent by M. Munzinger, and was coming back to Massowah with intelligence. He told me to ask you to send him some sugar and rice, and also some money, if possible. I am willing to take up these things, if you wish to send them. The Consul told me to take the things to my house at Gondar, and, if possible, to supply him with a little at a time, otherwise he would get Mr. Flad (who is at large, and working for the King) to take charge of them. The Consul has also requested me to ask you not to go up until you should hear from him, and he hoped to write to you as soon as I went back to Gondar.

He has further charged me to advise M. Munzinger not to stay at Bogos as the King had heard from Hailo, the Governor-General of Hamasain, that two Europeans (Messrs. Munzinger and Stalla) were living at Bogos, and that the Franks had intended to occupy that district. It is believed that the King had sent orders to Hamasain for the apprehension of the afore-mentioned Europeans and their conveyance as prisoners to Gondar.

An Abyssinian (formerly in the employ of the Consul) named Gabra Mariam Dasta gave me a letter for M. Munzinger, which he wrote for Captain Cameron in Ambaric. I have left that letter at Bogos, as I have found, that M. Munzinger had gone to Kassala, in the Egyptian territory. I believe that that letter contains a request for some sugar and rice, and also to warn you against going up to Gondar for the present.

All the prisoners were looking very well, with the exception of Mr. Kerans, who was suffering from eruptions on his skin. The Captain receives ample rations, but the rest of the European prisoners have not been allowed anything for the last eight months. They live upon charity, and the Consul gives them what he can spare from his meals.

The Aboona (Metropolitan of Abyssinia) is still in disgrace, and was only liberated about two months and a half ago. The Consul asked him to write you a letter, but he was afraid to do so.

The King has not only stopped all his allowances, but deprived him of all religious benefices, and confiscated all his private property.

Mr. Cairnes and a Copt named Yousif (a servant of Mr. Stern) have died in prison.

I heard that the messengers you sent to the King, four months ago, were in prison at Gondar, but I could not see them. It was said that they were imprisoned by the King because they had served Europeans contrary to his orders. The King had heard from Massowah that the English had intended to go up and fight him, and it is believed that that is the cause of his not replying to you.

There is no doubt that a rebellious spirit has sprung up all over Abyssinia. No less than five formidable chiefs have risen against him, and thousands of the King's disaffected subjects have joined them.

From what I have seen of the King's encampment and the exterior show of his Court, his power did not seem to me to have suffered in the least.

I stayed at Gondar three days, and it took me twenty-six to come down to Massowah by way of Bogos.

Before me, this 24th of November, 1864.

(Signed) H. RASSAM,
First Assistant Political Resident, Aden, on Special Mission to Abyssinia.

1865.

No. 437.

Captain Desborough to Earl Russell.—(Received February 6.)

My Lord, *Reading, February 2, 1865.*

I DO myself the honour of inclosing for your information the copy of a letter that I have ventured to address Her Majesty the Queen relative to the cruel imprisonment of my brother-in-law, Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) L. DESBOROUGH, *late Captain 94th Regiment.*

Inclosure in No. 437.

Letter addressed to Her Majesty the Queen by Captain L. Desborough.

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

May it please your Majesty,

IT is with great diffidence that I crave permission to approach your Majesty, for the purpose of bringing to your Majesty's notice the unhappy condition of your Majesty's Consul and other British subjects now in Abyssinia.

Captain Cameron, for whom I wish especially to bespeak your Majesty's sympathy, is the youngest son of the late Colonel Cameron, who for many years commanded the Buffs, and who served the Crown with distinction for more than forty years in various parts of the globe. Three of Captain Cameron's brothers died in the service, and he is now the only surviving son of his widowed and aged mother, who is bowed down with grief upon her son's account.

Captain Cameron has himself served the country, and not without distinction. He took part in two Kaffir wars, and was on General Sir W. F. William's staff at Kars during the Crimean war. He was employed politically in South Africa, and also in the Consular Service on the shores of the Black Sea. And I may be permitted to add, that, by desire of your Majesty's Government, he accompanied their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Saxe-Cobourg on their tour into the interior of Abyssinia.

In the year 1862, Captain Cameron was appointed Consul to Abyssinia, and was sent with presents from your Majesty to the Ruler of that Country. In obedience to instructions Captain Cameron proceeded to Gondar, the capital, and presented the King with the valuable gifts intrusted to his care. It has been more than once stated in the public prints that the King specially coveted the support of France and England, but his sympathies and reliance seem to have rested chiefly with the latter. With this view he addressed a letter to your Majesty, which Captain Cameron, as in duty bound, forwarded, and which arrived in this country early in February, 1863. Many months seem to have elapsed before any notice was taken of this letter, and Captain Cameron, and other British subjects, appear to have been imprisoned, if not altogether, yet principally on this account. In a pencilled note from Captain Cameron, dated Gondar, February, 14th 1864, and which reached England 25th May last, contains these words, "No release until civil answer to King's letter arrives." Unfortunately in November 1863, during his imprisonment, a letter arrived in Gondar addressed to the Consul, containing a kind of reprimand to him for being absent from his post, and directing his return to Massowah. Theodorus took possession of this letter, the contents of which greatly exasperated him. He placed Captain Cameron in more rigorous confinement, in which state he, with four other British subjects, have remained ever since, now a period of nearly fifteen months. Some of the prisoners have been tortured; each is chained to an Abyssinian, who is relieved at short intervals, they are confined in small tents under charge of the King's guards. Probably from want of information no steps were taken for a considerable time to procure the release of your Majesty's subjects from their cruel and ignominious bondage. Indeed it was only in August last that Mr. Rassam arrived at Massowah with a reply to the King's letter, and there he has

remained ever since, waiting permission to proceed to Gondar with the letter, if he has not already returned to Aden. On Saturday last I heard it rumoured in town that two of the prisoners had died in consequence of the hardships they had undergone, and that Mr. Rassam was on his way back to Aden, having failed in the object for which he had been sent to Abyssinia. I applied in vain for information both at the Foreign and India Offices. Nor could I obtain any information as to any ulterior steps likely to be taken with a view to bring about the release of your Majesty's subjects so unjustly and cruelly treated by this barbarous despot.

Knowing the deep interest your Majesty ever takes in the welfare of your Majesty's subjects, I have ventured to address your Majesty, hoping to obtain your Majesty's powerful aid, in causing measures to be taken for the release of your Majesty's suffering subjects from what may in truth be called a lingering death; and to interest your Majesty in the grief and desolation of the aged mother of one of the captives, who is now in the seventy-eighth year of her age.

Reading, January 31, 1865.

I beg to subscribe myself, &c.

(Signed) L. DESBOROUGH,

Late Captain 94th Regiment, and brother-in-law to Captain Cameron.

No. 438.

Dr. Kerans to Earl Russell.—(Received February 2.)

South Parade, Ahuscragh, Co. Galway, Ireland,

My Lord, *January* 31, 1865.

MY son, Mr. Lawrence Kerans, being one of the captives in Abyssinia, and not having heard of him since his captivity, except what I have seen in the public press, induces me to trespass on your Lordship in the hope that you will kindly give me some information as to their present condition and as to the prospect of their release. My son proceeded to Gondar in October 1863, as private secretary to Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul at Masssowah, and since then, though we have frequently written to him and to the Consul, we have never received any reply, our great anxiety as to his fate, I hope will plead my excuse for troubling your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LAWRENCE C. KERANS.

No. 439.

Mr. Hammond to Dr. Kerans.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 7, 1865.

LORD RUSSELL regrets that he is unable to give you any information respecting your son, who, from your letter of the 31st ultimo, appears to have accompanied Captain Cameron to Abyssinia in 1863. By the latest intelligence which has reached Her Majesty's Government it appears that the various Europeans who had been seized by the King of Abyssinia were still detained in captivity, and the efforts made to procure their release had hitherto proved unavailing.

An Agent deputed by Her Majesty's Government is at Massowah, endeavouring to open a communication with Abyssinia, and to induce the King to set the captives free; but that Agent, the latest account from whom is dated the 2nd December, has hitherto not succeeded in the endeavours which up to that time he was making to communicate with the captives and procure their liberation.

If any information respecting your son should be received from that Agent, Lord Russell will take care to make it known to you.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 440.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received February 8.)

My Lord, *Cairo, January 24, 1865.*

WE are still in the greatest anxiety about intelligence from Abyssinia.

I have directed the attention of the Consul at Djeddah to the necessity of endeavouring to obtain news; and I have earnestly requested the Resident at Aden not to fail to let me have every reliable information he can procure.

It is a painful subject, and one to which I can hardly see any issue. Conflicting reports reach us, on which no reliance can be placed; these last days have brought us two: one from rather an obscure German paper, declaring that Mr. Rassam's mission had been well received, the captives liberated with presents, &c. There has not elapsed the material time for such intelligence to have gone to Europe and returned out here. I am rather disposed to consider it as indirectly connected with the scientific mission to explore the Nile, for which a certain Mr. Miani has been endeavouring to secure the patronage and support of Germany.

Our second report is of a directly opposite character; it appears in a paper published two days ago at Alexandria, in Italian. I inclose an extract from the news from Djeddah, under date of 20th December last; to this also I can attach no credit. I have letters from the Consul at that port of the 27th, and no mention whatever is made of Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

Inclosure in No. 440.

Extract from the "Il Commercio" of January 22, 1865.

Rubric, Jeddah, December 20, 1864.

OUR latest news from Abyssinia, brought by a person attached to "Padre del Monte," lately arrived from Massowah, bears, that the persons sent to King Theodore on the part of (Sir, *sic*) Rassam, Secretary of Governor of Aden, as Envoys, to obtain from him permission to present the letter of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, have been imprisoned, and that Theodore having added to the chains already on Consul Cameron's hands, chains to his feet, added:—"If the English wish to come, let them come" ("Se gli Inglese vogliano venire, favoriscano").

No. 441.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received February 8.)

My Lord, *Cairo, January 27, 1865.*

CHEVALIER DE HEUGLIN, styling himself "Conseiller Aulique de Sa Majeste le Roi de Wurtemberg," called on me this morning. As he has been several times in Abyssinia, I questioned him very closely on points connected with that country, its King, his character, &c. The following are Mr. Heuglin's opinions, and the result of our conversation:—

He declares himself to have been on intimate terms with Theodore, and to have accompanied him to the southern frontiers of Abyssinia, during which he was able (speaking the language fluently), to understand and appreciate the character of the King; he pronounced him to be a remarkable man, possessing to an extraordinary degree the *coup d'œil juste*, and the very last man to have taken the measures he has done to a foreigner, far less to an English Agent, except under the greatest provocation.

I mentioned having learnt that since the death of Mr. Bell, the King had greatly changed, and that he had betaken himself to drink; he said, no; that having avenged Bell's death by the execution of 1,800 persons in one day, he had considered himself satisfied; that he had frequently been up days and nights with the King while travelling with his army in Shoa, and that he never saw him in the slightest degree overcome by drink; that his only liquor was hydromel (a kind of mead), never touching spirits.

I asked whether he (Heuglin) had seen Captain Cameron; he said, no. He had waited at Gondar several weeks in 1862, when the Consul was expected; but owing to the delay in his arrival, he, Heuglin, had been compelled to quit Abyssinia for his Nile expedition, from which he has just returned. He said, that had he known of our Consul being still detained by Theodore, while he was at Khartoum, he should not have have hesitated to have gone into Abyssinia with a view of effecting his release.

I asked him if he could form any opinion as to the probable reception our Envoy from Aden, bearer of Her Majesty's letter, would meet with at the King's hands. He said, no; but that Mr. Rassam had done well, in ignorance of the cause of Cameron's arrest, to send messengers to Gondar before proceeding there himself, particularly if Mr. Rassam was ignorant of the language and customs of the country.

I inquired whether he thought the King was sufficiently aware of the consequences he might bring on himself by an act such as he had committed, of arresting and putting in irons an accredited servant of the British Government. He said, yes, he was well aware; but that when he imagined his dignity was insulted, his violent nature would get the mastery over his better judgment; and he repeated, that he could only have taken such a step on very great provocation.

As I had received an indirect intimation that Mr. Heuglin would be willing to undertake a journey to Abyssinia, I thanked him, but told him of course nothing would be done till we knew what may be results of Mr. Rassam's mission.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

No. 142.

Précis of Intelligence brought down from Abyssinia by Fautsh Wandafrash, the private messenger who was sent up from Massowah on October 28, 1864.—(*In Mr. Rassam's letter to India Office, January* 28, 1865.—*Received by India Office, February* 28, 1865.)*

I WAS sent up to Gondar by Haj Adam Koorman (a Gondar merchant), about fifty-one days ago, to collect some information regarding the Consul and the other European prisoners. Also to find out what had become of your messengers that you had sent up to the King of Abyssinia on your arrival at Massowah about five months ago.

I went up to Gondar in thirteen days; and on arriving there I found that the King had gone to Debra Tabor; so I continued my journey thither, and reached that place in two days.

At Debra Tabor I learnt that His Majesty had gone to Zabeet, and consequently I followed him to that place; but on arriving there, I discovered that he had gone on to Magdala, about five days' journey further to the south.

At Zabeet I heard that the King was making long stages, as he intended to chastise the different rebellious Chiefs who have risen against him in different parts of Abyssinia. His first intention was to penetrate into Shoa, and subdue the insurrection which has appeared there; and afterwards he would go to Lakota (about eight days' journey to the east-south-east of Gondar), to punish its Chief, Wakshim Gobazay, who had thrown off his allegiance to the King, and was plundering the adjacent districts, and killing every person who showed any partiality to the Royal cause. It is premised that, after he punishes those rebels, he would proceed northward to coerce the rest of the rebels, Tisso Gobazay of Walka-ait, Garstakla, Negoosie of Agou, and others. The most powerful of these Chiefs is Waksham Gobazay of Sukota, who is supposed to be able to bring to the field of battle against the King, of cavalry alone, about 4,000; and of foot soldiers, he is expected to outnumber the King's. It is almost certain that the King will return victorious, because the rebels would not have the pluck to face his army when it is commanded by him in person.

At Zabeet I heard that the King had left all his prisoners, both Europeans and natives, on the top of the mountain at Magdala, as he did not wish to be encumbered by them on his expedition against the rebels.

I deemed it disadvantageous to follow the Consul and his fellow-prisoners to Magdala, as I knew I could not possibly see them there on account of the strict watch kept at that place on all the prisoners.

I learnt that all the European prisoners were well, and amply provided for with victuals by the King. I have not heard that any of them had died since they were confined.

* Communicated to India Office by Foreign Office, March 1, 1865.

As I found it was useless for me to follow the King any further, I returned the next day from Zabeet to Debra Tabor. I staid there with Mr. Flad, as we were acquainted with each other before then. Mr. Flad informed me that he and the other Europeans who are working for the King at Gaffat, outside Debra Tabor, had waited on His Majesty while he was staying there, to intercede for the release of their fellow-countrymen.

The King had received them well, and promised to accede to their request if they went to him again the next day. Before the appointed time had come, however, he sent to tell them not to go to him, as he had determined not to release the prisoners until he received the letter of the English Queen. Mr. Flad told me also that both he and the rest of the Europeans who are at large, are longing to quit the country, but they were unable to do so in consequence of the surveillance placed upon their movements by the King. They are prohibited from going out of Debra Tabor without his special license. It is believed that when the King receives the Queen's letter he would release all the prisoners.

The messengers of the Naib of Arkeeko; who went up with your second letter, reached the King before my arrival at Debra Tabor. They had delivered the letters to the King, and were ordered to join your former messengers under the care of Samuel, the King's Steward. They were all told to wait until they would be sent back with an answer. The report which was brought to you that the King had imprisoned your first two messengers was not true; they are not only at large, but are treated well by the King. I am certain that they had never been imprisoned, because I was assured of this fact by both Mr. Flad and Busha Garuzzuhre, the Commissioner of Customs of the district of Tigré, who had been with the King for some time.

The Aboona (Metropolitan of Abyssinia) is with the King, and it is said that he is now treated with more consideration by His Majesty.

After I remained with Mr. Flad at Debra Tabor two days, I left to come back to Massowah, but on reaching Wagara in four days on my way down, I was stopped by Ali Wishat, who had been placed by the King there to apprehend all persons who would be found travelling through that place without any legitimate purpose. He kept me in confinement fourteen days, with a number of others whom he had seized like me; but on hearing that Tisso Gobazai (one of the leaders of the rebels) was coming to attack him, he gave us our liberty and fled to Gondar. I then continued my journey hitherward, and as I had to maintain myself on my way down by begging, I could not come down in less than fourteen days from Wagara.

Before me at Massowah, this 19th day of December, 1864.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 443.

*Mr. Hammond to Mrs. Stern.**

Madam, *Foreign Office, February* 9, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acquaint you that a private letter has been received at this office from Mr. Rassam, referring to a statement made to him at Massowah, on the 19th of December, by a messenger whom he had sent from that place on the 28th of October into Abyssinia, and although the date at which that messenger last heard of the prisoners is not given, yet he must have done so within a few days after the 12th of November; and the account which he obtained was that at that time they were detained on the Magdala mountain, that they were all well, and were amply provided with food.

Any intelligence respecting the prisoners which may hereafter reach this office will be immediately communicated to you.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

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* Similar letters were addressed to Colonel Shafto Adair, Dr. Kerans, and Captain L. Desborough.

No. 444.

*Memorandum by Brigadier Coghlan on the Abyssinian difficulty, and how best to get out of it.**

February $\frac{8}{10}$, 1865.

1. IT is assumed that Her Majesty's Government desires, chiefly, the speedy release of the British subjects, and also of other Europeans, now held captives by the King Theodorus.

2. That any further relations with Abyssinia, except as they may affect that object, are not desired by Her Majesty's Government.

3. But that the King's proposal to send a distinguished Abyssinian Embassy to Her Majesty may be entertained if considered necessary to the object in view, viz., the release of the captives.

4. The difficulty in this case is to open any communication with one who has so grossly violated the rules of civilization and of international law as to seize and torture British subjects, one of whom is a British Consul.

5. Mr. Rassam, from Aden, is the bearer of a letter from Her Majesty to Theodorus, but Mr. Rassam not having been received by the King, that letter may be considered cancelled, and should not now be delivered.

6. If that letter recognises the fact that British subjects are held in captivity and have been maltreated, it may be well that it should not be delivered. It would be easier to address King Theodorus if Her Majesty had no knowledge of the condition of her subjects at his Court.

7. Theodorus is a *parvenu*, a powerful despot, of high aspirations and strong will, but he is not a savage.

8. There are probably several causes for his altered demeanour towards Captain Cameron, the British Consul; one only need now be specified, but that is believed to be the chief of them: it is, the long delay in replying to the letter which he addressed to Her Majesty in December 1862, or January 1863.

9. It is understood that his dignity is grievously wounded by the silence, which he accepts as an affront, and this sense of injury, coupled with other circumstances, has led to the deplorable state of affairs now existing at Gondar.

10. Also, there is reason to believe that the King refuses Mr. Rassam's mission as one which is not of sufficient dignity, that Mr. Rassam is in fact a mere messenger and not an Envoy; hence the contemptuous silence with which his letters and requests have been treated.

11. All that has been assumed in the preceding paragraphs can be proved by reference to known facts if necessary. Inquiry into the "other circumstances" alluded to in paragraph 9 would inconveniently lengthen this Memorandum, which is intended only as a brief statement of the existing difficulty and a suggestion as to the best means of overcoming it.

12. If any further effort is to be made to release the captives, it must be by means of an Embassy headed by an officer of rank, who should be supported by such a suite as would give dignity to his mission: a secretary (a military officer), two or three officers of the scientific corps or departments, and a medical officer should be of the party; these could be supplied either from England, or from Bombay, or from Aden.

13. Theodorus is known to attach great importance to military rank and to scientific men; on that account, therefore, a liberal display will be expedient.

14. A supply of presents should be provided, to be delivered or not according to circumstances.

15. The Embassy would carry a Queen's letter, the style and substance of which require careful consideration. It should be indited in Oriental phraseology, highly emblazoned and sealed (the King will consider nothing valid which is not sealed); in it the Embassy should be introduced and recommended; some general compliments on his Government, and particularly on the abolition of the traffic in slaves, could be appropriately introduced; some excuse made for the delay in replying to the King's letter, and his proposed mission from Abyssinia to England should be accepted, its details being left to be arranged by the Queen's out-going Envoy, the bearer of Her Majesty's letter.

16. It is suggested that the Queen's letter should make no mention of the captives, their case being supposed to become known to the Envoy on his way out; but if this suggestion be over-ruled, the letter may express surprise and regret at their condition,

* Laid before Parliament, 1865.

and request the King to hand them over to Her Majesty's Envoy, who, it should be stated, has authority to inquire into the circumstances alleged against them.

17. Arrived at Cairo the Envoy should endeavour to secure the services of two Abyssinian monks or priests; if not procurable there they might speedily be got from Jerusalem. These men should be treated with liberal consideration; they should be impressed with the dignity of the mission, and induced to interest themselves in its ultimate object. They, or at least one of them, would be the fittest messenger to be dispatched from the coast to Gondar, carrying a letter from the Envoy announcing his arrival "bearing a letter from the Queen," and soliciting from King Theodorus the necessary escort and carriage to Gondar.

18. The Copts at Jerusalem have lately treated the Abyssinians badly; hence it is not unlikely that the Patriarch at Cairo may be indisposed to do anything which may tend to bring about a better understanding betwixt the English Government and Theodorus. These under-currents of intriguing self-interest should be carefully studied at Cairo, and the Mission authorized to avail themselves of the Patriarch's intervention or not, as might be judged most prudent.

19. Indeed, at every stage of this difficult and delicate negotiation the Mission should be invested with a large discretion to meet the varied circumstances which may arise, and which cannot be foreseen.

20. There are reasons for doubting the good will of the Coptic Patriarch towards Her Majesty's Government, and it is far from certain that he possesses any great influence over King Theodorus; these and other kindred questions justify the claim for a liberal discretion being accorded to Her Majesty's Envoy.

21. The Governor of Bombay should be requested to send to Aden a second steamer, in addition to the one which belongs to the Aden Residency.

22. The Mission being formed at Aden, should proceed with two steamers to Adulis, whence one or both the Coptic Priests would be despatched viâ Hallai, carrying a letter from the Envoy, as suggested in paragraph 17. This route is preferable to that viâ Massowah.

23. After the despatch of the messengers the steamers could visit Massowah for water and provisions, returning to Adulis to receive the King's reply; or the interval might be occupied, if found practicable, by an inquiry into the questions of Coal discovery in that neighbourhood, which are already before Her Majesty's Government in the India Department, as well as at the Board of Trade and the Foreign Office; but this, important as it may be, is of inferior interest to that of the object of the Mission, and it should be entertained only on that understanding.

24. At this stage of proceeding, if the policy suggested at the first part of paragraph 16, *ante*, be approved, the Envoy might, as on his own responsibility, address the King on the subject of the captives, expressing the hope that they had done nothing to incur his displeasure, and requesting that in any case they should be released in order that the projected interview might be on the most friendly footing, &c.; or if Her Majesty's Government should think it necessary to recognize the captivity of the Consul and other British subjects, and Europeans of other nations, it should be solicited that they be made over to the Envoy, as suggested at conclusion of paragraph 16.

25. Supposing all to run smoothly—the British Mission to reach Gondar, to be well received there, and the captives to be released, then will arise the more delicate task of obtaining from the King some apology as the reparation for the wrong committed on Her Majesty's subjects; for without such an acknowledgment it will be impossible to bring away the Mission from Abyssinia which King Theodorus desires to send to England.

26. This, perhaps, will be the severest test of the diplomatic skill of the British Embassy. There is, however, no solid reason to despair of success; on the contrary, it may be hoped that a Mission dignified in its constitution, liberal in outlay, moderate in demands, and circumspect in conduct, will so highly gratify the pride of the King that he will make no difficulty in the matter of tendering such apology as may be acceptable to Her Majesty's Government.

27. Lastly, it remains to consider if any alternative process is open by which this object can be attained. It is believed that there is none. Suggestion has been offered that Egyptian forces might be sent to compel Theodorus to surrender his captives; but apart from the doubtful value of any warlike aid to be obtained from Egypt (if even it could be obtained at all), it must be remembered that Theodorus is alleged to have sworn to put all his prisoners to death immediately on any foreign invasion of his country to effect their release.

28. In the possible event of the release of the captives before the arrival of the

Mission, and on a certainty that they had removed beyond the power of the King, it is presumed that Her Majesty's Government would not desire the Mission to go on. British subjects might be warned, and the Mission would return.

29. And, similarly, in the dreadful possibility of the death of the captive British subjects, whether by violence or disease, there would remain no sufficient object for the further proceeding of a Mission: in that sad case it would be for Her Majesty's Government to consider what steps might be taken to avenge the injury; but a friendly Mission would be incompatible.

30. The existing difficulty is one which cannot be surmounted by force, and the circumstances are so peculiar that no very strict line of diplomacy can be marked out for the guidance of the officer who may be entrusted by Her Majesty with the conduct of the undertaking.

February 8, 1865. (Signed) W. M. COGHLAN.

P.S.—The foregoing Memorandum was written before Mr. Rassam's letter of 28th December arrived.

I have since received a letter from Aden, dated 21st January. The writer, a Hindoo, mentions Mr. Rassam as still at Massowah. Indeed, the position of affairs is much as it was four months ago.

Rassam is correct in judging that the ultimatum (as he calls it) suggested by Colonel Merewether would be dangerous.

I am still of opinion that the proper course will be to send a Mission as recommended in this Memorandum. In the meanwhile Rassam might be instructed to retain the Queen's letter for the present, as it would be (in that case) superseded by a new one.

February 10, 1865. W. M. C.

No. 445.

Mrs. Stern to Earl Russell.—(Received February 13.)

73, *Sussex Road, Holloway, February* 11, 1865

MRS. STERN begs to tender her grateful acknowledgments to Earl Russell for so promptly and kindly communicating to her the latest intelligence respecting the Abyssinian captives. She will receive with deep thankfulness any further information that may arrive.

No. 446.

Colonel Adair to Earl Russell.—(Received February 14.)

My Lord, 7, *Audley Square, February* 13, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge, with thanks, your Lordship's kind notification of the 9th instant, relative to the imprisonment of Captain Cameron in Abyssinia, which will be gratefully appreciated by the family, on whose behalf I beg to offer sincere thanks.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALEX. SHAFTO ADAIR.

No. 447.

Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(Received February 14.)*

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, February* 13, 1865.

I TAKE the liberty, most respectfully, of renewing the offer made to your Lordship in the months of March and May last year, that I should go to Abyssinia for the purpose of obtaining the liberation of Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, the Protestant missionaries, and other British subjects then and ever since kept in captivity by the Sovereign of that country.

Believing myself, without presumption, to be the person best qualified to undertake

* Laid before Parliament, 1865.

a mission of this peculiar character, I feel it to be my duty once more to place my humble services at your Lordship's disposal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 448.

Mr. Layard to Mr. Merivale.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 14, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to request that you will inform the Secretary of State for India in Council that his Lordship is of opinion that it might conduce to the success of Mr. Rassam's Mission to the King of Abyssinia for the release of the British captives if a British officer were joined with him, and that Lord Russell would be glad if an officer could be spared from the garrison of Aden for the purpose. Lord Russell would wish that the officer should be placed under Mr. Rassam, to whose discretion the conduct of the Mission is confided.

Should Sir Charles Wood concur with Lord Russell, it is desirable that no time should be lost in giving the necessary directions to the Political Resident at Aden; and it is suggested that they should be sent by the mail of next Saturday, by which a letter from the Queen to the King of Abyssinia will also be sent. The officer who is ordered to join Mr. Rassam might take charge of the letter and deliver it to Mr. Rassam at Massowah, or wherever he may happen to be.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 449.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received February 16.)

My Lord, *Cairo, February* 2, 1865.

I RECEIVED, a few days ago, a letter from the Political Resident at Aden. He says, 21st January:—

I am sorry to say I can send you no good tidings about the Abyssinian Mission. Mr. Rassam is still at Massowah, or was, when I last heard, about the middle of December. King Theodorus, up to that date, had taken no notice of Mr. Rassam's presence, nor of any of his letters. He seems to be deliberately maintaining silence in return for his letter having so long remained unnoticed. Others say that is nothing unusual: nothing more than his custom to throw business on one side for a time and never think of it for six months or so. Rassam has now been just six months at Massowah. I told him officially to have another letter written to the King informing the latter if no reply was received within a certain date, fixing sufficient for a messenger to go to Gondar and back, with some margin, the mission would be withdrawn to Aden. This being made known, and talked about, may prompt the King to action; but it is difficult to get messengers to go to Gondar, they are so afraid of Theodore's capricious temper.

I sent Her Majesty's ship "Pantaloon" to Massowah, on the 6th instant, to see if she could pick up any news, and find out what was going on; when she returns I will be happy to send you what she brings.

The last accounts were that the prisoners were all in confinement still, and in much the same state as at first. There is a report in the town here that Theodorus has been killed by one of his rebellious Barons, but I do not put much faith in it, &c.

I am truly unhappy in having only such meagre news to convey to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

No. 450.

Mr. Layard to Mr. Rassam.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 17, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to inform you that he is willing to place at your disposal 500 English muskets as a present to King Theodorus. His Lordship leaves to

your discretion the mode of making known to the King that you are authorized to offer him this present from Her Majesty's Government, and of presenting them to His Majesty.

Orders will be immediately given for these arms to be sent to Aden, from whence they will be forwarded to Massowah, or to any other port, according to the directions which you may think it advisable to send through the Resident at that station.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 451.

Mr. Layard to Mr. Rassam.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 17, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to send you a letter from Her Majesty the Queen to King Theodorus of Abyssinia, which is to be substituted for the one previously sent to you,* and which you will deliver into the hands of His Majesty when you are able to reach his presence. You will return to this office the letter first sent.

I am further directed to inform you that, in order that Her Majesty's Government may receive the earliest information of your proceedings, Earl Russell wishes you to send copies of your official reports direct to this office, through the Resident at Aden.

I inclose a copy of the Queen's letter to the King of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 451.

Her Majesty the Queen to the King of Abyssinia.†

May 26, 1864.

VICTORIA, by the grace of God, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c., &c., &c., to Theodore, King of Abyssinia, sendeth greeting. We have duly received the letter which your Majesty delivered to Our servant Cameron, and We have read with pleasure the friendly expressions which it conveys. We learn with satisfaction that Your Majesty has successfully established your authority in the country over which you rule, and We trust that you may long continue to administer its affairs in peace and prosperity. Our servant Cameron has no doubt conveyed to you the assurances of Our friendship and goodwill, and We are glad to learn by your letter that he had been duly received by your Majesty. Accounts have indeed reached Us of late that your Majesty had withdrawn your favour from Our servant, We trust however that these accounts have originated in false representations on the part of persons ill-disposed to your Majesty, and who may desire to produce an alteration in Our feelings towards you. But your Majesty can give no better proof of the sincerity of the sentiments which you profess towards Us, nor insure more effectually a continuance of Our friendship and goodwill than by dismissing Our servant Cameron, and any other Europeans who may desire it, from your Court, and by affording them every assistance and protection on their journey to the destination to which they desire to proceed. With the view of renewing to you the expression of Our friendship, and of explaining to you Our wishes respecting Our servant Cameron, We have directed Our servant Hormuzd Rassam, First Assistant to the Political Resident at Aden, to proceed to your residence, and to deliver to you this Our Royal letter. We have instructed him to inform your Majesty that if, notwithstanding the long distance which separates Our dominions from those of your Majesty, you should, after having permitted Our servant Cameron and the other Europeans to take their leave and depart, desire to send an Embassy to this country, that Embassy will be very well received by Us. And so, not doubting that you will receive Our servant Rassam in a favourable manner, and give entire credit to all that he shall say to you on Our part, as well as comply with the requests which he is instructed to make to you, We recommend you to the protection of the Almighty.

* Inclosure in No. 407.

† Written on a sheet of emblazoned vellum.

Given at Our Court at Balmoral, the Twenty-sixth day of May, in the year of Our Lord 1864, and in the twenty-seventh year of Our reign.

Your good Friend,

(L.S. The large Signet.)
(Not countersigned)

(Signed) VICTORIA R.

Superscribed:
To Our Good Friend Theodore,
King of Abyssinia.

No. 452.

Mr. Layard to Mr. Merivale.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 17, 1865.

WITH reference to my letter of the 14th instant,* I am directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you the letter, to which I alluded, from the Queen to the King of Abyssinia, which bears the same date as, and is intended to be substituted for, the letter from the Queen of the 26th of May last; and I am to request that you will move the Secretary of State for India to cause Her Majesty's letter to be forwarded to the Governor of Aden by the mail of to-morrow, with instructions to send it on to Mr. Rassam at Massowah with the least possible delay.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 453.

Mr. Layard to Mr. Merivale.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 17, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to state to you, for the information of Sir Charles Wood, that his Lordship has learnt, with regret, that it is the intention of the Governor of India to withdraw from Aden the steamer "Victoria," which has hitherto been placed under the orders of the Resident at that station. Earl Russell is of opinion that, whilst Her Majesty's Consul and other British subjects remain in captivity in Abyssinia, and until the efforts now being made to obtain their release should prove successful, it would be advisable to leave that vessel under the orders of Colonel Merewether, as it is of much importance that he should be able to communicate with Mr. Rassam and give him such support and assistance as he may require in the furtherance of the object of his mission.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 454.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received February 23.)

My Lord, *Cairo, February* 9, 1865.

I THINK the inclosed copy of a despatch, just received from Mr. Calvert, Acting Consul at Jeddah, may be of some interest to your Lordship.

It leads us to hope that, if there be no truth in the report of the liberation of the captives, that of Captain Cameron's increased ill-treatment may be regarded as equally unfounded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

P.S.—11*th February*. At the moment of closing the mail, I have learnt that a letter dated the 21st January has just arrived from Massowah. I know the source to be good almost official.

Rassam is still at Massowah. The King has closed Abyssinia to persons and letters, and has gone to Shoa.

* No. 448.

A German naturalist, formerly acquainted with Captain Cameron, had left for Gondar, in hopes of being able to assist him; he has himself been arrested and detained prisoner.

Disturbances having broken out on Taka frontier of Abyssinia, one of the chiefs of the tribe, a Christian, has applied for French protection.

R. G. C.

Inclosure in No. 454.

Acting Consul Calvert to Mr. Colquhoun.

Sir, *Jeddah, January* 28, 1865.

I HAVE this moment heard some Abyssinian news,* which I have obtained from a Copt of the Soudan, named Abd-ul-Melek, who states that he was Sacristan of the late Crollos, Coptic Patriarch in Abyssinia; that, on his attempting to leave the country, he was imprisoned by King Theodorus, who forbids any one quitting his Kingdom, but that he at last succeeded in escaping about two months ago with an Englishman (whose name he pronounced "Filat"†) and who found his way to Berber while Abd-ul-Melek arrived at Jeddah viâ Souakim.

My informant says that Theodorus is never long stationary at one place; he is always on the march, and conducts with him everywhere Captain Cameron and his four English (qy. European) servants. The Consul travels and lives with a Coptic prelate named Aboona Salama, who is responsible for his not escaping. His health was good; he well treated, and was only chained when the priest had to go to a distance. The chain, which was described as light, and not grievous, was attached to one ancle, but when the King was likely to see him, it was also fastened to his neck. The servants were never shackled.

The Rev. Mr. Stern was, in deference to his sacred office, not chained; he resided in the custody of a Copt priest at the monastery of Jebel Tabor.

Theodorus is disgracefully addicted to intoxication, on which occasions he displays a cruel and mischievous temper, causing every one to cower when in his presence. He is so suspicious that he has established a system of espionage and punishes severely any one, be he European or native, who is discovered talking in a low voice or holding private conversation. He will not receive any letters, and dismisses with contumely the bearers thereof. My informant states that he heard a person, supposed to be an Englishman, who, about three months ago was sent with a letter to the King, was seized by his officers and imprisoned in the province of Tigré.

Though I cannot, of course, vouch for the truth of these details, there is this much to be said that, having confronted my informant with a native of Abyssinia, he shewed a perfect knowledge of that country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY H. CALVERT.

No. 455.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received February* 23.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, February* 11, 1865.

I HAVE had occasion to call your Lordship's attention to the movements of a certain Count Bisson, a Frenchman.

Your Lordship, through Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, had asked how far the proceedings of this individual had the sanction and support of his Government. The Minister of the Emperor had given such explanations as had satisfied your Lordship that M. de Bisson had neither any official character nor support of the Government. He was simply desirous of settling up in the distant country to which his steps had been directed—Taka, on the frontiers of Egypt and Abyssinia.

Arrived, as previously narrated, in Khartoum about the middle of December 1863, with the staff necessary for carrying out his project of colonizing, amounting to eighty persons, with arms and munitions such as he deemed he would require, he further engaged about a hundred hands, and started for a place called Sufi, on the frontiers of the Tigré (see Keith Johnstone's map), where he announced his intention of settling.

* See No. 458. † This is Flad, the Swiss missionary.—R. G. C.

He appears to have met with systematic opposition on the part of the Governor of the Soudan, and this to such an extent that, after remaining at Sufi only a few months, he abandoned his station, and passing through Egypt, proceeded to France, where he formally complained of the treatment he had encountered.

The French Government would appear to have entertained his complaint, for during the last summer M. Bisson returned here, and orders were transmitted to the French Agent to send up an officer of his Consulate to investigate the facts. Accordingly, M. Garnier, the Elève Consul attached to the French Agency here, was sent up to Khartoum, accompanied by a Delegate from the Egyptian Government, and reached Khartoum in December.

There is little doubt that the result of this inquiry will be a heavy claim preferred by Bisson on the Egyptian Government.

Complaints reach me from many quarters of the shameful conduct of the Governor of Soudan, Moozza Pasha, whose exactions on every European have become intolerable.

A very serious charge has been brought against him by the Dutch ladies. Mesdames Van Capellan and Tinne, which must become matter for serious inquiry The Governor is strongly supported by the Viceroy, but so grave and apparently well-founded are the charges, that His Highness will be unable to protect him, and his dismissal and disgrace must follow, while heavy indemnities will be demanded of the Government.

No. 456.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received February 23.)

My Lord, *Cairo, February 12, 1865.*

MR. CALVERT, on examining the Coptic priest, Abd el Melak, mentioned in my despatch of the 9th instant,* thought it important that he should arrive here as speedily as possible, having matter to communicate he wished should only meet my ear. He accordingly sent him on to Suez by an English steamer, which was on the point of leaving Djeddah, paying his passage, and giving him funds to reach Cairo with all speed.

Abd ul Melek reached this late on the evening of the 10th, and proceeded to the Consulate, where he was lodged.

Yesterday he came out here, and after questioning him, I thought the nature of his communication to be such as to induce me to employ the greatest precaution. I therefore preferred entrusting to Mr. Ayrton the task of taking his declaration, as I have every confidence in his thorough knowledge of the character and language of these countries.

Your Lordship will find the result of Abd ul Melek's declaration, as made to Mr. Ayrton, in presence of my Secretary, also conversant with the Arabic language, in the annexed paper. The Arabic idiom has been kept up throughout this paper, which carries with it a very singular appearance of truthfulness.

It is not for me, my Lord, to point out the importance of this paper, as requiring the very careful and immediate consideration of Her Majesty's Government. I only pray that my mind may soon be relieved from a most painful weight which for several months has pressed on me, and I may inform your Lordship that the subject has attracted considerable attention here.

Were it not for one phrase in the document, I would at once have acted, and done all I could to extricate these unfortunate men from the position in which they are placed; but, my Lord, I do not feel myself authorized "to give to the Aboona the assurance that Her Majesty's Government will not demand reparation" for the insult done to one of her servants, and the injuries inflicted on her subjects.

I have no manner of doubt that the facts narrated by Abd ul Melek are strictly true; that the Aboona has been unceasing in his attempts to induce Theodore to free the prisoners; that yielding to the Aboona's importunity, the King has demanded an assurance, not from the British Government, but from the Aboona, that no act of retribution shall be made to follow on the liberation of the prisoners, and that the Aboona shall guarantee this by obtaining from Her Majesty's Agent in Egypt a letter to that effect. The Aboona, of course, could not do this without communicating with me, and it is equally beyond my power to answer him until specially instructed by your Lordship.

* No. 454.

Thus, Theodore has had some tact in not making it appear that he requires a promise of impunity from Her Majesty's Government, but in leaving to the Aboona, who is not a member of his Government, the initiative of an arrangement to be made between him and Her Majesty's Agent in Egypt, with the condition that it shall be satisfactory to Theodore himself.

The question is whether, on this proposal, which, in itself, seems to open the door in a way to a resolution of existing difficulty, Her Majesty's Government is prepared to forego future demand for reparation, and to allow the Aboona's interference to have its course. I know of no means by which reparation could be obtained but force, nor do I see in the state in which affairs now are any other course than availing ourselves of the informal office of the Aboona, the proposal of which I transmit in this hurried form, in the hope that it may reach your Lordship with the passing mail.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

P.S.—On further questioning Abd ul Melek, he is of opinion that there is no present apprehension for the personal safety of the captives.

R. G. C.

Inclosure in No. 456.

Statement of Abd-ul-Melek, arrived at Cairo on a Mission from the Aboona of Abyssinia to Her Britannic Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt.

Abd-ul-Meluk states:

"I am a disciple ('telemiz,' but meaning here personal attendant) of the Patriarch of Abyssinia, Aboona Abu Salameh, who resides at Gebel Tabor, which is about three days' journey southwards from Gondar, near the Lake Tsana, which is known as the water of Geziret Mariam (Isle of the Virgin Mary), after a much-venerated church dedicated to the Virgin built on an island in the lake. I left Gebel Tabor forty-one days ago—*i. e.*, on the 2nd of January, 1865. The Sultan Theodore was on his return from Shoa, but had not arrived at Gondar when I left Gebel Tabor. I have come on a mission from the Aboona of Abyssinia to the English Consul-General in Egypt. The cause is as follows: Captain Cameron, the English Consul, together with seven English missionaries (this number includes Germans), of whose names, on account of their heaviness, I can only remember Stern and Rosenthal, were put in chains and imprisoned by the Sultan. The Aboona interceded with the Sultan for these prisoners, telling His Majesty that it was not just to dismiss the French Consul (M. Lejean) and to retain the English Consul and missionaries in captivity; but the Sultan would not listen to the Aboona. About ten months ago the Sultan left Gondar on an expedition to Tigré. The Aboona accompanied His Majesty, and continued to urge upon him that he would incur blame by retaining the Consul and the missionaries prisoners. The Sultan for a time would not relent; but merely observed that whatever blame attached to his actions he would bear. The Aboona then urged that the prisoners should be released from their chains and confinement and be confided to him, and that he would be responsible for their presence whenever required. The Sultan acceded to this proposal, and sent officers with an order to accompany the Aboona to Gondar, where they were delivered over into his keeping. They were immediately freed from their shackles and allowed to go at large on parole, but under the eyes of guardians. Captain Cameron, Mr. Stern, and Mr. Rosenthal were removed to Gebel Tabor (which is the name of a considerable town, as well as of the mountain on which the town is situated). The others were allowed to remain at Gondar, but were permitted to visit Gebel Tabor under charge of guards—reasonably often. Captain Cameron and Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal were forbidden to leave the town of Gebel Tabor. Upon the return of the Sultan from his expedition in Tigré, the Aboona continued to press upon His Majesty to allow the unconditional freedom and departure of the prisoners. In the end, His Majesty promised the Aboona to allow them to depart when he should receive a letter from the English Consul-General in Egypt, certified by the Aboona, undertaking that the British Government would make no future question of their treatment or detention; the Aboona also holding himself personally responsible for the observance by the British Government of the undertaking by the Consul-General. At the suggestion of Captain Cameron, the Aboona wrote a letter to the Consul-General in Egypt to acquaint him with what had transpired, and charged me to convey it to Cairo, giving me a second letter for Mr. Sckander (Alexander), the British Consular Agent at Massowah, requesting him to write in my favour to the British

Consul at Jeddah, and to obtain for me such assistance as might be requisite for enabling me to reach the British Consul-General in Egypt. I left Gebel Tabor, accompanied by a soldier, with these letters, as I have stated, forty-one days ago. I knew that the Sultan had ordered the whole frontier of Abyssinia from Wahnia (the first town in Abyssinia from the Egyptian frontier near Matemma) to towards Massowah to be watched, and all letters found on travellers to be taken from them, and, in consequence, I took the least-frequented route to Massowah; but, on reaching the ruined monastery known as Weir el Kharban, which is about three days' journey before arriving at Kustan, which, again, is a good eight days' journey short of Massowah, I was stopped by the Sultan's watchers, who, discovering the letters on my person, took them from me, and tore them up into small pieces before my face. I was altogether twenty-four days on the road from Gebel Tabor to Massowah. I staid two days at Massowah, where Mr. Sckander gave me a passage to Jeddah, and a letter to the English Consul (Mr. Calvert) there. I was eight days on the passage. At Jeddah I remained two days with the English Consul, who provided me with a passage in a steamer to Suez, and presented me with 5 dollars for defraying my expenses. After a voyage of four days, I reached Suez yesterday, and came on by railway to Cairo, where I presented myself with a letter given to me by the Consul at Djeddah to the British Consulate. I was told I could not then see the Consul at Cairo; so I gave the letter to the berberry (gate-porter), who took it up stairs, and, on coming down, told me I could sleep for the night near him. This morning the Consul sent a cavass for a donkey, and, returning me the letter I had brought from Jeddah, directed the donkey-boy to take me to the Consul-General's house."

The above is what I have been able to obtain from Abd ul Melek, and, in effect, written down in English from his own words in Arabic.

Cairo, 15 *Ramadan*, 1281 (*February* 11, 1865).

(Signed) F. AYRTON.

No. 457.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received February* 23.)

My Lord, *Cairo, February* 12, 1865.

IN continuation of my previous despatch just closed,* I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, with the view of keeping Abd ul Melek, the messenger of the Aboona of Abyssinia, as much as possible independent of extraneous influence, and to mark my respect for his position by treating him hospitably, I have lodged and boarded him at my expense.

I think it would be well to mark still farther your Lordship's sense of the services rendered by the Aboona, and of the faithful way in which his messenger has performed those entrusted to him—that I should be authorised to transmit a few presents of trifling value to his Eminence, and to bestow a proportional like favour on the messenger; in both cases not to exceed 60*l.* or 70*l.*

Your Lordship will perhaps have the goodness to telegraph in case of this meeting your approval, that the little presents, if necessary, may be prepared in time; so that, on receiving your Lordship's instructions in full, no further delay in dispatching the messenger on his return may ensue.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

No. 458.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received February* 23.)

My Lord, *Cairo, February* 12, 1865, 7 P.M.

SINCE writing the preceding, I have confronted Abd-ul Melek with a gentleman who has been travelling in Abyssinia, and there appears no reason to doubt the man's knowledge of the internal affairs of the country, or the authenticity of his statements. He says that the messenger sent by the English Wakeel (Rassam) who came from Aden, was stopped at Kala, one station from Gondar, and the letter taken from him, and the messenger himself thrown into prison, where he now is. At Massowah, where he would have been on the 27th January, he saw a British man-of-war, but did not think of going on board.

* No. 456.

From a conversation he heard at Massowah between Mr. Sekunder (see his statement) and another gentleman, he inferred that the same Wakeel from Aden had gone to Kassala in Taka, but he is not sure of the person referred to in the conversation. When he left Abyssinia, Theodore was informed that he was only going to Massowah, and it is only by the secret orders of the Aboona that he came on here—which accounts for the great desire he has manifested to return immediately; he prays that the fact of his being in Cairo or that his name may not be so published for the information to reach Theodore, who would, he is afraid, visit him with serious consequences.

I may add, my impression since this morning is that the overture of Theodore has been probably the result of reflection caused by the continued presence of Her Majesty's ship "Victoria," Captain Carpenter, at Massowah.

I would venture to recall to your Lordship's mind that our position in face of Theodore is only this—that the Queen has written him a friendly letter, of which the language does not go further than stating that some persons with the object of disturbing the good feeling subsisting between the King and Her Majesty had informed Her Majesty, that the King had imprisoned her servant Cameron, and some others, and begging him, if there were any truth in the rumour to release them: and that letter, as far as we know, has not been delivered.

Your Lordship will excuse the broken form of this information, but it has come so close on post-time, that I have been obliged to record it piecemeal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

No. 459.

*Mr. Hammond to Mrs. Stern.**

Madam, *Foreign Office, February* 23, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acquaint you it would appear, from information which has reached Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, and which has been this morning received from that officer, that as late as the 2nd of January last, Captain Cameron, and the other Europeans detained in Abyssinia, were so far at liberty as to be relieved from their chains and not to be confined in prison, though kept under strict surveillance. Captain Cameron, Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal were at Gibel Tabor which place they were not allowed to leave; the others were at Gondar, but were allowed to visit Gibel Tabor.

[You will have the goodness to communicate this letter to Mr. Henry Cecil, who seems to be residing in the same house with you.†]

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 460.

Earl Russell to Mr. Colquhoun.

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 27, 1865.

I DID not receive until the 23rd instant, when it was too late to overtake by telegraph to Malta the mail of the 18th instant, your despatch of the 12th instant,‡ inclosing the statement respecting Captain Cameron and his companions in misfortune, which had been made by a messenger who had arrived at Alexandria with a communication to you from the Aboona of Abyssinia.

The telegraphic communication with Alexandria being interrupted, I have had no opportunity of sending you instructions before the mail of to-day.

I have now to state to you that Her Majesty's Government sanctions you returning an answer to the Aboona to the following effect: viz., that if the prisoners are all set free, no further inquiry shall be made, nor reparation demanded.

Her Majesty's Government would wish also that it should be intimated to King Theodore, that the British Government desire to maintain friendly relations with him, but that it would be impossible for them to do so, if he were again to imprison and illtreat any subject of Her Majesty.

I must, however, leave it to you to judge of the time and manner in which this intimation should be conveyed to King Theodore, so as to avoid running any risk of imperilling the lives of Captain Cameron and his companions.

* Similar letters were addressed to Colonel Adair, Mr. Lawrence Kerans, and Captain L. Desborough.
† To Captain Desborough only. ‡ No. 456.

Mr. Rassam will be furnished by this mail for his information and guidance with the substance of this instruction.

I have to add with reference to your despatch of the 12th of February, that I approve of your making the presents to which you refer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 461.

Colonel Adair to Earl Russell.—(Received February 27.)

My Lord, 7, *Audley Square, February* 24, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge, with thanks, a communication from the Foreign Office, dated 23rd instant, relative to Captain Cameron and his companions now prisoners in Abyssinia, which shall be duly communicated to the family.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALEX. SHAFTO ADAIR.

No. 462.

Dr. Kerans to Earl Russell.—(Received February 28.)

My Lord, *South Park, Ahascragh, Co. Galway, February* 25, 1865.

I BEG to return you my most grateful thanks for your kindness in so promptly having the account of the captives in Abyssinia forwarded to me.

The account received by me this day is most satisfactory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LAURENCE C. KERANS.

No. 462*.

Mr. Hammond to Sir E. Lugard.

(Extract.) *Foreign Office, March* 11, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to request that you will move Earl de Grey and Ripon to have the goodness, if they can be spared from Her Majesty's stores, to cause 500 servieeable flint muskets, with their bayonets, to be packed in suitable cases for transport through a country represented to be without practicable roads, and forwarded through Alexandria to the Resident of the Indian Government at Aden.

No. 463.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received March 18.)

Sir, *India Office, March* 17, 1865.

I AM directed by Sir Charles Wood to forward to you, for the information o Earl Russell, the accompanying copy of a letter recently received from Mr. Rassam, now employed on a special mission in Abyssinia, containing the latest intelligence respecting Mr. Consul Cameron and other Europeans held in captivity by King Theodorus.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HERMAN MERIVALE.

Inclosure in No. 463.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, February* 7, 1865.

SINCE the date of my last letter of the 22nd ultimo no intelligence of any importance has reached this from Abyssinia, save some information which was brought down by the servants of one of the Europeans at Debra Tabor, named Bourgon, who said that the King had taken all the European prisoners with him to Shoa, and that Captain Cameron was badly treated; that His Majesty had made him accompany him on foot, and had recently had him severely beaten.

I do not credit this rumour, inasmuch as I had before been informed of the same ill-treatment, and a few days afterwards the whole story was contradicted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 464.

Mr. Hammond to Mr. Colquhoun.

(Extract.) *Foreign Office, March* 23, 1865.

IT is intended to send 500 flint muskets to Aden to be held available as a present to the King of Abyssinia, if required.

No. 465.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received March 27.)

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 11, 1865.

IT was with real satisfaction I received, three days ago, your Lordship's despatch of the 27th ultimo.*

Since my despatches of the 12th ultimo† to your Lordship, I have been carefully examining a number of persons who, by chance, happen to be in this city at this moment, with a view to ascertaining the apparent truth of the messenger, who announces himself as having been sent by the Aboona, and I must give as the result of my inquiries and cross-examinations, my opinion that the story of Abd-ul-Melek is, in all respects, correct, although it be not put together with the ordinary intelligence of an educated man.

Naturally I dwelt on the fact of his not having seen Mr. Rassam when passing Massowah. The treatment he had met with on the road, when his letters were taken from him and torn up, and when he narrowly escaped being sent back as a prisoner to Gondar, saved only by the influence of another priest, had rendered him very cautious of showing himself. Moreover, we gather from careful noting of dates, that he reached Massowah on the 26th of January, and we have ascertained that Mr. Rassam had quitted it on the 25th in the steam-ship "Victoria," then in harbour; he said there was a ship of war there, and I actually find that the "Pantaloon" had arrived and remained during "Victoria's" absence.

Mr. Rassam, it appears, had also, previously to his departure, visited the hot springs (Aileh) about six hours west of Massowah. Abd-ul-Melek seems to have put this circumstance, as he gathered it from the conversation he overheard with that of the departure of the "Victoria," together, and inferred in his own mind that he, Rassam, had gone northwards.

The Iskender, or Segunder, spoken of as an English Consular Agent, proves to be Munzinger, the French Agent. Allowance must be made for a confusion of names having a somewhat similar sound.

M. Munzinger might, nay, ought to have written me by the messenger; he did not do so, but he must have written to others here, and this enables me to account for the fact of Abd-ul-Melek's arrival being known in Cairo; when I discovered this, I readily acceded to his wish to go up the Nile for some days to visit his mother, who resides at Bayaho, near Minieh. Since his return I have had difficulty in keeping him; he has been urgent to take his departure; in fact, he seems to dread the reception he may meet with on his return if his absence be too long prolonged.

I may be mistaken, my Lord, in the man, but I think not; and if I should be so, it is one of the many cases of intrigue we meet with in the East; at least the present course offers an opening I am too glad to avail myself of.

Meantime, firm in my good intention, and most anxious to save a countryman and colleague from a prolongation of sufferings which makes us shudder, and which, I cannot conceal from myself, have produced a very unpleasant effect on opinion here, I shall act up to your Lordship's kind permission† to take every step in my power to free the captives, using every precaution not to interfere in the least with the action of Mr. Rassam.

I shall prepare a letter for the Aboona, as instructed by your Lordship, and shall accompany it with a few presents to render it the more acceptable. My letter will be in English, and to guard against any distortion of its sense I shall have it translated into Arabic, the native language of the Aboona, by my own dragoman. Should it prove successful, I can, if afterwards desirable, in acknowledging his services, request his Eminence to transmit to the King the intimation alluded to in the latter part of your Lordship's despatch. To do so at present would only irritate His Majesty, and might even prove a source of danger to Captain Cameron.

As Mr. Rassam has been furnished with the substance of your Lordship's instruc-

* No. 460. † Nos. 456 and 457.

tions to me, I think it will be best I should not write to him, in the uncertainty of where he may be.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

No. 466.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Secretary to Government, Bombay.—(Communicated by India Office, March 27, 1865.)

Sir, *Aden, March 5, 1865.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the "Victoria" came in to-day from Massowah bringing the intelligence given in the accompanying copies of letter, &c., from Mr. Rassam.

2. Though no communication has been received by that gentleman from the King, the fact of letters having arrived from Captain Cameron and others, is something gained, and I hope on the return of the King from Shoa, we may hear of intelligence more favourable to the unfortunate captives.

3. Should King Theodorus persist in maintaining silence, and should no other instructions be received from England, I shall direct Mr. Rassam to return to Aden on May 1st to await further orders.

4. Nothing certain is known about the success or otherwise of King Theodorus against the rebels at Shoa.

5. Copies of these letters will be sent to the Secretary of State for India, for communication to the Foreign Office by the homeward mail expected here on the 7th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 466.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, March 2, 1865.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the private messenger whom I had sent up on December 28 last to Captain Cameron with rice, sugar, and money, has come back, and brought with him four notes from the prisoners; two from Consul Cameron to me; one from the Rev. Mr. Stern to his wife; and the fourth from Mrs. Rosenthal to her mother.

2. The notes of the former, which are nearly alike, I have copied word for word for the information of Government, and I annex to this letter, marked A. The notes of the other two I send herewith for transmission to their destination.

3. I also send a short statement, B, of the messenger to show how he contrived to reach the prisoners, and what Captain Cameron had instructed him to tell me about my going up to the King.

4. The messenger having informed me that Captain Cameron wished me to send him some things, and about 1,000 dollars to pay some debts which he had incurred since his imprisonment, I supplied him with the requisite articles, but I felt somewhat reluctant to intrust him with so much money, fearing lest the greatness of the amount might excite the cupidity of the rapacious rebels or others who are now infesting the roads leading to Magdala, whereby my endeavours to keep up a regular communication with the prisoners might be frustrated, and lead to no end of trouble hereafter. I have, therefore, given him 250 dollars, and told him to ask Captain Cameron when he had an opportunity to write to me again to inform me of his wants. In my note to that gentleman, which I sent up by the same messenger on the 25th ultimo, I also asked him if I could do anything more for him.

5. I have furthermore written to Mr. Flad at Gaffat (who has been rendering pecuniary assistance to Captain Cameron), to authorise him to draw upon me for 300 dollars, to pay himself for what he had expended upon the prisoners, and which he might be able to employ in future for their benefit.

6. In paragraph 8 of my letter of January 22,* I mentioned that I had written to Messrs. Flad and Schimper at Gaffat, and requested them to send me some intelligence

* No. 442.

regarding the state of the prisoners, and to inform me what chance there was for their liberation. To those letters I have received interesting answers of which I send herewith copies in German marked C, with their translation into English marked D.

7. There is one passage in one of the above letters which I cannot reconcile with the general opinion of those who know the King's habits and caprice well, nor with the repeated injunctions of Consul Cameron. Mr. Schimper (according to the translation), says, "that as the Emperor Theodorus on ascending the Throne caused to be proclaimed that he prohibited no one from entering his kingdom, it can be accepted," he concludes "that you can come simply up." It is well known that the King has changed his mind ever since he became the supreme Ruler over Abyssinia more than hundred times, and even Mr. Schimper himself admits "that the instructions of His Imperial Majesty can change in time," and have certainly changed since the intrusion of Count de Bisson with his forty European adventurers in Abyssinia in 1862, and the imprisonment of all the Europeans who called themselves English or French.

8. It is worthy of remark that the King has never been heard to say since the imprisonment of Consul Cameron, that he would not release the prisoners until he received the Queen's reply; on the contrary, he made up his mind very often since then to release them, but before he fulfilled his gracious promise something took place which made him change his intention. I was told that one day (after, I believe, he received my second letter) he actually mentioned the hour when he purposed to release the prisoners, but as ill luck would have it, about an hour or two before the time came, some treachery was discovered in his camp. He was so exasperated that he swore, instead of lessening the number of the prisoners, he would increase it: whereupon he imprisoned some of his Ministers, and a number of his leading men whom he fancied to have been implicated in the treason.

9. It is very curious that when the Europeans at Gaffat went to the King in the month of November last to intercede for the liberation of the prisoners, he did not mention to them the Queen's letter (as he knew very well that it was waiting for him at Massowah, and he had nothing to do but send for it), but said, according to Mr. Flad's version, "I will first see what the English at Massowah and the French in the Bogos (meaning Count de Bisson and his party) will do to me; it is possible I will make friends again."

10. This answer makes me suspect that the King would sooner give faith to any story told to him than release the prisoners, because surely he cannot but believe that our Queen would write to him in friendly terms (which I am certain he knows to be the case), or I offer to go up to him myself if we had intended to use coercive measures against him.

11. The fact of the case is, he wants to show his dignity by keeping me waiting here, otherwise his original reason for imprisoning Captain Cameron was not altogether for what he calls being "despised" by the British Government; and when he set forth the non-arrival of the Queen's answer as the cause, he only did so for an excuse. Certainly the maltreatment of Mr. Stern and his imprisonment with Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal, which took place long before the arrest and confinement of Captain Cameron, had nothing to do with the non-arrival of the Queen's letter, nor indeed was the imprisonment of the French Consul M. Lejean (afterward released), nor of Messrs. Bardel and Kerans. It is not customary in Abyssinia, nor with King Therodorus, to imprison the followers or friends of the offender, and this makes me suspect that the King had more reasons for imprisoning so many Europeans besides the non-receipt of the Queen's letter. Government is aware that King Theodorus had a great number of the prisoners released (I believe only Germans) after they were confined with the present captives.

12. In my letter to Mr. Flad I despatched to him the day before yesterday, I requested him and Mr. Schimper to use their best exertions in finding out for me the real cause of the King's delay in answering me. I have offered to pay the travelling expenses of any of the Europeans at Gaffat who could venture to the Emperor's camp, and obtain for me an answer to my letter.

13. I intend to write once more to the King upon the subject of my stay here, and as soon as I obtain a trustworthy messenger to send up, I will despatch the letter by him.

14. In case I do not receive a reply to any of my letters to the King before May next, I beg to be informed whether the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs wishes me to spend another hot season here, and endeavour to attain the object of his Lordship's desire through some other means, or return to my duties at Aden. In case of the latter, I shall appoint a trustworthy person here to receive any communicatio which the King may ultimately send, and transmit it to Aden for disposal.

15. Up to the date of this letter no news of any moment has reached this place about the movements of King Theodorus. He is said to be still in Shoa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 466.

(A.)

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.—(*Received by Mr. Rassam, February* 21, 1865.)

Magdala, January 17, 1865.

WE have received the Memorandum* about the letter† from England. Your two letters have reached. We thought that the second‡ had obtained an answer. Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal and child, Stern, McKelvie, Bardel, Macraire, David Pietro, and Kerans are here. The bearer will give particulars. We are all well, thank God, and have been supplied with the means of livelihood from Gaffat,§ so that we have had no suffering to speak of on that score. Kerans was ill all the winter, but is strong again now. Write to his father, Dr. Kerans,‖ of Galway, to say he is all right. Things here baffle all calculation. You will get all news elsewhere. We must keep on hoping the best, I suppose. Thanks dear Rassam, for everything. Remember me to dear Playfair,¶ and write a line to Hertslet** to say I am still alive, and reward the people who accompany your messengers.

Yours truly,
(Signed) C. D. C.

Magdala, January 17, 1865.

WE have received the note. We thought your second letter had had an answer. Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal (the latter not in chains), Stern, McKelvie, Bardel, Macraire, David Pietro, and Kerans are here. Mrs. Rosenthal's child is well. We are all in good health, and have had the means of obtaining food from Gaffat. Write to Kerans' father, Dr. Kerans, of Galway, to say his son is strong again. He was ill during the winter. The climate here is good, so we hope the best; but it is wearing work. Remember me to Playfair, and write to Hertslet to say I am well, and doing my best to hold on to the end. Let Dr. Kerans write to McKelvie's friends to say I am taking care of him. He is in strong health. God bless you, dear Rassam.

Yours ever,
(Signed) C. D. C.

(B.)

Précis of the intelligence brought down by Waldee Mariani bin Fantah, the Private Messenger who was sent up with Provisions to Consul Cameron on the 28th of November, 1864.

I left this place on the 28th November last with two donkeys laden with rice, sugar, and fifty dollars, which you gave me to take up to Consul Cameron.

On reaching Azaga, in Hamazeyn, on the 4th day, I found that Shakit, the wife of Dejaj Maraad (the ex-Governor-General of Hamazeyn), was going to join her husband, who was in captivity with King Theodorus. As I knew that the said Dejaj Maraad was confined in the King's camp not far from the European prisoners, I thought it a good opportunity to accompany her suite; so after I waited three days at Azaja, we left for Debra Tabor, and went up by way of Sacoota. We reached the latter place in thirteen days, and on arriving there we heard that the King had gone into Shoa, and that he had left all the prisoners, both Europeans and natives, at Magdala; so we continued our journey thitherward, and reached Labubola, in the district of Lasta, in three days. There we met Wakshama Gobazay, one of the chief leaders of the rebels.

* The note which I had sent to Mr. Flad, alluded to in my letter of December 2, paragraph 3. See Inclosure 2 in No. 436.
† Queen's letter to King Theodore.
‡ The second letter I had sent to King Theodore, through the Naib of Arkeeko.
§ Supplied by Mr. Flad.
‖ Of Abascragh, Ireland. I have written to him.
¶ The Political Agent and Consul at Zanzibar.
** Of the Foreign Office. I have written to him.

As Dejaj Maraad is very much respected by the rebels, of course his wife was well received by the present Chief of Lasta, Wakshama Gobazay. After we spent two days with them, we started off and reached Lalamjee, below Magdala, in eleven days. I had informed Shakit of my secret service, and when she sent to her husband Maraad to inform him of her arrival, she likewise apprized him of my business. Maraad, who has always shown a great friendship for the Consul, acquainted him with my arrival. The Consul asked him to keep the affair private, and to oblige him by allowing me to enter the citadel as one of his servants, which request he most willingly complied with.

As soon as the Dejaj got us permission from the guard to join him, we went up, and I took up my quarters with the imprisoned Chief. Afterwards the Dejaj consulted with the Consul as to the safest way of my having an interview with him. They agreed that the Consul was to feign sickness, and that I should take some mead for him from the Dejaj. Accordingly I repaired to the Consul's quarters the next morning, and delivered to him your Memorandum and the note you had written to Mr. Flad. He told me that as he wished me to return to Massowah at once, he would forward the note by one of his servants. I delivered to him all your messages, and he asked me to tell you in return to take care not to go up to Abyssinia before you receive an answer from the King, or to wait for a more propitious time.

Every prisoner is now chained singly, or their fetters have been transferred from their wrists to their legs.

The mountain on which the prisoners are placed is about five miles in circumference, and very high. It would take a good walker at least an hour and a-half to walk up to the top. There is only one narrow way to go up to it. There are about 3,000 men garrisoning it. There is abundance of good water, but all the food has to be obtained from below.

Aboona Salama, the Bishop of Abyssinia, is a prisoner at Magdala, but he is not chained. It is not true that Masheesha, the son of King Theodorus, is in prison. He is with his father.

When I left Magdala the King was still in Shoa, where he had been engaged in fighting, but no one knew the result, excepting that he had lost a great number of his followers.

I heard from Ibrahim, brother of Samuel, the King's steward, that your messengers were staying with his brother, and that His Majesty had made it known that as the English had kept him waiting two years for an answer to his letter, he would likewise make them wait at Massowah the same time.

Consul Cameron gave me the notes I brought down to you three days after my arrival at Magdala, but I could not leave till seven days after, because the Consul had asked Dejaj Maraad to send some of his followers with me. He knew that by my having such men with me I should be taken both by the Royalists and by the rebels as a follower of Dejaj Maraad, the latter Chief sent two men with me who accompanied me hither, and they intend to return with me to Magdala.

In consequence of the general insecurity of the roads just now all over Abyssinia, travellers have to use every precaution to guard against being made prisoners by the King's followers, or plundered by the rebels. This is the reason why it has taken me so long to go up and come down.

Before me at Massowah, this 22nd of February, 1865.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

(C.)

Mr. Flad to Mr. Rassam.

Sir, *Gaffat, January 26, 1865.*

Your letter of December 26 I received on the 26th January from your servant who had two months ago been with me. As on that occasion he brought no letter from you, I did not trust him with any written communication for you, *i.e.*, because I could not trust the servant, and am myself obliged to use all precautions, being myself a prisoner, although I at that time much wished to give you accurate information, as this man has now brought me a letter from you. I will, as far as advisable, answer your questions. The prisoners are Captain Cameron and two English subjects, and two other Europeans all in the Consul's service; further, two Missionaries of the London Jewish Missionary Society, viz., Mr. Stern and Mr. Rosenthal, the latter with a wife and child.

His wife is an Englishwoman; further, a Frenchman named Bardel, who was in the service of the Emperor of Abyssinia, by whom he was put in prison for personal offences. Mr. Stern was seized in October 1863 on his journey from Gondar to Massowah, where he happened to meet the King. He was beaten and brought back by the King in his carriage, and all his journals were translated. Among Mr. Stern's papers was found a report by M. Rosenthal which was likewise translated. The translation was made by the above-named Frenchman, named Bardel, and not in favour of the Europeans. The translated papers of both Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal contained facts and descriptions touching the Emperor's mode of government, which greatly incensed him and induced him to seize all the Missionaries of the London and Scotch Societies, and to confiscate their property. As the Emperor, however, still expected to receive an answer to his letter addressed to the Queen of England, he released, besides Messrs. Rosenthal and Stern, all the Missionaries, and returned them their property. When Mr. Stern was imprisoned, I received a communication from Captain Cameron, begging me to come to him and assist him in endeavouring to effect the release of Mr. Stern. The Consul did everything that under the circumstances could be done. I myself went without being summoned to His Majesty to use my influence in favour of Mr. Stern, but could not affect an alleviation of his imprisonment. All our endeavours to effect his total release utterly failed.

In November, 1863, Captain Cameron received a communication from the Minister of Foreign Affairs acknowledging the receipt of His Majesty's letter of 1862, and of the Consul's Report. In the same letter the Consul received the order from the Ministry to proceed immediately to his station at Massowah, a circumstance which he reported in a respectful and polite manner to the Emperor. As the Consul had received a reply to his letters, which was denied to Emperor Theodorus, he felt himself not only much hurt, but even slighted by the English Government, and considered all friendly relations broken off.

From this time the Consul and all the Missionaries were invited to the Royal camps, where we were guarded. Five weeks after the arrival of the Consul's letters he forwarded a modest and polite petition to His Majesty for permission to return to Massowah, in accordance with the orders of his Government. Hereupon we were all called in the presence of the Emperor.

The Consul was asked if he were the Ambassador of the Queen of England, to which question he replied in the affirmative. The Emperor then said, "Why does your Government despise me? Have I not sent a letter through you to your Queen? Why do I not get an answer? Why does the Queen of England slight me? Am I not Emperor in my country as she is Queen in England? Thereto the Consul replied that he felt convinced that his Government would answer His Imperial Majesty's letter. Well, replied the Emperor, until I receive an answer to my letter to the Queen of England I shall detain you as my prisoners. Upon this the Consul and all his people were bound. Among these were also two Germans, Chasseurs of the Duke of Saxe Coburg Gotha, Messrs. Shiller and Essler, and two Missionaries of the Scotch Jewish Mission, Messrs. Steigers and Brandeis; I, and Mr. Cornelius Josephnow, Missionaries of the London Society, were (as standing under British protection) likewise put in chains. I, more especially, because I had received the Consul as a guest in my house during the rains, and had frequently served as an interpreter of his letters to His Majesty. We all remained together from January 3 to February 3, when we Germans, through the intercession of our friends at Gaffat, were liberated by His Majesty and brought to Gaffat where we were obliged to remain, anxiously awaiting the liberation of the Consul, which would ensure our freedom also.

Shortly after our liberation the Consul and two of his fellow-prisoners were put to the torture to force from them confessions as to who had given Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal the above-mentioned information respecting the Emperor. The prisoners during the rains had to pass these evil times in close confinement, while the food they received from the Emperor was so scant that they certainly would have died of hunger if I had not been able to furnish them with money from this place.

It is still much to be feared that unless speedy relief arrives from England, these people will perish of want and misery should they have to pass another rainy season in chains. It is a mercy that hitherto I have been able to provide them with money. Should (as might possibly occur) this be betrayed, I should be no longer able to afford them assistance. May God avert such a calamity, for in that case these people must become the victims of starvation.

About three months ago His Majesty the Emperor passed through this place, and brought the princess with him. The German gentlemen at Gaffat went several times to the Emperor and begged him on their knees to liberate the Consul and the rest of

the prisoners, but without effect. The Emperor said, "I will first see what the English at Massowah and the French at Bogos mean to do. If possible I will effect a reconciliation." The Emperor sent the prisoners to the hill fort of Magdala, where chains were again put on their feet, and where (as the Consul shortly wrote) they were treated as the commonest Abyssinian prisoners.

From sure sources I have heard that both your letters have reached His Majesty. The reason why you receive no answer is, that the King considers himself slighted by the English Government and wishes to retaliate.

To your question "What can be done for the release of the prisoners?" I can give you no better advice than to send Her Majesty's letter to the Emperor. But the letter must be signed by the Queen, or have the seal of the realm attached, or it will not be acknowledged as a legal document. Should this proceeding prove ineffectual, your Government will best know what it has to do to decide the question. I have to request that you will on no account mention my name to the Abyssinian spies by whom you are surrounded, nor to the Emperor. If it were suspected that I corresponded with you, I with my wife and children would be instantly hanged. I am always at your service, but please to write to me in German. The German language is the safest here.

With respect and esteem,
(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

(D.)

M. Schimper to Mr. Rassam.

Gaffat, January 26, 1865.

Your letter of the 26th ultimo reached me to-day, and I hasten to reply. Mr. Cameron arrived in Abyssinia in July (August) 1862, accredited to His Ethiopian Majesty Theodorus. He was received with distinction and friendship, and on taking leave at the end of the year was requested to forward a letter from the Emperor Theodorus to Her Majesty the Queen of England and to return with the answer. Mr. Cameron duly forwarded the letter, and after its despatch returned, in 1863, to Gondar, hoping shortly to receive the answer there. In this way he wished to gain time, as a native carrier (runner) in these countries makes quicker progress than a foreign traveller. The hope of Mr. Cameron was not realized. After long waiting he received, instead of the answer, an order from the Government to return to Massowah without delay. Mr. Cameron now found himself in a difficult position. Trusting to the friendly feeling of England towards Abyssinia, he had promised the Emperor Theodorus a favourable answer. In accordance with his duty, he was obliged to acquaint His Ethiopian Majesty with the order he had received. The Abyssinian Emperor felt himself aggrieved. England had sent him a Consul, and when he replied to this attention by writing, he received no answer. He regarded this silence not only as the suspension of all friendly relations, but as a personal slight. Mr. Cameron, who was regarded as the bearer of desired political relations, was put in chains, in which he yet lingers.

Permit me to inform you that in this case there exists a misunderstanding on both sides. Here, where for centuries the temporary Potentate has been absolute autocrat in his dominions, in this country, which has never had political relations with foreign countries, they cannot understand that in other states a Minister or other Member of the Government can be nominated to enter into important political relations with other countries by the head of the Government; they therefore cannot understand why answers on such important subjects should not always be quickly sent. The state of things in this country has not been sufficiently taken into consideration in England, and in the mean time Mr. Cameron is the victim of this misunderstanding. Your question is, What are the means to effect the release of the prisoners?

The arrival of a letter from your Queen.

As the Emperor Theodorus made known, on commencing his reign, that he would prevent no one from visiting his country, it may be concluded that you may come without ceremony, but you will return without effecting your purpose, or may possibly share the fate of Mr. Cameron, as his intercessor, if you arrive without a letter from Her Majesty the Queen of England. You give me to understand that you have a communication from your Queen to present; this, as before said, would be the means of setting all our prisoners free. But there remains to observe that a letter of this kind, to be considered authentic here, must, in accordance with the custom of the country, have the seal of the realm affixed. Although I am only giving utterance to a personal

opinion, for whose perfect correctness I cannot be held responsible, inasmuch as the views of His Ethiopic Majesty may in the meantime change, yet it will be possible for you to take it in the meantime into consideration. I add the presumed opinion that His Ethiopic Majesty will answer no letter respecting the prisoners before receiving a letter from Her Majesty the Queen of England,—an autographic letter, of the authenticity of which there can be no question. At the time when Mr. Cameron was arrested, all Europeans in his employ met the same fate, viz., two young Englishmen in his service, named Clarence and Richard; a Frenchman from Alsace, named Makerer, who, from want, had taken service with Mr. Cameron; an Italian named Petros, who has been many years in Abyssinia without trade or object, and who often went to Mr. Cameron's house appealing to his generosity. These four men, who are regarded as Mr. Cameron's dependents, are, as he is, in chains in the hill fort of Magdala. Mr. Cameron was arrested on January 3, 1864, and at the same time all Europeans then in Gondar were put in durance, because they had, as in duty bound, frequently visited him. They are Messrs. Flad, Steigers, and Brandeis, all three missionaries of the English Society for the Conversion of Abyssinian Jews; further, the two chasseurs of His Highness the reigning Duke of Saxe Coburg Gotha, named Essler and Schiller. The latter five were after a time liberated, but ordered to Gaffat, where they must remain, probably until the solution of the Cameron question. The Duke of Coburg Gotha left his two chasseurs with Cameron, or under his surveillance, who, through interest in them, had included them among his dependents. About two months prior to this, Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal, missionaries of the English Missionary Society, were put in irons, because they had written against the Emperor and his system of Government. Their letters were intercepted and translated by a Frenchman named Bardel, who came to Abyssinia in the year 1862, and attached himself as a servant to the Emperor Theodorus. In this capacity he was sent to Paris, and, on his return, to the Turkish Pasha in Sennaar. As his endeavour had not proved in accordance with the desires of His Ethiopic Majesty, and he had probably also excited suspicion, he was put in irons, and is at present in the hill fort of Magdala. I only speak of this man to give you to understand that he has no particular interest.

There are therefore imprisoned at Magdala:—

Mr. Cameron and four servants	5
Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal	2
Bardel	1
	8

Their position must be a painful one. Through Mr. Flad, a little money has been sent them. In conclusion, the observation that at present His Majesty the Emperor Theodorus is out on a campaign against the Gallas, but is soon expected to return. Regretting that circumstances prevent me from writing to-day more explicitly, I beg to offer my services.

(Signed) DR. G. H. GUILL. SCHIMPER.
(Baron de Furstenbach.)

No. 467.

*Mr. Hammond to Mrs. Stern.**

Madam, *Foreign Office, March* 27, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acquaint you that copies of two papers, dated Magdala, 17th January,† which Captain Cameron found means of forwarding to Mr. Rassam at Massowah, have been this morning received from the latter gentleman, in a despatch dated Massowah, 2nd March.

Captain Cameron states, that Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal and child, Messrs. Stern, McKelvie, Bardel, Macraire, David Pietro, and Kerans, were with him. They were all well. Mr. Kerans was ill all the winter, but was then strong again.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

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* Similar letters were addressed to Colonel Adair, Captain Desborough, Dr. Kerans, and Mr. Caley.
† Inclosure 2 in No 466.

No. 468.

*Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(Received April 1.)**

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, March 31, 1865.*

WITH reference to the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 13th February,† and to the interview with which your Lordship favoured me on the 17th of the same month, I now beg leave to renew the offer of my services, with a view to the liberation of Mr. Consul Cameron and the other British captives in Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 469.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received April 5.)

My Lord, *Cairo, March 21, 1865.*

IN continuation of my despatch of the 11th instant,‡ I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy and translation of my letter to the Aboona of Abyssinia.

We have had various reports of the state of things in Abyssinia, differing much in their tenor, but almost all concur in saying the captives were "still in irons." As these reached me, I continued to cross-question Abd-ul-Melek. The result on my mind is the same as I at first experienced, that the Copt's story is true and consistent; informed of the conflicting reports, he persisted in saying he saw Captain Cameron with the Aboona without irons. Of course he knows naught of what may have since transpired, with one so capricious as the King is reported to be.

One traveller, a certain Abbe Stella, who had succeeded in escaping from Galaat knew Abd-ul-Melek as a confidential friend of the Aboona, had seen him previously to his (Abd-ul-Melek's) departure for Massowah, but did not know he was charged with any mission to me.

Under these circumstances I have determined on following out my original plan of giving faith to Abd-ul-Melek and sending him back. He leaves in a few days, as soon as I hear of a boat for Djeddah. He will be consigned to Mr. Calvert's care, who will pay his passage back to Massowah, from which place he must trust to his own cunning to make his way to wherever the Aboona may be.

I consider myself bound to leave no stone unturned to gain our end, for I much fear Mr. Rassam's mission may prove unsuccessful from many causes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

Inclosure in No. 469.

Mr. Colquhoun to the Aboona Salama.

Most Reverend Sir, *Cairo, March , 1865.*

I HAVE had the satisfaction to receive, from your follower Abd-ul-Melek, the friendly communication which you desired to make to me in writing, but which, not to displease His Majesty the Sultan, only reached me verbally, and on my part I salute your Eminence in peace and good-will, and in the name of the Holy Trinity and of our common Christianity, invoke blessings on your head, and favour for you in the sight of His Majesty, and pray that the Good Shepherd may long keep you, so that you may be able faithfully and profitably to minister to the large flock intrusted by Him to your spiritual guidance, and by the same grace, and His Majesty's favour, to watch over the safety of my friends, our Consul Cameron, and others who are in Abyssinia.

Your servant has already caused me to know the kind interest your Eminence has shown on behalf of these friends who have now been absent from us in Abyssinia a long time, and whose return, by your Eminence's further assistance with His Majesty, we shall be glad to welcome.

* Laid before Parliament, 1865. † No. 447. ‡ No. 465.

I beg you to accept the expression of my deep gratitude for all the kindness and Christian charity manifested to our friends, and to continue to assure His Majesty of my best wishes for his rule and prosperity.

I hear it has been supposed that questions might be raised about the detention of our Consul and friends in Abyssinia. Should such a supposition have been entertained, I hope you will dissipate it, and, on my word, as that of the Agent and Consul-General here of Her Britannic Majesty, inform His Majesty the Sultan that my Royal Mistress, the Queen, does not desire to make any demands upon His Majesty or act otherwise than in accordance with the most friendly dispositions towards him.

In reliance, therefore, on a like desire on the part of His Majesty, whom we all know to be a soldier, brave, generous, and hospitable, I trust His Majesty will, on your making known to him the sentiments expressed in this letter, at once order to be removed any difficulties which may have beset the return of our Consul and the other persons referred to, and dismiss them with honour and satisfaction.

I have forwarded to Massowah, to be thence taken charge of by Abd-ul-Melek, in token of my esteem and friendship for you personally, a few presents, mentioned in the list written below, of which I ask your Eminence's acceptance.

Trusting that God may always inspire the counsels of the Sultan and have His Majesty, and your Eminence as the Spiritual Pastor of His Majesty's subjects, in his merciful keeping,

I subscribe myself, with great sincerity, your Eminence's
much obliged and faithful servant,
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

His Eminence the most Reverend the
Archbishop Metropolitan of Abyssinia.
(L.S.)

List of Presents.

1 Leather portmanteau with two extra straps, cover and travelling-sling, containing:—
1 New Testament, Arabic, with vocalised letters, bound in morocco gilt, in case.
1 New Testament, Arabic, with concordance.
1 Archbishop's black scarf.
1 White silk napkin, with which to hold cross.
2 Pieces of Syrian black silk, with yellow stripe for dresses.
2 Ditto of Trebizond cloth.
2 Ditto of English long cloth.
2 Pairs of red leather shoes.
20 Box-wood spoons.
1 Pair of amber mouth-pieces for pipes in case.
30 Pipe bowls (packed in small box).
12 Spare wooden tubes for mouth-pieces (in tin case).

1 Long wooden case with slings, containing:—
2 Jasmine pipes.
6 Wires for cleaning pipes and tubes of mouth-pieces.

1 Bale of Latakieh tobacco packed in canvass.

No. 470.

The Marquis of Hartington to Mr. Hammond.—(*Received April* 6.)

Sir,

War Office, April 3, 1865.

IN reference to your letter of the 11th ultimo,* respecting 500 flint muskets to be forwarded through Alexandria to Aden, I am directed by Earl de Grey and Ripon to acquaint you, for the information of Earl Russell, that these arms, complete with bayonets and scabbards, are now packed and ready for issue in 100 cases, the total weight of which amounts to 80 cwt. 1 qr. and 12 lb., and the tonnage required nine tons light.

I am to request you will state whether it is Earl Russell's wish that the cases should be shipped by Peninsular and Oriental Company's Steamer, and whether their contents

* No. 462*.

should be marked on the outside, in addition to the address, viz: "The Resident of the India Government, Aden."

I have, &c.
(Signed) HARTINGTON.

No. 471.

Captain Desborough to Mr. Hammond.—(Received April 6.)

Sir, *Reading, April 5,* 1865.

WITH reference to your* letters under date 23rd February and 27th March last,† I beg to forward an extract from the "Pall Mall Gazette" of the 1st instant, by which it would appear that the unfortunate captives in Abyssinia had not, up to 17th January last, been relieved from their chains.

With regard to the means of obtaining the release of the prisoners, may I be permitted to suggest, that in dealing with an Asiatic or African Sovereign, it is usual to propitiate him with presents. In the case of King Theodore, I humbly think that he not only requires presents, but that an English gentleman should be the bearer of them —this he requires to sooth his wounded dignity. The want of these two elements may account for Mr. Rassam's failure in his mission. I trust you will not think me presumptuous in thus offering my opinion, considering the deep interest I feel in one of the captives.

I have, &c.
(Signed) L. DESBOROUGH.

Inclosure in No. 471.

Extract from the "Pall Mall Gazette" of April 1.

NEWS FROM THE CAPTIVES IN ABYSSINIA.—A few days ago we informed our readers that the captives in Abyssinia had found means to communicate with the British Agent at Massowah, and that amongst their communications were a letter from the Rev. Mr. Stern to his wife, and one from Mrs. Rosenthal to her mother. We have now received a copy of Mr. Stern's letter. It is written from the hill fortress, or Amba, of Magdala, and is touching enough to earn for the prisoners a little pity, though it is obvious (to our shame) that after 18 months of unheeded misery, these poor creatures have ceased to rely upon the "indignation" or the help of their countrymen.

"My dear Charlotte, "*Amba Magdala, Southern Abyssinia, January* 17, 1865.

"Nearly 16 months of almost unparalleled sufferings have now rolled over me. That I am not mad, sick, or dead, must be entirely attributed to the promises of our Heavenly Father in which I confided, and to the visible interposition of a gracious Providence, which, under the most trying circumstances, I experienced. August 19, 1864, a letter arrived from the British Government; and as it was couched in the most friendly terms, we thought that it would satisfy the King and effect our liberation. Our hopes were however doomed to disappointment. More than 2 months ago, Captain Cameron, his 4 European servants, a Frenchman of the name of Bardel, Mr. Rosenthal, his wife, and myself, together with about 150 native prisoners, were conducted in chains to this Amba. Mrs. Rosenthal, though regarded as a prisoner, has no fetters, but every one else has from 15 to 20 pounds of chain attached to his legs.

"How long this misery will yet last it is almost impossible to conjecture. I do not despair of deliverance; and if you and other kind friends continue their intercessions at the Throne of Grace, I cherish the hope that this wrathful severity towards harmless missionaries and a well-disposed Consul will yet subserve the interests of civilization and the advancement of Christ's kingdom. We are all well; my mind and nerves are only a little unhinged.

"God bless you and the dear children.

"Your imprisoned and suffering husband,
(Signed) "HENRY A. STERN."

This letter Mr. Layard may as well extract and lay by in darkness with other documents relating to the matter which have reached him from time to time since the

* Nos 459 and 467

end of 1863. Probably he sees the letter here for the first time. It is at least true that its publication has been prohibited by certain persons. What reasons they had for the prohibition, seeing how simple, how pious, how touching a letter it is, we must leave our readers to guess at present. Meanwhile, we wish all those whom it may concern distinctly to understand that Mrs. Stern is in no way responsible for the copy which has come into our hands.

No doubt the letter from the British Government which Mr. Stern describes as having reached King Theodorus was one sent from Mr. Rassam, the Envoy at Massowah, and not an official letter from England.

No. 472.

*Major Leveson to Earl Russell.—(Received April 6.)**

My Lord, 6, *Lansdown Terrace West, Brighton, April* , 1865.

I HAVE the honour to offer my services to proceed to Abyssinia for the purpose of negotiating the release of Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul, and the other persons now in confinement in that country, should your Lordship require a volunteer for such an undertaking.

Being accustomed to adventurous enterprises, having a good knowledge of Oriental languages, and understanding the character of the people, I believe that I should be able to obtain the liberation of the captives without any very great risk to myself; at any rate I shall be only too glad to make the attempt, and in case your Lordship should see fit to entrust me with the mission, no efforts shall be wanting on my part to attain success.

I can refer your Lordship to the Secretary of State for the Colonies for any information as to my services, I having only lately returned from the west coast of Africa, on account of a severe wound received in a skirmish near Lagos, where I was Colonial Secretary.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. A. LEVESON.

No. 473.

Lord Dufferin to Mr. Hammond.—(Received April 7.)

Sir, *India Office, April* 7, 1865.

WITH reference to Lord Wodehouse's letter of the 16th of June, 1864,† in which it was stated that Sir Charles Wood was willing to place Mr. Rassam at the disposal of the Foreign Office, with a view to his being employed on a special mission to Massowah and Gondar, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acquaint you that a letter has been received from the Government of India requesting the confirmation of Her Majesty's Government to an allowance of 400 rupees per mensem, which has been granted to Mr. Rassam, in addition to his pay of 800 rupees, during the time that he may be so employed; and I am desired to state that this extra allowance, and any other extraordinary expenses which may be incurred on account of this mission, will be charged against the Imperial revenues.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 474.

Mr. Hammond to Captain Desborough.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 8, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant‡ suggesting that some English gentleman should be sent to Abyssinia with presents for King Theodore, in order to obtain the liberation of Captain Cameron and the other captives; and I am to state to you in reply that the friends of the captives

* Laid before Parliament, 1865. † No. 409. ‡ No. 471.

may depend on every exertion being used to effect their liberation, which Her Majesty's Government deem to be most calculated for that object.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 475.

Mr. Hammond to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 8, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo,* and to thank you for your renewed offer of services in the matter of procuring the liberation of Captain Cameron and other captives in Abyssinia.

His Lordship will be glad to see you again after the 20th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 476.

Mr. Murray to Major Leveson.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 8, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter† offering your services with a view to obtaining the release of Captain Cameron and the other captives in Abyssinia; and in reply I am to convey to you his Lordship's thanks for your offer, and to state to you that he has no present occasion to accept it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 477.

Earl Russell to Mr. Colquhoun.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 10, 1865.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 21st ultimo,‡ respecting Captain Cameron and the other captives, and I have to state to you that I approve the letter you addressed to the Aboona of Abyssinia on that subject, a translation of which is inclosed in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 478.

Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(*Received April* 18.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, April* 17, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Hammond's letter of the 8th instant,§ intimating to me your Lordship's desire to see me again on the subject of my renewed offer of services, with a view to the liberation of Captain Cameron and the other captives in Abyssinia; and in reply I beg leave to say that I shall be happy to wait on your Lordship whenever you may be pleased to command my attendance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

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* No. 468. † No. 472. ‡ No. 469. § No. 475.

No. 479.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(*Received April* 22.)

Sir, *Aden, March* 26, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to state, for the information of Earl Russell, that the despatches from the Foreign Office, dated 17th February last,* reached me here on the 15th instant, and as the steamer "Victoria" was then lying in harbour ready, I thought it best to send her off at once with the amended letter from Her Majesty to King Theodorus, to ensure its reaching Mr. Rassam at Massowah, and to enable him, if he had an opportunity to start with it for up-country without further delay, leaving the despatch of the officer to join him for the next opportunity.

2. The "Victoria" left this on the afternoon of the 15th, and returned yesterday bringing intelligence from Mr. Rassam down to the 21st instant. Copy of his last Report to me is appended, and the first letter from Her Majesty is returned herewith as requested in your letter of the 17th ultimo.

3. The "Victoria" will leave again for Massowah to-morrow evening, and by her I am sending Lieutenant Prideaux, Third Assistant Resident here, to join Mr. Rassam, in accordance with the wish expressed by Lord Russell. I selected Lieutenant Prideaux because he has already worked with Mr. Rassam in this Residency, and has had some experience in the Political Department, besides having served for several years in Aden. He would be more likely to be of assistance to Mr. Rassam, under whom I have placed him, than any of the officers of the garrison, all of whom have lately come to Aden, and most of them are scarcely even personally known to Mr. Rassam. An officer from the garrison will temporarily fill Lieutenant Prideaux's position during the latter's absence.

4. The muskets alluded to in your letter of the 17th February† have not been received, though the mail of the 10th March arrived this morning.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 479.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, March* 21, 1865.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, with accompaniments, including a revised letter from Her Majesty to King Theodorus, and I beg to return herewith the former Royal letter for re-transmission to the Foreign Office.

2. The reason I could not send back the "Victoria" to Aden immediately after her arrival here was because I was awaiting fresh intelligence to send by her.

3. One of my private messengers, whom I had sent to Adowa for news, brought me a report that he had seen near that place a follower of the King, named Ibraheem, the brother of Samuel, the King's Steward, who told him that he was coming down to Massowah for the express purpose of seeing me on some important matter.

4. It may be remembered [see the statement of the private messenger, Waldee Miriam, that accompanied my letter of the 2nd instant‡], that this very Ibraheem was at Magdala as an officer of the garrison who guarded the prisoners when my messenger returned to me with letters from Captain Cameron; and this very fact makes me anxious to know the object of his visit.

5. I have been waiting for his arrival for the last fortnight. Indeed, he would have been here long ago if he had not met, while on his way down from Adowa, an Abyssinian Chief marching against some rebels, who persuaded him to accompany him on his expedition.

6. The expected arrival of this Abyssinian has prevented me from sending my third letter to the King. I wish to see, firstly, what news I shall get from him in order that I may know what to say to His Majesty; and, secondly, I am desirous to engage him to carry the said letter himself to the King, as I learn that his brother Samuel has great influence with his Royal Master; and the co-operation of the two brothers in our interest may bring about a speedy reconciliation between us and their Sovereign.

* No. 451. † No. 450. ‡ Inclosure 2 (B.) in No. 466.

7. You may rest assured that I shall spare no expense to obtain the best information that can be had, and to expedite the success of my mission. I have never had any difficulty on this score, inasmuch as you have always been kind enough to afford me your best support in the matter of necessary expenses.

8. With reference to the officer for whom Earl Russell has applied to be associated with me on my mission, I do not think I could do better than entrust the selection to you. There have been so many changes in the Aden garrison since I left that I now scarcely know any one whom I could recommend for the post.

9. I shall feel extremely obliged by your allowing the muskets which are expected out from England (for the purpose of being presented to King Theodorus) to remain for the present at Aden. I do not think that their arrival here just now would conduce to the advancement of the object in view.

10. It is most singular that no reliable information has been received of the movements of King Theodorus since he penetrated into Shoa. Some people say that he had been defeated several times, and is now quite hemmed in by the rebels; and others declare that he has subdued all the rebels, and is now acquiring an extension of territory from the Galla. I am inclined to give credit to the latter rumour.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 480.

Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(*Received May* 1.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, April* 29, 1865.

FROM your Lordship's reply to Lord Chelmsford's enquiry,* it would appear that the protracted imprisonment in Abyssinia of the Protestant missionaries and other Europeans, as likewise of Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, is not so much the consequence of any fault of theirs as of the altered policy of Her Majesty's Government towards the Christians of that country, who, since the commencement of the present century, enjoyed the favour and protection of the British nation, and had been repeatedly aided against the aggressions and ill-treatment of the Mahommedan Turks and Egyptians.

Under existing circumstances, the position of Her Majesty's Government is no doubt a painful and difficult one; but I would venture to suggest to your Lordship that if the difficulty cannot be met, it may at all events be turned. And I cannot but entertain the deepest regret that the offer of my humble services, first made in March, 1864, and since repeated on more than one occasion, should not have been accepted, as I feel confident that through my intervention the captives might have been liberated long ago, and the relations between the two countries placed on a satisfactory and mutually advantageous footing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 481.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received May* 7.)

(Extract.) *Cairo, April* 22, 1865.

I AM glad to learn from Mr. Calvert at Djeddah that Abd-ul-Melek was to return viâ Souakin, not Massowah.

Inclosure 1 in No. 481.

Mr. West to Mr. Colquhoun.

(Extract.) *Suez, April* 4, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 25th March, delivered into my hands by Abd-ul-Melek, who was provided by me with all he required, according to your request.

* In Parliament.

Abd-ul-Melek left Suez in the steamer "Lord Clyde." I recommended him to the captain, who kindly promised to allow him a free passage. The "Lord Clyde" left Suez on the 2nd instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEO. WEST.

Inclosure 2 in No. 481.

Acting-Consul Calvert to Mr. Colquhoun.

(Extract.) *Jeddah, April* 11, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Confidential despatch of the 25th March by Abd-ul-Melek, who, you inform me, is returning to Abyssinia, charged with a written message and with presents from you to the Archbishop Metropolitan of that country.

Abd-ul-Melek arrived here safely on the 6th instant, and is to sail for Souakin to-morrow morning in a native coasting boat. I afforded him hospitality and every assistance in my power; and I obtained for him a letter of recommendation from the Governor of Jeddah to the Kaimakam of Souakin. The local authorities obligingly facilitated his progress, and allowed his packages to pass without inspection.

No. 482.

Mr. Murray to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, May* 12, 1865.

IN reply to your letter of the 7th ultimo,* I am directed by Earl Russell to state to you, for the information of the Secretary of State for India in Council, that his Lordship concurs in the propriety of charging to the Imperial Revenue the expense of Mr. Rassam's mission to Massowah and Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 483.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(Received May , 1865.)

Sir, *Aden, April* 16, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith copy of the last intelligence received from Mr. Rassam.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 483.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, April* 10, 1865.

IN paragraph 3 of my letter, dated the 21st ultimo,† I stated that it had been reported to me that an Abyssinian named Ibraheem, a brother of the King's steward, was coming down to me on some business. I have now the honour to report, for the information of Government, that he arrived here on the 27th ultimo, and I have sent him up with my third letter to King Theodorus on the 30th idem.

2. He came straight to my house, and as I had heard that he had it in his power to render me some important service in conjunction with his brother, in the liberation of the prisoners, or in obtaining for me a reply from the King, I entertained him, with his followers, as a Government guest, all the time he remained here.

3. He told me that he had come down to see me for the sole purpose of informing

* No. 473. † Inclosure in No. 479.

me that we (the English) had a great number of formidable enemies in Abyssinia, who have been always trying to poison the King's mind against us.

4. He also wished to acquaint me with the King's return from Shoa, crowned with victory. That as soon as His Majesty reached Magdala, he had released Consul Cameron of his fetters, and had placed him in the same place with the Bishop of Abyssinia and Ubie, the ex-ruler of Tigré. That the other European prisoners were allowed free access to the Consul, and were all well treated by the King.

5. I was surprised to hear from him, however, that he (Ibraheem) had not been near Magdala for the last seven months; for it may be remembered that the private messenger, whom I had sent up to Captain Cameron with rice and sugar, had informed me that he had seen this very person at that place. This fact makes me suspect that the messenger had somewhat exaggerated the information he gained while he was up in Abyssinia. Ibraheem declared to me, that not only he had not been at Magdala since the European prisoners were sent there, but that he had never stated or even heard of the assertion that the King had said, that he intended to keep the English waiting at Massowah the same time he was kept waiting for the Queen's reply.

6. On asking him what he thought was the reason of my not having received an answer from the King, he said I ought to remember that I came here at a time when rebellion had broken out in different parts of Abyssinia, and that it was quite impossible for the King to have ensured me a safe conduct through his country, without sending a large force to escort me up to him. That he was too proud to do so; and, moreover, that would have shown his weakness, which he was loth to disclose.

7. He said further, that the King had never forgotten the calamity which befell the late Consul Plowden, when that gentleman travelled through the enemy's country against His Majesty's repeated warnings, and now he is careful not to allow a repetition of such a catastrophe to take place.

8. I have written this time to the King, both in English and Arabic, because I was told that His Majesty had some persons in his Court who can read and write the former language. I annex herewith a copy of my third letter, for the information of Government.

9. Ibraheem has undertaken to deliver the letter to the King in person, although I have sent with him two more messengers. He doubted not but that he would succeed in obtaining an answer for me, and hoped to be down here with it himself in forty days from the day of his departure hence.

10. I regret to bring to the notice of Government, that the private messenger whom I had sent up to Captain Cameron on the 25th of February with money and some things, was seized by the rebels on his way up to Adowa; and after much trouble he managed to purchase his liberty by delivering to them some of the money and most of the articles he was carrying up to the prisoners. Luckily 200 of the dollars were carried by his companions (the followers of Dejaj Moraad), who escaped the freebooters unnoticed.

11. All the messengers had then to return to Hamasain, for the purpose of sending me back the remainder of the articles, with the note I had sent up to Consul Cameron. After they had despatched them to me by a private messenger, they resumed their journey up to Magdala, carrying only the balance of the money with them.

12. The reason they gave for sending me back the note was, that they wished to convey the money safely to Magdala. They were afraid that, in case they were seized again, the money and the note together might get them into a scrape.

13. I have sent up the note with the messenger who brought it back, as I found he was willing to convey it; and being one of the followers of Dejaj Moraad, he could easily get access to the prisoners as one of the followers of the exiled Chief.

14. Since the departure of Ibraheem, conflicting accounts have reached this place regarding the position of King Theodorus. Some people say that he returned to Magdala from Shoa victorious; and others declare that he had to retire for want of proper adherents to cope against the overwhelming forces that had been brought forward against him by the Galla and Shoa people. The latter version has been confirmed by a number of pilgrims who have just arrived from Shoa.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 483.

Mr. Rassam to King Theodore.

Most gracious Sovereign, *Massowah, March* 29, 1865.

I HOPE that your Majesty will pardon the liberty which I have taken in addressing you this third time upon a matter which has given me much anxiety.

More than eight months ago I wrote and informed your Majesty that I had been sent here by the British Government, as a bearer of a letter for you from our Queen, and after having waited about three months for a reply, I was compelled to write to you again, through the Naib of Arkeeko, as I had feared that the first two messengers did not deliver my letter safely to you.

Neither to first nor to the second letter have I as yet received an answer, and the very thought of knowing, now, that the two letters have reached you long since, makes me feel the more anxious to learn the cause of your silence.

I beg to inform your Majesty that the sole duty on which I have been sent is to convey to you our Queen's letter. I have nothing else to do but to deliver it to you, and to assure you of the sincere wishes our Sovereign entertains for your happiness, and for the welfare and prosperity of the great country which the Almighty God has placed under your will.

Ii is rumoured that some evil-disposed persons, who do not wish to see England and Abyssinia on the best of terms, have misrepresented the object of my mission to you. I can confidently assure you that the British Government takes a sincere interest in the welfare of your Empire, and would greatly deplore any unfriendly feeling taking place betwixt the two Christian countries through mere misunderstanding.

The delay makes me feel this painful suspense the more because I am at a loss what explanation to give to my Government as to its cause. Moreover, the rainy season is now fast approaching, and if your Majesty will not honour me with an answer soon, I shall be obliged to return to my duties at Aden.

I remain with the profoundest veneration, Sire, your Majesty's most dutiful, most humble, and most devoted servant.

(Signed) H. RASSAM,
First Assistant Political Resident, Aden,
on Special Mission to Abyssinia.

To His Imperial Majesty King Theodorus,
Emperor of Ethiopia.

No. 484.

Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(Received May 19.)*

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, May* 19, 1865.

IN the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 29th ultimo,† I took the liberty of suggesting that, if the existing difficulties in the way of obtaining the liberation of the British captives in Abyssinia could not be directly met, they might at all events be turned; and at the interview with which I was favoured by your Lordship on the 8th instant, I briefly stated the course which, in my humble opinion, ought to be adopted.

Your Lordship seemed, however, disposed to leave the business still in the hands of Mr. Rassam.

Should all the endeavours of that gentleman prove unavailing, the time will at length arrive, when, unless it be determined to abandon the captives to their fate, Her Majesty's Government must decide on adopting some other measures.

It would scarcely be consistent with the dignity of the British nation that a Mission on a larger and more magnificent scale than that of Mr. Rassam should now replace it; for, as your Lordship argued in the House of Lords, when replying to Lord Chelmsford's inquiry, "the obvious inference would be that the way to obtain consideration and respect from this country would be to imprison one of our Consuls."

On the other hand it is not to be expected the British Government will go to war with the Emperor of Abyssinia, for the purpose of compelling him to set the captives free.

It would therefore really appear that there remains no practical method of

* Laid before Parliament, 1865. † No. 480.

surmounting the difficulty, except by adopting a totally different line of conduct towards the refractory Monarch, and, with your Lordship's permission, I would now presume to state in detail the course which, in my humble judgment, it would be advisable to pursue, in order to render him amenable to reason, without at the same time compromising the British Government or affecting the dignity of the British nation.

It is now well understood that the Emperor Theodore's ill-treatment of Her Majesty's Consul and the other European prisoners has been mainly caused by the altered policy of the British Government with respect to the relations between Egypt and Abyssinia; and that the Abyssinian Monarch hopes to induce Her Majesty's Government to retrace their steps and to continue to afford him material aid against his enemies, as was virtually done while Mr. Consul Plowden was alive; that Officer having been an active partisan of the Emperor, and having lost his life while bearing arms in his cause.

Circumstanced as England is with Egypt, it is impossible for the British Government to hold out to the Emperor Theodore the hope of his receiving the further countenance of this country in his disputes with Egypt, or of his obtaining material aid in any other respect; although the transmission to Massowah of 500 stand of arms as a ransom for Her Majesty's Consul, might by some persons, and even by the Egyptian Government, be looked on as doing covertly what would be repudiated openly.

Nevertheless, it would not be difficult, I believe, to make the Abyssinian Monarch understand, that by the policy now proposed to be pursued towards him by the British Government and recommended for his adoption, he might eventually attain the object he has so much at heart; inasmuch as, by the cultivation of the arts of peace he would so aggrandize himself, as to be able to cope effectually with his powerful neighbour. Leaving it, however, to the progress of events to guide his judgment as to whether the continuance of peace would not be more conducive to the permanent prosperity of himself, his dynasty, and his people, than a war which might result in the ruin and destruction of them all.

In the first place, then, I would represent to the Emperor Theodore that the immense increase of power and influence among European nations acquired by Egypt during the last few years, had chiefly arisen from the extension given to the cultivation of cotton within the territories of the Viceroy; and I would represent to His Majesty that the plant which has thus suddenly caused the wealth of Egypt was introduced into that country from Upper Ethiopia only forty years ago, and that within his own dominions there are tracts of land more extensive than the whole of the cotton grounds of Egypt, and far more fitted than the latter for the growth of the cotton plant, not only as being its native country, but also as lying within the limits of the tropical rains, and thus rendering unnecessary the great trouble and expense of artificial irrigation. And I would hope to have it in my power to convince the Sovereign of Abyssinia that, if he desires to equal, or even to surpass the Viceroy of Egypt in power, he must first seek to augment the material wealth and prosperity of his country and its inhabitants, by means similar to those so successfully adopted by the latter Potentate.

I would further represent to the Emperor of Abyssinia that he possesses within his country other sources of wealth far greater than any enjoyed by the Ruler of Egypt; such, in fact, as have so largely contributed to make England what she is. These are iron and coal.

The former article is well known to exist in unlimited quantities throughout the whole of Abyssinia, and in so pure a state as to require little more than "rolling out," it being used by the native smiths in the manufacture of weapons of war and of agricultural and domestic implements.

The existence of coal in various parts of Abyssinia has long been asserted by travellers in that country: by myself as far back as 1840, when I reported on the subject to Captain Haines, then Political Agent at Aden; but it is only within the last few years that this has been established as a fact. In communications more recently made by me to the Board of Trade, and thence referred to your Lordship's Department,* it is shown that coal of good quality exists within the district of Galeila, at a short distance from the entrance to the Red Sea; and there is reason for believing that it was the knowledge of the existence of this coal so near to the sea-shore that induced the French Government, in 1862, to acquire possession of Obokh, on the Abyssinian coast, just outside the Straits of Babelmandeb.

But without taking into consideration the coal field of Gaeila, or others which are said to stretch along the line of coast northwards nearly to Mlassowah, and also south

* See Inclosure in No. 342.

of the Bay of Tajurrah, below the eastern flank of the high table-land of Shoa, all of which, though in common parlance said to be situate in Abyssinia, can hardly be regarded as lying within the dominions of the Emperor Theodore; there is one extensive field which not only is situate in the heart of those dominions, but has been worked by the Emperor himself during several years past.

This coal field lies at a distance of about fifty miles from Gondar, the capital of Abyssinia, and has been described by several Europeans who have visited it. For a length of about three miles along the right bank of the River Gwang (the upper course of the Atbara), six seams of coal crop out, each having an uniform thickness of from ten to fifteen feet; the quality of the coal being very good, and fit for ordinary steam and other purposes, though from its rapid combustion it might not be suited for steam-vessels going long sea voyages; nor, were the quality fit, could it, like the Galeila coal, be rendered available for steamers in the Indian seas, as it lies at a distance of at least 200 miles from the sea-shore.

At present the only use made of this coal appears to be in the imperial foundries, in which the European artizan, missionaries, and others are employed in casting mortars and shells, and in constructing other implements of war. But it may well be conceived what a mine of wealth is here present, if the Emperor and his people could be brought to appreciate it at its true value, and to apply it to useful purposes.

As, by means of the cultivation of cotton in Abyssinia, the Emperor Theodore might be shown how he could cope with Egypt, so by the proper application of the produce of his iron and coal mines, he might be led to the hope of being eventually able to rival even England herself; and if once brought to entertain such ideas, and whilst awaiting their realization, he might without difficulty be induced to see how he could lay both nations under obligation, and in a manner make them dependent on his favour, by permitting a line of electric telegraph to be carried across his dominions.

The Viceroy of Egypt is engaged in constructing a telegraph line from Cairo up the Valley of the Nile as far as Khartoom, the capital of the Province of Sennar, with a branch to Kasselah, the capital of the Province of Taka, by means of which not only will those remote possessions in the south be placed in immediate connexion with the seat of Government, but, from the fact that this line is a prolongation of that already existing between Egypt and Europe, it will result that about three-fifths of a telegraphic communication between England and India (London and Kurachee), by way of the Red Sea, will thereby be established.

Before this plan of the Viceroy of Egypt was known, I had suggested to Her Majesty's Government, in a "Memorandum on the means of developing British commerce within the Red Sea, and of securing the communication between England and India,"* dated November 12, 1862, and submitted to your Lordship on the 27th of the same month, that the wires of the Red Sea telegraph line from India should be continued from the Straits of Babelmandeb northward along the Abyssinian coast as far as Sawakin, and thence carried inland to Berber on the Nile, and so up the bank of that river to Cairo, thus forming a land line the whole way from Babelmandeb to Alexandria, entirely over Turkish and Egyptian territory.

But, taking into consideration the great stride which the Viceroy of Egypt is making in the desired direction, bearing also in mind the advance which during the last few years the Emperor Theodore has made towards the east and south-east, by the conquest and annexation of the territories of the King of Shoa, and the chiefs of the Wollo Gallas, and having regard likewise to the hold which the Government of India, through Aden, is gaining on the Abyssinian coast, in consequence of the acquisition recently made, by a British subject, of the Galeila coal field, as also of the settlement of the French at Obokh, I am now decidedly of opinion that the telegraphic communication between England and India, through Egypt and Aden, should and might easily be effected by continuing the Egyptian line from Khartum across Abyssinia to the sea-coast, in the immediate vicinity of the island of Perim, and thence to Aden.

On the accompanying map I have marked the proposed line of telegraph, and in explanation of the same I would beg leave to state that the entire distance between Khartum and Aden is (in round numbers) 850 geographical miles, which distance may be divided into four portions.

Of the first of these, being from Khartoom to Kalabat, on the western frontiers of Abyssinia, the length is 250 miles; the next, from Kalabat to Dowe, the great market-place on the eastern edge of the Abyssinian table-land, has a length of 300 miles; the third, from Dowe, across the country of the Dankali tribes, to the shore of the Red Sea opposite Parin, is 200 miles, whilst the last portion from Perim to Aden is 100 miles.

* See Inclosure 2 in No. 342.

The condition of these several portions of the line is very different. The first, between Khartoom and Kalabat, and the last between Perim and Aden, forming together 350 miles, or about two-fifths of the whole length, would be respectively Egyptian and British; no further remarks therefore are requisite as regards them. Of the remaining 500 miles, the third portion between the sea-coast and the eastern edge of the Abyssinian table-land, being 200 miles in length, may be regarded as being so far under the influence, if not the absolute control, of the British Governor of Aden on the one hand, and of the Emperor of Abyssinia on the other; that, between the two, the road might be kept open as securely as it is among the tribes occupying the regions through which passes the Euphrates Valley Telegraph line to India.

As regards the third portion of 300 miles across Abyssinia itself, the road is already marked out by nature and by the experience of the natives. It runs from Kalabat by Wakui, Gondar, and Debra Tabor; and thence, over the water parting between the Rivers Takkazie and Bashilo, to Magdala, the impregnable fortress, arsenal, and state prison, in the district of Warra Hemano, in which Captain Cameron and his companions are confined; from whence it continues to Dowe, in the adjoining district of Warrakali. (It may here be remarked parenthetically that it would be in vain to look for Magdala in the ordinary maps of Abyssinia; and that in those few in which it is marked, it is altogether misplaced.)

Availing themselves of the natural facilities of this road across Abyssinia, the native merchants have from time immemorial made use of it, in a greater or less degree according to political circumstances, as the direct channel of communication between the sea-coast and the interior. In the "Memoir on the Commerce of Abyssinia," which I had the honour to submit to your Lordship's predecessor in office on the 9th of December, 1843, I dwelt particularly on this fact, and I pointed out the advantages that would result from the re-opening of this great commercial road; expressing the opinion that, whenever the political condition of Abyssinia should become more settled, we should doubtless see this road resume its pristine importance, and the commerce from the coast to the interior in great part pass by this channel.

Such then are the arguments that I would propose to employ when approaching the Emperor Theodore. I would support the arguments by the presenting to him some cotton gins, together with specimens of articles of British manufacture of various descriptions, capable of being made from the cotton of Abyssinia, if only he would stimulate the production of that article by his subjects.

I would further submit to the Emperor's inspection specimens of the infinite variety of articles that might be manufactured from the fine iron which his territories contain in such abundance.

Lastly, I would take with me an electric telegraph apparatus, for the purpose of exhibiting and explaining to His Majesty the use and operation of this wonderful—and to him as it would appear miraculous—invention. And in order to make him more readily and fully appreciate the channel by which I should propose to connect Abyssinia with England and the other nations of Europe, I would not enter his country at all by the way of Massowah, but would adopt the road laid down on my map as that of the proposed telegraph line; thus proving to him that the acquisition of Massowah is no longer indispensable as the channel of communication between Abyssinia and the civilized world.

I take for granted that it would be but proper to assure the Emperor Theodore that Her Britannic Majesty's Government would exert every suitable influence over the Viceroy of Egypt, to induce him to desist from further aggressions on the territory or dependencies of Abyssinia; and that the mediation of Her Majesty would even be offered, with a view to the settlement of existing questions between Egypt and Abyssinia and the determination of an equitable frontier line between the two States.

On the liberation of the British Consul and the other captives it might (should Her Majesty's Government so decide) be promised to the Emperor Theodore that a suitable Embassy should be forthwith despatched to his Court, and that Her Majesty would, on her side, be willing to receive an Envoy from His Majesty of Abyssinia, in accordance with the stipulations of the Treaty of November 2nd, 1849.

Such being the line of conduct which I should propose to adopt, I once more beg leave most respectfully to tender my humble services to Her Majesty's Government.

To obviate the objection that might be made that I am not of sufficiently elevated rank to be entrusted with such a mission and that I do not occupy any official position, I would take the liberty of reminding your Lordship that the late Richard Cobden though holding no official post, was not thereby disqualified from acting as mediator between the two most powerful nations of the world; and as regards myself, without thinking

for a moment of comparing myself for a moment with that distinguished individual, I may be permitted to state that I have already had the honour to serve the Crown as Acting Consul at Leipzig.

And as, further, it appears that so much importance is attached to the wearing of a British uniform that a young subaltern officer, Lieutenant Prideaux, has been sent from Aden to Massowah to join Mr. Rassam, I trust it will not be regarded as presumptuous if I represent to your Lordship that I have for many years held the commission, and am consequently entitled to wear the uniform of a Deputy-Lieutenant, which (if I mistake not) gives me rank equivalent to that of a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Army.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 485.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(Received May 25.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, May* 13, 1865.

I HAVE no news from Abyssinia further than the assurance of a traveller just arrived from Aden, that no sign of recognition of Mr. Rassam's mission of any importance has been exhibited.

I expect before long to hear what result will attend the arrival of the Copt, Abd-ul-Melek at Debra Tabor. He found a vessel leaving Jeddah for Souakin, and availed himself of it very prudently, whereby his return to Abyssinia may escape notice, till he reach the place where his Chief may be, whether in or out of arrest.

Anxious to procure every information respecting the character of Abd-ul-Melek, I caused a person at Cairo to write the Catholic Missionary who passed through this a few weeks ago, of whose arrival I was informed too late too see him. I inclose an extract translation of the Abbé's letter, which tallies completely with the idea I have formed of the Copt's general character, and leads me to hope for some result if his Chief be not too deeply in disgrace with the King.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

Inclosure in No. 485.

Letter from the Abbé Stella to a person in Cairo.

(Translation.) *Paris, April* 10, 1865.

I RECEIVED yesterday your letter and hasten to reply to it, as when in Cairo I was unable to see you, which I hope to do on my return.

The matter on which you write is involved in some degree of obscurity. Abd-ul-Melek, whom I know very well, says, he saw Mr. Cameron not in irons, but under guard; he says that the Aboona might be able to obtain the Consul's liberation under certain conditions. Now, when I was in Massowah, on the 9th of February, I learnt from the followers of Burgeaud who had just arrived from Debra Tabor, that the Consul with his suite and the German Missionaries were still in irons, and that, moreover, the Aboona himself was in custody.

You are well aware that in Abyssinia reports easily gain wind, and that it is with the greatest difficulty one can arrive at the truth. Moreover, you know that the King is one day on the best terms with the Aboona, on the following day he threatens and insults him; he has his days of good and of bad augury. Amid all this obscurity what is to be done? Something must be done for the sake of our reputation, and for these poor Europeans who are suffering severely and are horribly maltreated in Abyssinia.

That Abd-ul-Melek wishes to deceive you I cannot aver, for I have always known him for an honest man. I see no other course than to act with and by him; if he returns viâ Massowah he will of course see Mr. Rassam.

As so many European prisoners are concerned, it behoves every one, if there be a ray of hope, not to lose sight of it. Since it appears that the Europeans are in Magdala, perhaps the Aboona is in Magdala also; in this case I should doubt the success of Abd-ul's mission, but if the Aboona is not in arrest we may hope, &c.

(Signed) ABBATE STELLA, *Apostolic Missionary in Abyssinia.*

No. 486.

Mr. Hammond to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 27, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant,* suggesting a plan for effecting the liberation of Captain Cameron and his fellow prisoners, and I am to convey to you his Lordship's thanks for your communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 487.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received May 29.)

Sir, *India Office, May* 29, 1865.

I AM directed by Sir C. Wood to forward, for the information of Earl Russell, the accompanying copy of a letter from Her Majesty's Political Resident at Aden, containing further particulars respecting the captives in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HERMAN MERIVALE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 487.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

Sir, *Aden, May* 2, 1865.

I DO myself the honour to forward a copy of my latest despatch in this Department, dated 2nd instant, to the Government of Bombay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 487.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir *Aden, May* 2, 1865.

I DO myself the honour to forward copies of further correspondence received from Mr. Rassam at Massowah, for the information of Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 3 in No. 487.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, April* 28, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a German letter in original which I received yesterday by a special messenger from Gaffat from the Rev. Mr. Flad.

2. M. Munzinger, the Acting French Agent at Massowah, who used to translate for me the German letters, has gone up to the Soudan in the Egyptian territory, and I have not been able to find any one else here to translate this letter. I shall therefore feel greatly obliged by your sending me a translation of it by the return of the "Victoria" hither, in order that I may know what answer to send to Mr. Flad. Please also to send me a copy of the letter, or the original one, after you have done with it, to place amongst my records.

3. In my last letter to Mr. Flad I asked him not to write again in German; but unfortunately the accompanying letter was despatched before he could have received

* No. 484.

that communication, as you will perceive from its date that it was nearly a month and a-half in its way down to this place.

4. The German gentlemen at Gaffat are so closely watched by the King's people, and are so much afraid of their messenger being seized while on his way down, that Mr. Flad had to recur to the expedient of choosing a leper to bring me down the letter, as it is an abomination to the Abyssinians to touch a person inflicted with that dreadful disease. The messenger told me that Mr. Flad had given him a horse to ride down, and the reason he gave me for his having been so long in coming down was, because he had to beg his livelihood on the road.

5. Since the despatch to you of my last letter of the 10th instant,* I have heard that King Theodorus had returned to Shoa to recommence hostilities, and that his reason for going to Magdala was to obtain fresh assistance, and to release his old generals and ministers, whom he had imprisoned within the last eighteen months on mere suspicion of treachery. One of these ministers, named Ras Oubie (not the ex-ruler of Tigré), was, I believe, imprisoned on account of his having befriended Captain Cameron; and it was, of course, conjectured that his release would be followed by that of Captain Cameron and his fellow-prisoners. On this account a rumour has been afloat that the European prisoners had been released, which I am certain cannot be true.

6. Ibraheem, the messenger I sent up with the third letter to the King on the 30th ultimo, has sent me down a messenger from Janbian (about two days' journey to the south-west of Adowa), to inform me of his progress, and also to acquaint me with the good tidings he had received of the expected release of the European prisoners. This report is founded on the rumour, that Samuel, the King's steward, had been sent by His Majesty to Dubartaboot, to consult about the liberation of the prisoners, with Basha Goragzabe, the Commissioner of Customs at Adowa, and the once-nominated Chief of the Mission which King Theodorus had intended to send to England.

7. The intelligence from the seat of war is most conflicting; but there is no doubt now that King Theodorus is in a sorry plight just at present, owing to the revolt against his power, which has become quite general all over Abyssinia.

8. I have now no less than seven private messengers up the country, three of whom (especially the one I sent up to Mr. Flad at the end of February) are more than twenty days behind their time. I attribute their delay to the insecurity of the roads.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 4 in No. 487.

Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam.

Sir, *Gaffat, March* 16, 1865.

TWO months have now elapsed since I wrote to you. I hope that our letters have safely reached you. Yesterday I got a letter from Captain Cameron, and one from the Rev. Mr. Stern; both write that last week the Emperor spent a few days at the fort, which were indeed days of anxiety for our poor captives. The Emperor liberated some of them, whilst he ordered others to be beaten with sticks in a dreadful manner, and to be put in closer confinement than ever. Our unfortunates were however, God be praised, spared; they dared not let themselves be seen by the Emperor, but their fright was quite enough, when the Emperor on his arrival on the hill sent them the following message:—"By the strength of God we have come back from Shoa, and have brought you some kusso" (this is a very bitter medicine which is take here by the natives for tape worm). Such a message from His Majesty does not give hope of any good. Captain Cameron and Mr. Stern are in a great state of despair and fright about the things that will come to pass. Mr. Stern says in his letter to me, "As it appears that they have quite forgotten us in Europe nothing remains for us but to prepare ourselves for the worst, a miserable death." Captain Cameron is very anxious to get news from Massowah to know what Government has determined to do for their liberation, and if no letter is from the Queen on its way to reach us here. I tell you this with the most instant prayer to let me know what England will do, so that I may be able to put an end to the fears of those poor prisoners. The Emperor sent from Magdala a letter from Messrs. Steigers, Brandeis, Essler, Schilders and myself, in which he asked us to work for him, but we will only do that if we are forced to it. We comfort ourselves in the hope that England will soon put an end to our captivity. The Emperor is at present

* Inclosure 1 in No. 483.

in the Galla country which it appears he will ruin entirely. I beg you will be kind enough to give the bearer of this letter a little reward, he was my servant for a long time, but on account of his illness and subsequent circumstances left me. He can tell you what I cannot write.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

No. 488.

Sir C. Wood to Earl Russell.

(Extract.) *Hickleton, June 6, 1865.*

I INCLOSE to you a very interesting letter from Mr. Rassam. It shows pretty clearly that neither the Queen's letter or anything else is likely to produce much effect in liberating Captain Cameron.

Inclosure 1 in No. 488.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

My dear Sir Charles Wood, *Aden, May 21, 1865.*

I INCLOSE copy of Rassam's last private letter to me. The officials go to the India Office as usual. The intelligence is so far satisfactory that it shows the captives were alive and well on the 9th April, and such free communication with them is a good sign.

I inclose for your private information copy of Mr. Stern's letter to Mr. Goodhart. It was sent open, so I thought there was no harm in copying it. I have sent another to Mr. Layard for Earl Russell's information.

The Germans at Gaffat recommend the Queen's letter being sent up any how. I consider this will be a very wrong move, and not likely to do any good. If Theodorus is standing on his dignity, as seems to me most clear, he would take the opportunity of treating the missive with further and more open contempt if it reached him; if it was lost on the way, it would do harm every way and no good.

I shall be very anxious for further tidings, as so much depends on Theodore's future. If the rebels gain complete head, he must fight desperately to the last or fly. In the latter case the captives would be immediately released by the successful rebels. In the former they might be sacrificed with him.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 488.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

My dear Colonel, *Massowah, May 12, 1865.*

I SEND you by this opportunity some important letters that I have received from Magdala and Gaffat, which I know would interest you not a little. Unfortunately Mr. Schimper has written to me in German and consequently I know not what he says. I send you his letter in original, and I shall feel obliged by your sending me a translation of it by the return of the steamer, in order that I may answer him by the same messenger whom I am going to send up to Gaffat. I intend to send back the "Victoria" to Aden soon after her return, as I cannot send up the messengers to Magdala before I receive the stores clothing and medicine, which I am going to send for. I shall write to Camasje Dnishow for the provisions and to Blanc for the medicines. Can you kindly allow the bill to be paid from the Treasury on the public account, as I fear my Agent at Aden will not have money enough with him belonging to me to pay from. I want to send the poor prisoners a good supply of everything, in case they have to spend another rainy season in confinement. It is to be hoped that their release would follow that of the Bishop, and the general impression is that this would surely be the case. I am waiting anxiously for another note from Cameron which he promised to write to me after Easter. My note which ought to have been

taken to him by Waldee Mariam, would, in all probability reach him in time to answer by the same messenger. My third letter would reach the King soon after the release of the Bishop, and taking everything into account, I think some glad tidings ought to reach me ere long, concerning the fate of the prisoners. If native report can be depended on, I fear there is some falling out amongst the prisoners, and that Bardel is doing a great deal of mischief. If the rebels will have a little more pluck and march against the tyrant, it is quite impossible that he could stand against them. It will be very curious that, after my waiting so long here, the release of our people will be obtained through the power of the rebels. The best thing for the prisoners and ourselves would be, if Theodore could make up his mind to quit this vale of tears. From all accounts my second letter, which I sent through the Naib of Arkeeko seems to have done more harm than good, for I believe the King did not like my show of being impatient. The Naib's men, who carried the letter, have been sadly neglected, whereas my first two messengers are amply provided for with food and clothing. In a letter received here from one of the latter, the messenger said that he would undoubtedly be back here soon. I hope he does not intend to run away! He told Waldee Mariam (the rice and sugar messenger) that the reason the King did not answer me immediately, was, because I had not signed my letter. However, the King always said that he would answer. I am now more anxious than ever to see the King, because I wish to find out from him the different causes which actuated him to behave so rudely. I am almost certain that I shall discover my conjecture to be correct, and that is, the reason of his not having hurried himself was neither more nor less than through a caprice of his. Kindly do not let the "Victoria" remain at Aden more than a day or two, as I am anxious to despatch the messengers up to Magdala and Gaffat as soon as possible. M. Rosenthal sent a note to Mrs. Blanc, to thank her for something she had sent to his wife, and he has asked her to send some dark print for his wife and child. I have sent this note to Blanc to deliver to his wife. There is nothing important in it. It is addressed merely to "Mrs. at Massowah," and I only guessed from its contents, that it was meant for Mrs. B. Prideaux and I have had our trip to the hills, and although we are not sorry that we have been there, nevertheless we are not anxious to leave our present quarters for another trip, as we found the temperature in the day time in the coolest place we went to, much hotter than we ever had it here, and moreover, all those places are out of the way, and not convenient for my duties. As ill luck would have it, my private messenger from Magdala and Gaffat arrived here just as I was away; and though the one from the former place found his way to where we were, the Gaffat man had to wait for me at Massowah three days before I learnt the purport of his letters. As it happened, the "Victoria" was away and no harm was done by keeping the messengers waiting, but if she had been here I should have never forgiven myself for the delay. At all events we have found a way of keeping ourselves cool in this locality, and that is by having grass huts erected, in which we shall be able to keep the temperature down between 80 and 85 degrees in the hottest time of the day, by means of having the grass constantly sprinkled with water. We shall only be obliged to resort to this expedient for six or at the most eight hours in the day, as the nights are generally cool here, and ever since our return we have not had the mercury higher than 78 during the greater part of the night.

I must confess that some of the places we went to are most beautiful, and some parts reminded me very much of Koordistan mountains. But we could not stand the excessive change between the cold and heat in the space of twelve hours. Very often we had no less than 40 degrees rise and fall between sunrise and noon. In one place called Shushare (about 50 miles to the west of Massowah), the maximum of the temperature was 96 degrees, and the minimum 57 degrees; and at Dogree (about 40 miles from this place), at sunrise the mercury fell to 64 degrees, and rose at noon to 106 degrees. I don't think our servants could have stood this extreme change within a few hours long; indeed they had begun to suffer from fever and headaches soon after we went up, and both Prideaux and myself might have followed their example if we had stayed a little longer out. The first stage we went to from this place I found Abdul Kareem, the Naib's brother, with twelve Turkish Irregulars, waiting to escort us. Abd-al-Kareem informed me that the Kaimakam had sent him orders to wait upon me with the guard as long as we remained out in the interior. I must confess that the Turkish authorities here have been extremely civil to me, and there is nothing which they would not do for me.

By-the-bye, I have quite forgotten to mention to you an extraordinary information which Waldee Mariam brought down about the Conference which took place between the Aboona and the King. The messenger asserted that the Bishop had made his

royal Master to understand that unless he released Cameron and his fellow-prisoners, he would rather be confined with them than at large. The King had said to him that both the Consul and the missionaries deserved the perpetual imprisonment (according to law), the former for having opposed him in everything, and employed his enemies, Mr. Speedy as his agent at Massowah, and M. Mercier (the Frenchman) as his baker, and that unless Speedy was given up to him to do what he liked with him, he could never think of releasing Cameron. As for the missionaries, they had been sentenced to everlasting bondage for the abuse which they had heaped upon him, both in their books and before his subjects.

I think there is some truth about the story of Speedy as you may remember that in a letter which Cameron got an Abyssinian to write for him, he said that Messrs. Speedy and Mercier had ruined them. It appears that the former had been in the habit of abusing the King, and calling His Majesty by his proper name—an ass—a most insulting word amongst the Abyssinian Christians; it is worse than calling a Mahometan a pig. Waldee Mariam has also informed me that Samuel was in disgrace while he was at Magdala, and that his going to Dubartaboot was to get out of the way of his Master. He got into a scrape with the King because he had l[illegible] his best rifle while he was in Shoa. If what Waldee Mariam has said turn out to be true, I fear that the poor prisoners will have to spend another winter at Magdala, and this very fact makes me the more anxious to receive the note I expect from Cameron, which he promised to write to me after Easter. I ought also soon to hear of the movements of Ibrahim. In case my third letter will meet with the same reception at the Royal hands, viz., in being shelved like the former communication, I do not think I could do better than to pack up and retreat back to Aden. However, before I do so, I shall write to Government for permission to break up the Mission.

May 14th.—Another messenger has arrived from Gaffat, and brought me a letter from Cameron, and one from Flad. The one from the former, that contains strict injunctions for me not to go up to the King "with or without a safe conduct," was written three days before his letter No. 3 which accompanied my official of the 12th instant, but I fear both will make the Foreign Office somewhat uneasy as to its future action. Undoubtedly the poor prisoners are anxious that strong measures should be resorted to, though they might forfeit their lives in consequence. This injunction of Cameron has quite pulverized me, as I fear that Government will not let me now hazard a trip up to the presence of Abyssinian royalty. I suppose a Mission on a grander scale from England is out of the question now, and those who have been pitying the tyrant will have to follow another kind of policy towards him. It is quite evident that that madcap does not intend to release the prisoners, and that his desire of receiving a reply from our Queen has been long forgotten. I shall certainly send Her Majesty's letter up when an opportunity offers itself, but I shall certainly not force it upon him unless I am ordered to do so by Government. Kindly read Mr. Stern's letter to Mr. Goodhart, as I think some parts of it will interest you. I fancy Earl Russell will also be interested in its perusal.

I am, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 488.

The Rev. H. Stern to the Rev. C. D. Goodhart.

My dear Mr. Goodhart, *Prison, Amba Magdala, April* 6, 1864.

NEITHER you nor myself ever thought that my missionary activity would be arrested by fetters, a prison, and unparalleled suffering. But a righteous God ordered it so, and although frail nature shrinks from unmerited torture and violence, yet a missionary must meekly submit to every contingency, since he knows that the seeds of the gospel have, to a great extent, been everywhere watered by the tears and, not unfrequently, by the blood of the sower.

That I fervently long once more to be released from my heavy chains and restored to usefulness, is quite natural; and I believe that, notwithstanding the gloomy aspect in which the future is enshrouded, God, who in his infinite mercy has preserved me till now under trials which seldom fall to the lot of man, will yet more manifest his goodness, and bring me and my fellow-prisoners out of our troubles. Within the last six months Captain Cameron and myself several times anticipated that matters would come to a satisfactory solution, but it appears that conciliatory letters fail to produce

the desired effect, and we both think that a communication of an opposite tenor might be attended with happier results. Thank God, we are well, and with a few painful exceptions, struggling in prayer and faith against the difficulties by which we are encompassed.

With kind regards, &c.
(Signed) HENRY A. STERN.

No. 489.

Captain de Dohsé to Earl Russell.—(*Received June* 12.)

8, *Chesterfield Cottages, Bath Road, Peckham,*
Your Excellency, *June* 10, 1865.

AS it is my most anxious desire to render any good services to this country, of which I have become a subject, I beg humblest, your Excellency, in case, as Government had the intention of ordering a Mission to Abyssinia, for the relief of Captain Cameron and the missionaries, to propose graciously that I may be entrusted with that important charge. I have, previous to my naturalization, served the country, and Her Majesty our Most Gracious Queen deigned to confer upon me the honour of a title of a Captain, in which quality I served during the Crimean War. Also I enjoy for my good services the high protection of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and War Department. As regards my capacities, I can only refer to an autographic letter of the late Alexander Von Humboldt, being in my possession, which is directed to me in most flattering terms.

I think that I would be able to fulfil the Mission to the general satisfaction; therefore I took the liberty to apply to Her Majesty's Principal Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. And, in conclusion, I beg once more, urgently, to favour me with that Mission, which will give me an opportunity of proving my abilities in diplomatic matters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) Captain FREDERICK DE DOHSE.

No. 490.

Mr. Colquhoun to Earl Russell.—(*Received June* 10.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, May* 29, 1865.

THE mail had sailed yesterday about an hour, when the inclosed despatch, under flying seal from the Political Resident at Aden,* was put into my hands, and I therefore avail myself of the French boat leaving this afternoon for Marseilles, to forward Colonel Merewether's despatch and its many inclosures. In a note to me he says he thinks the news is hopeful. I cannot myself see any gleam of light.

Insurrection seems rife throughout Abyssinia. More than one rebel appears to be holding the field, in addition to the King's enemy at Shoa. What may be the effect of these various sources of annoyance on one so violent as Theodorus is described to be, even by his best friends, may easily be imagined. Success might have made him favourable to his prisoners; failure will probably render him callous and reckless of consequences.

Paragraph 7 of Mr. Rassam's letter, respecting the feelings of the Aboona, confirms my impression of the Patriarch's sentiments towards the prisoners, and the bold attitude the Prelate has often taken with the King.

The state of complete anarchy, described in 8, 9, 10, and 11, is embarrassing.

There is a curious idea started in Captain Cameron's letter of 6 April,† showing the ambition of Theodore to obtain an increase of territory, Soudan and the Sennaar. It was doubtless the knowledge or suspicion of this inclination that induced the Viceroy of Egypt to strengthen his forces so much on the borders, as to have led Theodorus to suppose Egypt meditated an invasion of Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

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* No. 491. † Inclosure 3 in No. 491.

No. 491.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(*Received June* 15.)

Sir, *Aden, May* 21, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith copies of despatches from Mr. Rassam, containing further intelligence from Abyssinia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 491.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, May* 12, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward for the information of Government copies of four letters that I have received from Magdala and Gaffat—three from Captain Cameron, marked A, Nos. 1, 2, and 3; and one from the Rev. Mr. Flad, marked B. I also transmit a German letter in original from Mr. Schimper, marked C, as I have been unable to have it translated here. I shall feel obliged by your returning it to me with a translation after you have done with it.

2. I further forward a copy of my letter, marked D, that I last wrote to Mr. Flad, in order that Government may understand more clearly the reply of that gentleman.

3. I cannot make out whether Captain Cameron wrote to me the No. 3 note before or after he received my letter addressed to Mr. Flad, which that gentleman informed me in his answer above quoted he was going to send to him. From the purport of Captain Cameron's note, I am inclined to think that he was in receipt of it when he last wrote.

4. Captain Cameron has been misinformed regarding the pith of my second letter to King Theodorus, as Government is aware that I have always been careful not to use any expressions in my letters which might give offence to His Majesty. If I had written and demanded an answer in three days, doubtless it would not have tended to soothe the irritable temper of the peevish Monarch.

5. I see that Mr. Flad has also not been rightly informed regarding my third letter. He mentions in his note which accompanies this, that my "third letter" had reached the King, and that it had been treated in the same way as my former communications. This could not have been the case, as my third letter did not leave Massowah till the 30th March, the very day on which Mr. Flad wrote the note above referred to. This informant must have confounded the third letter with the second, which I sent through the Naib of Arkeeko.

6. In reference to the advice Captain Cameron gives in his letter (No. 3), "that the only way to settle the matter is to write strongly, and act, if further writing is of no use," I regret very much that I cannot agree with him on this point, unless Her Majesty's Government is prepared to support the use of a high tone by coercive measures. I do verily believe that not only no good result can be derived from a mere menace, but most likely it will do much harm towards aggravating the condition of the prisoners.

7. The messengers from Magdala inform me that the Aboona was on the point of making peace with the King when they left; and it was rumoured in the King's Court that the release of Captain Cameron and his fellow prisoners would in all probability follow the reconciliation of the Bishop. Indeed, it is alleged that the Prelate had made it known that his reconciliation with the King would only be on the sole understanding that His Majesty should act compassionately towards the European prisoners by liberating them.

8. It is now proved beyond doubt that the King returned from Shoa utterly discomfited; and his troops had been so much decimated in the last engagement he had had with the combined forces of Shoa and Walloo Galla, that he dare not return to Dubartaboot for the present. It is believed that he has resolved to spend the rainy season at Magdala.

9. Gondar, the capital of Amhara, has been taken possession of by the most powerful rebel Chief, Tisso Gobazai, whose power has been on the ascendant for the last year and a half. He now rules the whole country that lies between Gondar and Tigré as far north as the Egyptian territory; and it is rumoured that he will soon take

possession of Adowa, when, as a matter of course, the rest of Abyssinia to the east and north-east, as far as the district of Massowah, must succumb to his authority.

10. The awkward position of the King can be easier understood by a reference to the map. Besides his loss on the south-east of Amhara of the whole of Shoa (which has been usurped by his late Viceroy Bezabeck), with the tributary position of the Walloo Galla under the Sovereignty of Warkait, its Queen, and Gondar, with all the districts to the north and north-east, as far as Tigré, he has two other formidable enemies in the field, who are Kalo Tadda and Wakshoma Gobazai. The former holds the district of Godjam, on the south-west; and the latter now governs Lasta, to the south-east of Amhara and Tembean, adjoining Tigré, and is daily increasing his conquest. He is said to be now only five days' journey from Magdala.

11. This latter chief, though descended from royal blood, is the weakest of all the rebels; and it is surmised when his conquest reaches Adowa, which must take place ere long, that there will be a regular tussle between him and Tisso Gobozai, as to the possession of Tigré. The result of the struggle, however is not disputed, as Wakshoma Gobazai will not have the chance to withstand the power of his rival.

12. My difficulty will now be, in case the King sends for me, how to pass through the revolted districts, which cannot be avoided. The small portion of Abyssinia where the King's power is still acknowledged, is now surrounded by rebellious districts. My anxiety would be to pass safely through without creating jealousy either in the mind of the chief or the King.

19. I should not mind the rebel chiefs so much if King Theodorus had proper sense. While he has no power to ensure me a safe conduct through the revolted country, he would be averse to my having any communication with his enemies, which I must do if I wish to pass through their country unmolested. At all events, I shall take very good care not to do anything which may increase our difficulties and embarrass Her Majesty's Government.

14. I intend to send a good supply of provisions and clothing to the prisoners; and for insuring their safe arrival to their destination, I shall divide them into three parts, and will send each by different messengers through separate routes. I shall also send some money, as Mr. Flad has not been able to draw upon me.

I have, &c:

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

(A.)—*Captain Cameron to Mr. Rassam.*

(No. 1.)

My dear Rassam, *Magdala, March* 17, 1865.

I HAVE taken the liberty of drawing an order on you for 200 dollars. If there is no money of mine at Massowah, pray write to Hertslet of the Foreign Office to repay you. We are still lying here in the dirt and in chains. News has come of a third letter. We are awaiting the result. Another winter here, and some of us must drop. Frames of iron could not stand this work much longer. I wish you would write a letter to Hertslet, telling him that I am still alive. I have nothing to write to him myself; besides, I have to be careful about correspondence, and could not say very much beyond what I have told you to say for me. If you write to Playfair, remember me to him. We are all anxious for news from home. We know nothing whatever, except fragments of news from our fellow sufferers at G., but nothing, of course, about our relatives. I will send you another letter soon, if necessary.

Yours, &c:

H. Rassam, Esq., Massowah. (Signed) C. D. C.

(No. 2.)

My dear Rassam, *Magdala, April* 7, 1865.

WALDO MARIAM has arrived. He has brought 200 dollars cash, which we have received all right, but he has no letter, and has made away with the 30 dollars intended for Dejaj Merret's peopl. Scandal says that he has drunk ten bottles of brandy intended for us, and made away with various other things. He has a story about having been caught by rebels, which has not been confirmed, so I send you back all three messengers, and hope that you will see that Dejaj Merret's people are not done by our friend Waldo. Merret ran a serious risk in mixing himself in the matter, and we may want him again. If you send again, send potted meats and vegetables, potted fish, sardines, tea, chocolate, sugar, and calico, also silk (one piece) and medicines, camphor, ammonia, emetics, and purgatives. Congratulate my hyæna on his appetite,

and pay his mess bill, but give him away, or send him adrift; I can't allow him to spend more in housekeeping than myself. God bless you, old fellow. I shall write again after Easter. My other note by Dejaj Merrett's people will contain anything else I have to say.

Yours, &c.

H. Rassam, Esq., Massowah. (Signed) C. D. C.

(No. 3.)

My dear Rassam, *Magdala, April* 9, 1865.

YOU will have received my letter through Flad. I speak advisedly, dear Rassam, and with the full consent and approval of our party—Mr. Rosenthal and Mr. Flad, who have not only their own lives but those of their children at stake—when I say that the only way of settling this matter is to write strongly, and act, if further writing is of no use. Of course we have no wish to press the Government in saying this; the interests of England and the good of the country must be always the first consideration, and will be with us. But it may remove a difficulty to know what we all feel. If Government acts energetically, and it entails suffering on us, we are prepared, as it must come to that sooner or later. When the King refused to answer your second letter, requiring an answer in three days, he meant a defiance, as, not calculating on the defection of Shoa, he expected to return with 40,000 or 50,000 Mahratta horsemen, who would give your people a hot reception if you wished to fight. Now things are changed. He would like matters settled, but doesn't see how. But for God's sake don't come up here; he will cage you as sure as a gun, as he thinks that while he has us in his hands he is safe from attack, and of course with a swell like yourself in addition, matters would only be better for him, according to this view. The Bishop and King are, perhaps, about to make friends, for the first time after our torturing. This may make a change in our position; but I don't think the King will send us out. God bless you. Remember me to Playfair, and pray send Hertslet any news you like. I am afraid to write too many letters.

Yours, &c.

(Signed) C. D. C.

(B.)—*Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam.*

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, March* 30, 1865.

YOUR letter dated 26th of February 1 received yesterday evening. We cannot but express ourselves surprised about the patience which you and your Government exhibit in the present affairs in which you are engaged with his Imperial Majesty of Abyssinia. Things look quite different if you look them in the face as we do, which you will see also from the letter of Captain Cameron, who informs you of their sad position and their gloomy prospects if they have to remain another rainy season in their present situation. We heard that your third letter arrived, and was presented to the King. If the reports which we heard about it may be relied upon, your last letter has produced no other effect than the former ones you sent. We were told that he said, in the same careless manner as he did six months ago, he wishes to finish the matter and to be reconciled to the Queen of England; but how long it will take until this will be realized, no one can conjecture. Concerning the delay of the King's answer to your letters, I cannot but repeat what I asserted in my first letter to you, *i.e.*, the King considers himself to be insulted by not having received an answer to his letter, and it appears that his intention is to irritate the English Government in return. If you venture to come to Abyssinia on your own responsibility, without having been called specially by His Majesty the King, it is more than probable that you will share Captain Cameron's fate. Still I would advise you to find out any way how to transmit the letter of Her Britannic Majesty the Queen to His Imperial Majesty King Theodóros, as a last means of dissolving the matter in a peaceable way.

Concerning your suspicions about some persons influencing the King against a friendly connection of the Government with the King of Abyssinia, I cannot deny that there are such; however I must state that our German friends who were formerly sent by his Lordship the Bishop of Jerusalam, have used all possible means in order to release our friends from their chains, and they have hitherto provided me with money for them. They desired me to tell you that, as soon as they meet with the King, they will repeat their former entreaties concerning the release of them. If this should fail, they hope to find out the motives of His Majesty keeping you so long in suspense. It

is quite out of the question that any of us, under the present circumstances, could venture to go to the King for this purpose, he being in a hostile country, where no one would be permitted to see him. Concerning the money you mentioned, it would be better not to send any, on account of the road being very unsafe. Up till now I was enabled by my friends here to provide them with money. However, circumstances may arise that this source might be cut off; in such a case it would be very desirable to know at Massowah where I could draw for them. As there is all possibility that we have to spend another rainy season here, it would add a little to the comfort of the poor prisoners if you could send them some sugar, tea, cocoa, rice, &c., and some shirts for Captain Cameron, as he is in need of them; a little flannel and dark print for Mrs. Rosenthal's child; also if you could spare a little rhubarb and magnesia powder. I think the best way of transporting these things is to send two servants with the Gondar merchants, paying as merchants the toll at every station, which would be the most convenient way to get them safe through. The whole country is in a most disturbed condition, rebels rising everywhere. I shall send your letter to Captain Cameron, who I have no doubt will give you more satisfactory advice than I am able to give, and as soon as I have his answer I shall continue to send it to you. I thank you for your kind consideration. I am well, with my family, thank God, though we are in constant anxiety what may befall us the next hour.

I remain, &c.

H. Rassam, Esq. (Signed) T. M. FLAD.
Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador to Abyssinia.

(C.)—*Dr. Schimper to Mr. Rassam.*

Honoured Sir, *Gaffat, March* 30, 1865.

MR. FLAD has had the kindness to communicate to me the contents of your last letter, to which I can at present only reply with the request that you will be good enough to regard circumstances in the same light as I had the honour of representing them in my former communication.

We have certain suspicions and more than these, that the Emperor Theodorus considers himself slighted, since he receives no answer from Her Majesty the Queen of England and is yet in error concerning this.

It is almost impossible to satisfy His Imperial Majesty in this respect as experience, after many efforts, has proved to us, therefore it would be much to the purpose that the letter of your Queen should arrive; but I may not venture to express an opinion whether you should, under existing circumstances, yourself bring the letter or send it by messenger partly for the valid reasons mentioned in my last letter, partly, because the present perils of the road render it unadvisable to risk the future of this highly important document, a circumstance which eventually must however take place.

The Europeans at Gaffat are partially under the ephemeral amnesty of His Imperial Majesty, but none of us is permitted to absent himself from the place. You will understand this hint.

With especial reference to myself, I have to inform you that, shortly after the arrest of Mr. Stern, I wrote politely but firmly to His Imperial Majesty, a circumstance which was most unfavourably looked on, so much so, that I should injure myself by so doing, were I to presume at present to intercede directly in the cause of the prisoners. Notwithstanding I shall always be ready to assist the cause of the prisoners and of yourself.

According to appearances His Imperial Majesty has no great objection to liberate the English Consul, Mr. Cameron, but it is a question whether he will ever give up Mr. Stern or Mackerer, a question which at present I am unable to answer.

The future is veiled, and what is to be done must be determined by circumstances which here quickly change, and may now be described as in a state approaching a crisis, which it requires a few months of patience to see eventuated.

There is a possibility that His Imperial Majesty may turn towards Tigré.

Excuse the shortness of this letter, and rest assured that I can only venture to write to you, because I can make use of the German language, to write in French is most dangerous. Should you be prevented from writing to me in German, and could find no means of doing so, be good enough to respect my request and communicate with me in the English language through Mr. Flad.

Everyone who writes to you from this, has good cause to request that you will not

make mention of his name to any one, because, at your present residence, there are elements opposed to peaceable relations with this country, and certain Abyssinians reside at Massowah and are paid to report all occurrences &c., to Abyssinia, which, of course they can rarely do with correctness.

Yours, &c.

Mr. Rassam, Massowah. (Signed) SCHIMPER, M.D.

(D.)—*Mr. Rassam to Mr. Flad.*

Dear Sir, *Massowah, February* 21, 1865.

ALLOW me to return you my best thanks for your polite and interesting communication of the 26th ultimo,* which reached me a few days ago. You can well understand how grieved I am to have been so long here without having it in my power to obtain the release of the poor prisoners, or even to alleviate their sufferings by sending them money or some necessary provisions. On the 24th July last (the day after my arrival here) I sent up a most courteous and respectful letter to the King, apprising him of my having been sent by the British Government, as a bearer of a letter from our Queen to his address, and as I wished to deliver it to him in person, I begged the favour of his sending me one of his followers to escort me up. The messengers who carried that letter, I believe, reached the Imperial Court about the middle of August, and they have been waiting for an answer ever since. I must tell you that with that letter I sent three others—one addressed from the Patriarch of the Copts in Egypt to the Emperor, and two to Aboona Salama, the Metropolitan of Abyssinia, one from his Patriarch, and the other from me, touching upon my Mission. From all I can make out, the messengers were received well and have been taken care of ever since. After I had waited about three months without receiving a reply, I despatched another letter to the King through the Naib of Arkeeko, and although it has been proved to me without doubt that that letter has also reached His Majesty, I have not yet been honoured with an answer. As I am quite at a loss to understand the cause of the delay, unless, indeed, the Emperor distrusts the duty on which I have been sent, I fear that some evil-disposed persons here have spread false reports which prejudiced him against us, as, I am quite certain, that there are a great number of people in these parts who do not wish to see the Governments of England and Abyssinia on friendly terms. Our Government is so anxious to adhere to the friendly relations which have always existed between them and the Emperor of Ethiopia, that they ordered me, as one of their officers at Aden, to carry the letter of our Queen myself, and directed me to inform His Imperial Majesty that the Queen would be happy to receive any Embassy he might wish to send to England. This I have already communicated to the Emperor in my first letter. I intend to write a third time to His Majesty, in the hopes of receiving a reply from him, as to his intention regarding the Royal letter in my possession. It is both sealed and signed by Her Majesty. If the Emperor should be near you, I shall feel greatly obliged if you or Mr. Schimper, or any of the other Europeans at your place, could manage to find out from His Majesty what his real intention is regarding the receipt of the Queen's letter. I take the liberty to ask you to do me this favour on the supposition that it would be quite safe and prudent for you to do so. Kindly thank Mr. Schimper for his favour in sending me that interesting letter by the messenger. Please show him this letter, and ask him to use his best exertions in finding out the cause of the King's delay in replying to me. If I can only know without doubt that I shall be received well by His Majesty, I will go up forthwith to him with the Queen's letter. I have heard from a good quarter how kind you have been to the captives, especially the Consul. I cannot too much thank you for your philanthropic and Christian feeling in acting in this generous manner towards those who are truly in need of succour.

You are at liberty to draw on me for 300 dollars for any expenses you have incurred or which you may wish to spend on behalf of Captain Cameron and his friends. I think your best plan would be to make the order payable to Parshotam, a Banian merchant of this place; because, in case I shall not be at Massowah when the order comes, he will be able to pay it. I shall, of course, leave proper instructions with him. I need not assure you again that I shall always be happy to pay for any expenses which you may incur upon sending me useful information, and I shall also be glad to pay the travelling expenses of any of the Europeans who can venture to the King's camp, and obtain from His Majesty a reply to my communications. If I can be of any service to

* Inclosure 2 (c) in No. 466.

you here, please do not hesitate to let me know, and communicate the same to Mr. Schimper. Wishing you health and prosperity with your family,

I remain, &c.

The Rev. T. M. Flad, (Signed) H. RASSAM.
Missionary, Gaffat, Abyssinia.

P.S.—I regret very much that I shall not have it always in my power to address you in German, and when you write again to me, I shall feel greatly obliged by your addressing me either in French or English, as M. Munzinger, who has been kind enough to write this, is often away from Massowah, and I shall have no one to translate a German letter, if you write to me in that language.

H. R.

Inclosure 2 in No. 491.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, May* 14, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for the information of Government, copies of two more important letters which I have received from Captain Cameron and the Rev. Mr. Flad.

2. It will be perceived that the communication from the former is of earlier date than his latest one that accompanied my letter to your address of the 12th instant, as it had to come to me viâ Gaffat.

3. I also send an open note from the Rev. Mr. Stern, for Mr. Goodhart, of 16, Lincoln's Inn Fields, for transmission to its destination.

4. Government will see from the contents of Captain Cameron's note, above mentioned, that it would be impolitic for me now to think of going up to the King with Her Majesty's letter. Indeed, as far as I am concerned, I do not mind risking the journey up if Her Majesty's Government will have no objection to my doing so.

5. I am still of opinion that an ultimatum, without active measures to back it, would not only be treated as waste paper by King Theodorus, but would most assuredly bring about a deplorable result. If Government intend to follow the wish of Captain Cameron, I beg that I may be furnished with the necessary instructions.

6. With regard to Her Majesty's letter in my possession, I would have sent it long ago to the King if I could have found a good opening for my doing so; but the very measure of forcing the Royal letter upon him, when he is unwilling to receive it, would have at once brought matters to a crisis.

7. There is no doubt that the unfortunate prisoners are quite sick of their lives, and would rather hazard their safety than to linger on much longer in their present torture: this is, of course, a point for the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 491.

Captain Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

Dear Rassam, *Magdala, April* 6, 1865.

MR. FLAD sent me your letter to him in German* and his answer, which seems very much to the purpose.

For God's sake don't think of coming up here, with or without a safe conduct.

You will only get chains for your pains.

Your person would be made use of not to get terms but concessions.

All this business has been about the absence of an answer to the King's letter.

If a simple answer had been sent, giving a courteous explanation of the delay, and begging that I and all the missionaries might be given a safe conduct out of the country, the matter might have been settled after last winter.

But your bringing up the letter yourself would have been a fearful risk.

* Alluding to my letter of the 26th February, 1865 (D), page 370, forwarded with my letter of the 12th May, 1865.—H. R.

It might have got us out if you had been properly submissive and acquiesced in everything that had been done; but the slightest movement of independence on your part would have got you into chains, or you might even have been detained from mere caprice, or put among us as a sort of additional hostage, after which a savage diplomacy would have been plied to get Soudan and Sennaar, by working on the fears of the British Government. Things have changed here, however, and the country is on the eve of dissolution.

If, instead of your third letter, the letter in your hands had been sent, with a polite ultimatum accompanying it, it might have got us out, or brought matters to a crisis, either one way or the other.

As it is, we are in for another winter, and an amount of misery no human being can calculate as far as we can see.

But, on the other hand, people talk of the King's going to Gaffat, and taking us with him.

If so, things may take a better turn.

We none of us now have hopes of getting out for another six months, by which time, I suppose, some of us must drop.

Iron frames could not stand this work another winter,in fact we are all so worse that a little sickness would floor us, and a severe attack of any kind kill the strongest of us.

Your servants are at the bottom of the mountain; I will write again by them.

God bless you, dear Rassam, but don't let me see your face here.

Write a line for me to Hertslet of the Foreign Office, and remember me to Playfair.

Adieu once more.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. D. CAMERON.

P.S.—The Bishop who has suffered so much on our account is still kind as ever. It would be well of you to write to him an Arabic letter of thanks: he has no fear of consequences.

(Signed) C. D. C.

Inclosure 4 in No. 491.

Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam.

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, May 25, 1865.*

IT is now four weeks that I send your messenger.

From the letters of Captain Cameron and Mr. Stern you will learn what steps they wish you to take for procuring their liberty.

As to what advice I should give you, Captain Cameron wrote to me the following: "I wish you to write to Her Majesty's Ambassador that I wish he would send his letter, and tell the King that unless we are sent out in a limited time there will be hot work for this country at once. It might get us out or not; but it would at least bring matters to a point."

What results such a decided step might have I am puzzled to say. Some of us are of the opinion that it might lead to the liberation of the poor prisoners; others, that it might have the contrary effect, and endanger their already miserable condition. However, this seems certain, that when, after you have sent Her Majesty's letter, and you will not soon receive an answer, it is evident that the King intends to insult England into a war.

I send two men with this,* with whom I agreed to give each of them 5 dollars, on their return here. For food on the road to the coast I gave each of them 2 dollars, and I beg of you to give each of them 2 dollars for food for their return. The Consul, Mr. Stern, and Mr. Rosenthal begged me to buy for them some sugar, tea, cocoa, shirts, and dark prints. If my servants will find the road safe enough to bring these articles through, would you be so kind to have them bought, and to procure them with a donkey to convey them hither.

About the King I can but say that he is still in the Wollo Galla country.

Mr. Waldemair, who is son-in-law to the late Mr. J. Bell, begs me to send his respectful regards, and desires to assure you of his willingness to serve you in any way he is able.

* The one is called Padle, the other David.

Allow me to add one petition of my own, if it is possible: almost all our medicines are spoiled and lost at the plunder, and the little we retained is exhausted; so I shall be very grateful for a few ounces of rhubarb-magnesia powder, 1-2 ounces of carbonate of soda, 1-2 ounces of Epsom salts.

Begging to forgive the liberty I take, I remain, &c.

(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

H. Rassam, Esq.,
Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador, Massowah.

No. 492.

Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(*Received June* 19.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, June* 17, 1865.

IN the "Times" newspaper of the 14th instant, your Lordship is reported to have said in the House of Lords on the previous evening, that you believed it to be the opinion of those best able to judge, that, if we were to send any mission to the King of Abyssinia, he would probably imprison the persons composing it, with a view to forcing us to take his part against his rivals.

I trust your Lordship will permit me to state that, though it is most probable that Mr. Rassam would be made a prisoner if he ventured to proceed to the Emperor's Court, and that, consequently, Mr. Consul Cameron exercised a sound discretion in his magnanimous advice to him not to leave Massowah, still I do not participate in the opinion that a similar fate would await a suitable English mission.

It must be borne in mind that, notwithstanding Mr. Rassam has received an English education, and has even studied at Oxford, and though he is in other respects eminently qualified for the mission entrusted to him, still he is not a native Englishman, but an Asiatic; and, therefore, the Abyssinian Monarch and his people may reasonably be excused if they are unable to distinguish (great as the difference really is) between that gentleman and persons such as the translator into English of the Emperor of Abyssinia's letter to Her Majesty the Queen, a young man, the son of an Armenian, who received an English education at Bombay by Dr. Wilson.

Such being the case, it is quite intelligible that the Emperor should continue to ignore Mr. Rassam's presence at Massowah as the representative of Her Britannic Majesty; and hence it is, no doubt, that up to the 19th May, the latest date of which intelligence has been received, that gentleman appears to be no further advanced than he was exactly nine months previously, when he first arrived in that island.

So far, however, am I from entertaining any apprehension as to a native English gentleman's experiencing the like treatment, or of his being otherwise than well received by the Emperor Theodore, that I am still ready to go out to Abyssinia, with a view to obtain the release of Her Majesty's Consul and his companions in captivity, either by the road proposed in the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 19th ultimo, or by the way of Massowah and Halai.

As it appears doubtful whether the Emperor has been successful in his late campaign in Shoa, and as the season has been allowed to advance so far, it might probably now be better to adopt the latter road, in order to reach with the least possible delay the high table-land of Abyssinia, which at Halai, at an elevation of more than 8,400 feet above the ocean, is only twelve geographical miles and a half distant in a direct line from the sea coast near Zulla (the ancient Adule).

It is appositely remarked by the Comte de Moynier, who (according to a notice in the "Athenæum" of this morning) proposes the establishment of trading stations at Halai and Mount Taranta, as the steep ascent to that place is called; "the climate of Mount Taranta is temperate and healthy, and it is not within the territories of King Theodore, who puts Europeans in irons. Only this latter assertion may be understood as intimating that the French intend again to dispute Theodore's sovereignty in north-eastern Abyssinia, and to renew in another form the attempt made by Captain de Roussel to gain a footing there, to which I called your Lordship's attention in the letter which I had the honour of addressing to you from Mauritius on December 26th, 1859, and as is detailed in pages 19 and 20 of my recent pamphlet, "The British Captives in Abyssinia."

Taking, then, into consideration the time that has elapsed since Mr. Rassam undertook his mission, it must surely be manifest to Her Majesty's Government that if any

further steps at all are intended to be adopted, they should be immediate; and, therefore, I again beg leave to place my humble services at your Lordship's disposal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 493.

Mr. Murray to Captain De Dohsé.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 20, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant,* offering your services to proceed to Abyssinia to effect the liberation of Consul Cameron and other British subjects, and I am to state to you, in reply, that his Lordship has no occasion to avail himself of your offer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 494.

Archdeacon Tatham to Earl Russell.—(Received June 23.)

My Lord, *Rectory, Stanford Rivers, Romford, June* 22, 1865.

I HAVE received the accompanying letter this morning, and if your Lordship should think that I can be of the least service in the matter to which the letter refers, I will most gladly write to the Coptic Patriarch, and to Mr. Leider, of Cairo, who has great influence with the Copts, to second my application. The late Patriarch I was intimately acquainted with, and most of the principal Copts in Cairo, as I edited for them an edition of the New Testament in Coptic and Arabic, and also "Mecarin's Homilies" in Arabic; but I do not know the present Patriarch, who has been consecrated only about a year, or a year and a half.

Perhaps your Lordship may decide to apply to the Patriarch through the Consul-General. If so, I would advise that he should take Mr. Leider with him.

I also know the present Coptic Aboona, the Ecclesiastical Head of the Abyssinian Church, or rather did know him before his consecration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY TATHAM.

Inclosure in No. 494.

Mr. Maule to Archdeacon Tatham.

My dear Mr. Archdeacon, *Ampthill Rectory, June* 21, 1865.

* * * * * *

I DON'T know whether you may happen to see a letter in to-day's (Tuesday's) "Times," signed Gardner Wilkinson, Tenby, in which the writer suggests that the best way of attempting the release of the English captives in Abyssinia would be through the Copt Patriarch at Cairo, as the Abyssinians are Christians of the Copt Church. If this be so, it occurs to me that you might be able (perhaps better than any other Englishman) to bring the matter to the notice of the Patriarch, and I am sure the will will not be wanting if you feel you can do so.

* * * * * *

Yours, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE MAULE.

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* No. 489.

No. 495.

Mr. Gibson to Mr. Layard.—(*Received June* 24.)

Sir, 25, *Moorgate Street, June* 23, 1865.

BY your request I take the liberty of addressing you to state that, having been down the Red Sea for some years and being intimately acquainted with the manners, languages, and customs of those countries, I take the liberty of tendering my services for procuring the release of my countrymen from the King of Abyssinia. The mode of procedure I shall keep secret to myself, but as soon as I have the Queen's authority under seal I shall proceed to Cairo forthwith, and then make arrangements that shall insure their immediate release. The only emolument I ask is 5,000*l.* for myself to be paid to me if I succeed, together with my expenses, which I guarantee not to exceed 2,000*l.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) THOS. GIBSON.

No. 496.

Mr. Murray to Archdeacon Tatham.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 27, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd instant,* offering to write a letter to the Coptic Patriarch at Cairo in order to endeavour to obtain the liberation of the British captives in Abyssinia; and I am to inform you, in reply, that Her Majesty's Government have already communicated with the Patriarch through Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt.

In conclusion, I am instructed by Lord Russell to convey to you his Lordship's thanks for your offer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 497.

Mr. Layard to Mr. Gibson.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 28, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter† offering for the sum of 5,000*l.* your services to obtain the release of the British Captives in Abyssinia, and stating that your travelling expenses would not exceed 2,000*l.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 498.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(*Received June* 28.)

Sir, *Aden, June* 5, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith for the information of Earl Russell, further despatches received from Mr. Rassam, containing most interesting intelligence from the captives themselves, who were all well up to the 1st May.

2. Mr. Rassam has, I think, judged rightly in not giving any guarantee or promise of interference to Dejaj Maraod as suggested by Captain Cameron.

3. In order that nothing may be left undone which might in any way facilitate the release of the prisoners, and as Mr. Rassam may have difficulty in communicating with Matemma, I have requested Mr. Colquhoun, Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt, to try if he cannot arrange for a sum of 500 dollars being sent from Egypt also to Matemma, to make sure the money being there if required. If both sums reach no harm will have been done. Mr. Colquhoun will be more likely to have means of communication with that side of Abyssinia. I have asked Mr. Colquhoun to draw on me for the

* No. 494. † No. 495.

amount if he has not funds at his disposal, and with the view of keeping the disbursement accounts in one office.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 498.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, May* 29, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith for the information of Government, copy of further communications I received from Captain Cameron, together with a letter from him to Dr. Norton Shaw of the Royal Geographical Society in London, also a letter from the Rev. Mr. Stern to his wife, and one from the Rev. Mr. Rosenthal addressed to the Rev. Mr. Goodhart, of 16, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

2. The letter from Mr. Stern is very interesting, and as that gentleman has authorised me to make any use of it I like, I would recommend that a copy of it be made to place with the correspondence touching my Mission. I am sorry I have no time to make a copy of it myself to annex to this letter.

3. I regret to report that the Aboona was still in confinement when the messengers left Magdala on the 2nd instant, and there was no likelihood of his making matters up with the King.

4. In accordance with the wish of Captain Cameron, I have written and thanked the Bishop for his kindness and civility to our people, and asked him at the same time that if he thought that by my sending Her Majesty's letter to him he could present it to the King himself, and believed that it would lead to the release of the prisoners, I would lose no time in transmitting it to him. I fear however that his continued imprisonment would debar him from rendering any assistance for the liberation of the captives.

5. I shall comply with everything that Captain Cameron and Mr. Stern have asked me to do for them, with the exception of the former's request about the promise he wishes me to make to the family of Dejaj Maraad. I deem it inexpedient to meddle in matters touching the political affairs of the country.

6. I have not yet heard of the receipt of my third letter by King Theodorus. I fear that his expedition into Shoa again would create some delay in my gaining authentic intelligence regarding its fate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 498.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Mountain, April* 3, 1865.

THE Abyssinian Easter has passed, but brought no solution and no prospect of a solution of our affair. The King has gone to Shoa again, he is expected back in about a month, when possibly he may take us on to Tigré or Debra Tabor, as he could'nt feed his troops here during the winter, the Walloo being at open enmity with him. Stern and I have been thinking matters over, and as the whole country is likely to be in open rebellion very shortly, we would urge on you most earnestly to send 500 dollars on my account to Matemma, to be left in the hands of Mr. Eiberlei of the Jerusalem Mission, and to send a note with it to Mr. Waldemeur at Yaffat, which Eiberlei can forward to him, to the effect that such sum has been placed at our disposal. I have given Dejaj Maraad ten dollars out of the 200. It would be well if you gave his servant 60 to 100 dollars for himself, and a strong promise to do anything for his family that the state of the country may require. He is anxious on this latter point, as he foresees great troubles shortly in Tigré. His messengers should have fifteen or twenty dollars, my servant Lucuma the same; but tell him it is on my account, or he may consider himself your servant and give me trouble hereafter.

Things have risen to famine prices here, and we will have difficulty in supplying ourselves with the necessaries of life, if we are kept on this mountain for the winter. It is impossible to suggest anything in regard to getting us out, but I fear unless the

Government tells the King plainly that the retention of a single prisoner will be followed by war, Stern, Rosenthal, and Macraire may be detained, as the King has a particular hatred of these three. I only tell you this on behalf of these poor people. The Government however will, I feel sure, act rightly as well as considerately, and we are prepared to acquiesce in every thing. Remember me kindly to Munzinger and the Catholic Mission, and believe me

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

I have placed half of the 200 dollars to Stern's account as I do not know whether it came from the Government or from some funds of my own. As Stern and I get on well together, I will always do the same; he kept me alive last winter.

C. D. C.

Inclosure 3 in No. 498.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, May* 1, 1865.

OUR letters are to start to-morrow, and Mr. Stern has shown me a letter he has written to England containing the salient points connected with his imprisonment. His letter has been hastily written, I have, therefore, thought it necessary to add, which I do with his concurrence, that I made two applications on his behalf—the first was after the Bishop had given large presents ineffectually to obtain his liberation; the second afterwards, when his papers were being translated, at which point I tried to arrest the whole affair by begging the King to hand him and Mr. Rosenthal over to me, and to let me send them out of the country together with anything they had written against him, and I would lay the matter before their own Government. I made a third application, begging that they might be sent out of the country; when I wrote requesting to be allowed to go to my post, in accordance with my orders, as it was evident I could do nothing further in the matter with any credit to myself or the Government. I add these points only because they were omitted by Mr. Stern, and make the story clearer as regards myself.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

I beg you will consider this a sort of postscript to Mr. Stern's letter, and add it in any use you may make of the latter, as I am necessarily compelled to postpone my own report until I shall see the Gaffat people, when a great deal which neither Mr. Stern nor myself can now explain will become more plain.

C. D. C.

Inclosure 4 in No. 498.

Consul Cameron to Dr. Shaw.

My dear Shaw, *Magdala Mountain, April* 30, 1865.

I WROTE you a hasty note nearly two years ago merely to let you know that I was alive and working. A week after I was at death's door from fever, and only saved by pushing on to our missionary station beyond the Abyssinian frontier.

I suppose you will have heard of the mission having been broken up some time after, and the ugly crisis in which the missionaries became involved.

I kept clear for three months, but, at last, I was obliged to come to the point, and got bowled over. So here I am with five and twenty pounds of chains to my legs, and no great chance of getting rid of them for some time. My black friend has had a long innings. Stern has been chained now over nineteen months, and I, sixteen. But I suppose it will all end in the country being opened, and a mixed civilization of missionaries and filibusters, chapels of ease, and cafés chantants being introduced: so it is all right. If protection could be ensured to Europeans to develop the resources of the country, it might be made to produce anything; but horse, mule, and cattle breeding, cotton and coffee farming, are what it is best adapted for. Cotton along the coast or within easy reach—coffee, indigo, madder, and even sugar, along the Lake Dembee and in the low countries, even when in and beyond Western Tigré. The

Galla countries beyond here produce musk, spices, gold dust, and ivory in abundance. I buy thirty pounds of coffee from the Galla peasantry here for a dollar, it is not good, but no trouble is taken about its cultivation.

God alone knows whether I shall be able to write again to you about these things, still more speak to you about them, some day; but "the blue heaven is above all!" as Lear says. I will try and write before winter sets in. "Waes Hael" is good old Saxon—I drink to your health in mead—remember me to Burton, Mr. White, and all other geographical friends.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES D. CAMERON.

Inclosure 5 in No. 498.

Rev. H. A. Stern to Mrs. Stern.

My dear Charlotte, *Amba Magdala, Southern Abyssinia, April* 1865.

AS there is just now an opportunity of sending to Massowah, I hasten to write, as I know, from my own feelings, how anxious you must be to receive tidings. Little did you or I anticipate that sad morning when a gloomy foreboding allowed you only to utter a faltering "God bless you," that our separation would be so long. Months ago my sufferings and imprisonment might have terminated, had not always some fresh and untoward event occurred to frustrate my hopes. The only comfort in all the afflictions that have been my lot for nearly nineteen months is the consciousness that ever since a gracious Providence directed my wandering steps to this country, I have only sought the welfare of souls and the glory of the Redeemer. My object was, of course, grossly misrepresented; and I believe that, next to the members of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, King Theodorus considers me the greatest miscreant that ever breathed the free air of heaven. But I must not be prodigal with the limited quantity of paper at my disposal, nor dare to be diffusive in my statements, without attracting the eyes of the guards; therefore I simply jot down the chief points connected with my own and fellow-prisoners' painful history. You are aware that in the beginning of April 1863 I reached Abyssinia. Our Mission, though restricted in its operations, was then most prosperous, and, despite obstacles, I cherished the most hallowed anticipations respecting the future. In June, Captain Cameron, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, arrived a second time at our station at Genda. The King, who had been at some distance, also quite accidentally came into our neighbourhood. During his stay in our vicinity, I heard several times that he was annoyed that Captain Cameron had not brought an answer to his letter to the British Government, and also for having gone round the frontier and formed, as was falsely represented, prejudicial intimacies with his enemies the Turks. Against us and our Mission I also heard unfavourable reports; and, as I knew the priests were opposed to us and our works, I communicated my fears to my fellow-labourers, and we all agreed not to incur any expense, except what was indispensably necessary for the support of schools, Scripture readers, and the extensive circulation of the Word of God. Not expecting violence or forcible detention, even under the most adverse circumstances, I visited the Falashas of various districts; and, at the end of August, accompanied by Cornelius, I set out for Armatgioho, a province well inhabited by Falashas who had never seen a missionary or heard the tidings of redeeming love. About the 20th of September I came back to Genda, and on the evening of my return a Royal order summoned the British Consul, all the missionary agents, and myself, to Gondar, to hear the reading of a letter which M. Bardel had brought from the Emperor of the French. All obeyed the behest; and on the morning of the 2nd of October, I think (the dates may not be quite correct), the despatch was publicly read, and the fictitious interview between M. Bardel and Napoleon III narrated before the small European Colony. The King was exceedingly dissatisfied with the letter and the reception of his messenger, and I know that M. Lejean, the French Consul, might still have kept us company, had not Aboona Salama arrested the King's violence, and gained him permission to leave. M. Lejean and M. Legarde, a French physician, were peremptorily required to quit Abyssinia, and the rest returned to their respective homes. The crisis, which for some time had been looming in the distance, was now drawing nearer and nearer; all felt that there was something impending; but even the most timid dreaded nothing beyond the seizure of property and an expulsion from the country. My own work being finished, I purchased the requisite number of animals and started for the coast. On my way I had to re-pass Gondar, where the King was still with his army.

The Metropolitan, with wonted kindness, invited me to his residence, an offer which I gratefully accepted. I reached Gondar on Thursday, and on Saturday I intended to pay my salaam to His Majesty. Unfortunately, before I could secure a baldarabā, or introducer, the King unexpectedly set out on an expedition against a rebel. I remained at Gondar till Tuesday, and then bade a final adieu to the Bishop and other friends, and quitted, as I thought for ever, the capital of Abyssinia. Captain Cameron and also the Frenchman Bardel accompanied me about two hours on my road, and then shook hands and parted. My people as well as myself were in the happiest mood, a feeling which even our animals seemed to share, for they marched with ease along the shelving path and ever dizzying precipices up to the plain of Woggera. Here to my surprise, I saw the King's white tents glittering in the sun's rays on one of the heights which dot the plateau. Duty as well as courtesy forbade me to advance without saluting His Majesty; this induced me to halt, and towards afternoon I proceeded, accompanied by two of my servants, of whom one spoke a little Arabic, to the Royal camping ground. After waiting about two hours, His Majesty came into the open air; myself and attendants immediately made a most humble obeisance. There was a frown on the King's countenance, which augured nothing auspicious; between the first question and the death of my two servants the hand of time could not have advanced ten minutes. The gloom of approaching night, the rattling of the sticks, and my own doubtful fate, prompted me to put my hand mechanically to my lips, or, as it was said, to put a finger into my mouth; this was construed into a crime, and in less time than these words take to pen I was stripped, beaten, and lay almost lifeless on the ground. Wounded, bruised, and bleeding, my executioners dragged or rather carried me down the hill, where my swollen wrist was fastened by a hoop and chain to the arm of a soldier. My guardian, moved with compassion, tried with rank grass to staunch the blood which profusely welled out of more than a score of gashes and scars; but finding the effort useless, he wrapt himself in his shama, and with my spectral form clinging to him, fell asleep. I also sank several times into a feverish stupor, and oh! how gladly would I have passed the wearisome hours of night in forgetfulnes, had not the shifting motion of blood in my throat and mouth denied me this indulgence. In sighs, groans, and excruciating agonies the night waned, and the beautiful stars, unconscious of my mortal woes, glittered with wonted brightness in the Eastern horizon. At daylight I was given into the charge of several chiefs whilst the King moved on to Gondar. The villagers, as also my guards, showed me much sympathy, and like the good Samaritan they washed my wounds and brought me an abundance of milk, the only nourishment my inflamed lips and gums allowed me to swallow down. Midday, my servants, strongly guarded, were conducted to my temporary prison, and never shall I forget the shrieks, lamentations, and agonizing contortions which the sight of their afflicted master occasioned. Orders had been sent that I should have foot and hand fetters, but as my ankles were too much inflamed for the hoops, they transgressed the Royal command, and only tied my left hand to my right ankle. The next day a detachment of troops came to escort me and my servants to Gondar. I was now treated as a regular criminal; in fact, my position became so painful and my physical suffering so intense that I looked for death as a happy release. The abject condition to which I had been reduced softened even the flinty hearts of my guards, and amidst words of comfort and hope they told me in whispering breath, that my intimacy with the Bishop, and the report that he had sold the Church lands to me and the British Consul, were the cause of my misfortune, and that it might have fared worse with me had I passed the Royal camp, as arrangements had already been made for my arrest. Loss of blood and want of food, beyond a few biscuits, brought on a melancholy and a depression of spirits which language cannot depict. On the fourth day I believe Mr. Flad, M. Bardel, Samuel (a convert of Bishop Gobat), and two officers of the Royal household, came to inspect my luggage, as I was suspected of having letters from the Bishop or Captain Cameron. My photographic sketches and a well-assorted collection of insects however entirely absorbed their curiosity, and the search turned out to be only a farce. In going away I mentioned to M. Bardel that I had papers and diaries which might compromise me; to which he readily replied, "Don't be afraid; for if anything is found, I will say they are the journals of ——, a gentleman in England." My visitors gave me and my luggage again in charge to the guards, and then left.

A few days later, all the missionary agents arrived at Gondar, and at the royal behest visited me. They all thought, as I subsequently learnt, that my days were numbered, and that I could not possibly survive my horrid wounds. Mr. Flad, who remained at Gondar, obtained leave to give me medicine; and his occasional hope-

inspiring visits, and a regular supply of wholesome provisions from the house of the Consul, staved off the fever, contrary to the expectations of my friends, and brought on a better state of health. The anticipated arrival of favourable letters from the British Government, as well as the energetic efforts of the Metropolitan and other friends, dispelled every doubt of my speedy release. Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul, also kindly offered to exert himself officially in my behalf, but I disclaimed all assistance that was not strictly of a conciliatory and friendly character. About the beginning of November, the King wrote to his European workmen at Gaffat that he had tortured me long enough, and that if they approved of it, they should come to Gondar and reconcile us. My prospects now looked bright and hopeful, when unexpectedly His Majesty was informed (I know by whom, but will not, without positive proofs, give the name) that I had papers unfavourable to him. This was exactly four weeks after my beating and incarceration. Not dreaming of anything inauspicious, and animated by the sweet hope of liberty, I passed the greater part of the day in conversation with my guards, when unexpectedly Samuel and a party of soldiers came rushing into my prison, seized every article in it, and carried it off to the King. My Egyptian servant, Joseph, who had been my fellow-prisoner, though not in chains, was desired to follow. Two hours of torturing suspense had elapsed, when bags, boxes, &c., were again brought back, minus every paper and book. I anxiously interrogated poor Joseph about every incident, but he was so agitated and nervous that I could only gather from his incoherent sentences that every paper and book had been handed to M. Bardel, who acted as examiner, and that now and then the King said, "Cocab" (my name in Amharic), is a "bilhatenya" (clever man); then again, a "tonkoulenya" (cunning man). The glowing prospect of freedom and restoration to the bosom of my family from that hour, like the declining rays of the sun, sank before my mind's vision, and all became again dark. Cheerless, and dismal, and removed from all human aid, I threw myself then, as during all my subsequent sufferings, on the arm of Omnipotence, and fearlessly braved the crested waves that threatened to engulf me. In the evening I was given in charge of severer guards, and tied hands and feet. Joseph, who was tenderly attached to me, unable to check his deep emotion, groaned and sighed as if his heart would burst. Twenty-five soldiers and five chiefs were now appointed as my regular guard. But notwithstanding this formidable watch, some of the soldiers during the night actually put their legs across my stiffened limbs, to prevent what they must have thought a miraculous escape. No stranger was allowed to approach my tent. A servant of the chief of the soldiers now and then baked me a few flat cakes, and brought me a leather bottle of water. One of the guards, into whose good graces I had wormed myself, informed me that I had an enemy at Gondar, and snapping his fingers (a sign that all was over), ejaculated, "We are all dust, and must die." On Tuesday evening, as stated, I was bound with fetters on hands and feet; and on the Monday following I heard from a delegate of the King that all the missionary agents had been brought in chains to the camp. Subsequently I was informed that they had all been again released; then, that one was still in irons; and finally, to add to the confusion, M. Mackerer, a French servant of the British Consul, sent me word, through a soldier, that the longed-for letter from the British Government would arrive in two days, and that on Friday I was to be liberated. Seconds yielded to minutes, minutes to hours, and at last came Friday. I had already lost trust in messages, but early on that morning, to my agreeable surprise and gratitude, the feet-chains were opened. Less guarded than usual, I sat in my tented prison, and prayerfully ruminated on my future destiny. About midday, my fierce chief gaily marched into the tent, and commanded that I should accompany him to His Majesty. I immediately obeyed the summons, but instead of a private interview with the Monarch, I found the whole army drawn up in a square, the furthest line of which was occupied by a kind of throne, on which sat the King, shaded by gigantic silken umbrellas. On the left side of His Majesty I noticed Messrs. Bardel and Zander, and on the right a host of priests and scribes, whilst in the interior of the square, and squatted on carpets, were ranged in opposite lines the King's European workmen, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, and the missionaries. The grins of some and the dejection of others filled me with a mingled feeling of contempt and gratitude. Scarcely one of the Europeans ventured to gaze at me, whilst myriads of black glittering eyes vainly tried to pierce my inmost soul. Fearless, and confident in the purity and integrity of my actions, I calmly awaited the issue of that pompous court of justice.

My Christian fortitude (and I do not say it in a boastful strain), which always rose higher as the danger became more imminent, almost flagged, as on looking round I saw Rosenthal in chains, standing about 100 steps from me, ignorant of the crimes he had

committed. I forgot entirely my own misery, and allowed an excited fancy to torment itself in reflecting on the sorrow, grief, and pain I had brought upon others. The distress, agony, and horror of his desolate young wife. rose like a revolting phantom before my mental vision, and unconsciously made me shake the abominable fetters by which I was held. A violent pull from the jailer put a stop to the dreamy speculation. The Fetha Negest was then read, and according to that code the verdict of death was pronounced on all who spoke, wrote, or offended the King. Judgment being thus announced before the accusations were read, the prisoners were naturally deprived of all defence or hope; for form's sake the charges were, however, read. Ten articles, were, I believe, brought forward against me; and the most formidable of these were, the assertion that a war between the King and a foreign Power would remove intolerance, and introduce religious liberty; that since the death of Mr. Bell the King had no good Counsellor; that various provinces, and also Genda, had been plundered; and, lastly, that in passing a place where lay bleaching in the sun 700 or 800 skulls, I had stated in my diary they had been murdered in cold blood. The only offensive statement in my book, of which I had unfortunately one copy, was the pedigree of His Majesty; and the last heavy crime consisted in my having a few harmless and complimentary notes from the Metropolitan. Rosenthal's sins, which were laid upon me, though I knew not a word of what he had written till that very moment, consisted in some remarks about the King's private life, in a letter to a relative in London. Even Mrs. Flad was arraigned before this Imperial Court, and that forsooth, because she wrote to me a note a year before, in which she stated that the Abyssinian lion had degenerated into a tiger, which note I carelessly threw among other papers. She was immediately pardoned on account of her husband. But myself and Mr. Rosenthal, notwithstanding all I urged, against the malice and obvious perversions in the translations, were unanimously declared guilty. Knowing full well, from sad experience, what the verdict implied, I appealed to Samuel, and intreated him to solicit the Royal pardon in our behalf. He at first did not deign to give me a reply; but on reiterating the request, he angrily retorted, "To-morrow, to-morrow." The King now waved his hand, and both Mr. Rosenthal and myself were led off to our common tented prison.

The chains were the same day again fastened round our legs; and Faith had once more to exert its energy, and seek refuge from surrounding despair in the arms of Omnipotence. Judgment was given on Friday, and on Monday morning all my luggage was for the last time carried off to the King. The same evening Jaque Obey, our fiendish jailer, tumbled half drunk into our tent, and, after eyeing me awhile like a basilisk, he exclaimed, "If I had a sword I would cut off that dog's head," and then, making again a pause, he jumped up, dragged me along the ground by the chain, and, amidst a shower of the vilest epithets, began to hammer tight my fetters. Rosenthal, having on slave-irons, he could not augment his torture, and so he dismissed him with the remark, "He is a 'balamakerah,'" *i.e.*, fellow sufferer on account of the other. These harassing scenes wrung the heart, and made death to be courted more than life. On the next morning Samuel and an officer came to our prison, and in the name of His Majesty promised me a pardon and favours if I confessed that through the family of the wife of Ras Oubie, one of the greatest men of the country, I had obtained the information respecting the Royal descent. I deprecated all acquaintance, direct or indirect, with that family, and my tormentors walked off in a discontented and angry humour. A spasmodic calm, like the lull of the elements before the outburst of a storm, now crept into our tent; we attributed this to the arrival of the impatiently-expected letter from the British Government—an intelligence that came to us quite accidentally. Every day, though in misery, of a life-long duration, must perform its diurnal motion, and add its segment to the past. This we mournfully experienced in our captivity, where even minutes became long periods in one's sad existence. The memorable 4th of December at length broke with wonted brightness upon the afflicted and happy, the prisoner and the free. About noon that day our fetters on the feet were removed, and, escorted by a detachment of soldiers, we were conducted before the King, His Majesty was at our arrival engaged in administering justice, and for two hours we had to stand close to the criminals who were undergoing the dreadful punishment of the giráf. On being summoned nearer, His Majesty ironically said, in reference to an expression which had inadvertently dropped from my lips, "Are you now afraid?" We gave no reply, but quietly resigned ourselves to Him who is a help to his servants in all times of need. His Majesty then peremptorily inquired why we had insulted him. Fearlessly though respectfully I returned, "Our object has not been to insult your Majesty, nor have we written a single word in the language of this country; but if we have done wrong, we humbly crave your Royal pardon." Samuel, who acted as interpreter,

had not quite finished translating this sentence, when the King commanded to take away our shamas and shirts. Miserable, wretched, with a mere rag around the waist, we were conducted back to our prison. Our guards now consulted among themselves whether they should leave us in the open air or permit us again to occupy the tent. The fear of our escape induced them to consign us again to our old place, where, on the bare ground, we spent a never-to-be-forgotten twelve hours. Cold and chilly was the night; gloomy and sad appeared the dawn of day. Our chief jailor, who had gone to the King, came back in about two hours, but instead of leading us to execution, as we had every reason to believe, he brought to each a tattered rag, and also ordered us to have some bread and water. Respite, and not release, did not lighten our burden or mitigate our mental and physical sufferings. A young native lad in the service of Mr. Flad, accompanied by a friendly soldier, occasionally came to the door of our tent, and, by signs, gave us to understand that we were ere long to be liberated. Our guards also put a stop to their petty tyrannies, and some became even civil and communicative. We now heard from all sides that our lives had been in imminent peril; nay, we were assured that on the day the King had us stripped, the knives to cut off our hands and feet were actually lying close to the spot where we stood, and that the fell deed was only prevented by the energetic remonstrances and intercession of the head of the Monks. Thus, almost miraculously delivered from mutilation and a horrible death, we shook off the depressing melancholy which deprived us almost of our senses, and began afresh to foster the prayerful hope of freedom and liberty.

Fifteen days more of trouble and exhausting anxiety rolled away; I do not recollect the date, but it was on a rainy and dull morning that our tent door was lifted up and, to our surprise as well as joy, there entered Flad, Samuel, and several of the Bishop's and King's people. My body being almost bent double by the chains, Flad softly requested me not to rise, as is customary at the receipt of a Royal message, but simply told me that His Majesty wished me to give him the exact price of certain silks which had been presented to him by the Metropolitan.* Having finished the valuation, which I could easily do, as most had been purchased by me in England, Samuel ordered me to get up, and then he informed me that it had been the King's design to kill me, but that God had not permitted it, and that now I had the means of regaining the royal favour if I supplied Mr. Flad, who was going to Europe, with letters to procure machines and one or two gunpowder makers. On the return of Mr. Flad, His Majesty would also allow me to leave Abyssinia, and that too overloaded with presents and a name famous in Africa and Europe. During the interval His Majesty would set me free, and afford me occupation in taking for him photographic sketches. I felt inclined to object to all these proposals, but Flad, to whom the King himself had shown the spot where he intended to kill me, advised me to give an unqualified assent to every demand, or otherwise it might go badly with myself and also with Mr. Rosenthal. His Majesty sent the following day to open our hand-chains, but on Mr. Flad representation that my legs were in a bad state, the order was reversed. Samuel subsequently said that the King wanted that the same fetters should that very day be attached to the Consul and Makerer, and that he had to beg most earnestly to prevent the command from being carried into effect.

Our affairs, though still undecided, assumed a more favourable aspect. We were again allowed to have a servant and also clothing, which (you will smile) consisted of shifts from Mrs. Rosenthal's and Mrs. Flad's rifled wardrobes. What we most prized were two Bibles, a solace we had not enjoyed for six long and trying weeks. Poor Joseph, whose constitution fright, terror, and suffering had entirely sapped, was removed to Gondar, where after a week's illness he breathed his last. Two or three days after the above incidents, Mr. Flad and Samuel came again to me and requested me to write to my friends to ensure the success of Mr. Flad's mission. Mechanically I complied with the Royal behest, and then made some oral arrangement with Flad on the subject. Another year of exile appeared inevitable. The King himself communicated his agreement with me to the Europeans at Gaffat. Judging rightly of my feelings they gently remonstrated with the King against my further detention, and instead of a machine and powder maker, through me they promised to provide themselves all that His Majesty required. Their objection appeared plausible to the King, and they were requested to come to the camp at Gondar, to reconcile us; when Captain Cameron, uninformed of all this, sent in a letter demanding leave to depart for his post at Massowah in compliance with orders from the British Government. This once more proved fatal to my own and Rosenthal's prospects, and on January 3, 1864, Captain Cameron, his

* The bishop presented to the King on his own account articles of considerable value, hoping thereby to gain his favour, and promote my restoration to freedom.

European servants, and all the missionaries were put in fetters, and we, together with them, confined to one common prison, within the royal inclosure.

The above is a hasty, brief, and unvarnished statement of facts which you will kindly communicate to Mr. Goodhart, for the information of all who sympathise with me and my fellow-prisoners. On a future occasion if I get paper, I shall furnish you with an account of our subsequent career of sufferings, viz., messages from the King, fresh hatred against me—awful passage of Scripture—suspected warning to me and Rosenthal before execution—full and complete pardon to Rosenthal and myself—release of Flad, and the other missionary agents—M. Bardel's return from Kassala—imprisonment—royal message that he was the cause of all our troubles—release of Rosenthal from his fetters, controversy about religious fasts between the King and myself—reckless temerity in quoting Isaiah lviii—public interview between the Metropolitan and myself—refusal to incriminate him—torture with ropes—Royal message, "I know you are not afraid to die, but I shall not kill you; on the contrary I shall at regular intervals torture you (*i.e.* myself) till the flesh falls in rotten pieces from your body"—second night's more frightful torture—finally, removal of all the prisoners to Amba Magdala. These and the former facts if duly delineated would form a book of real horrors far stranger than the most improbable and terrifying fiction. God bless you all, and in the pleasing and prayerful hope that we shall yet in God's own appointed time be reunited, I remain, &c.

(Signed) HENRY A. STERN.

Mrs. H. Stern,
16, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London.

Inclosure 6 in No. 498.

Letter from Mr. Rosenthal to his Family.

Dear Mother and Relatives, *Magdala Amba, end of April,* 1865.

YOU will no doubt hear within a short time of the letter of the Rev. H. A. Stern, in which he gives a sketch of the sufferings we have had to undergo since our arrival in this country, with the circumstances which accelerated them, in order to prevent ill-disposed persons from misconstruing his course of action here. Although the history of his sufferings comprises that of my own, with the exception of the beating, which he received at first, yet as Mrs. Rosenthal and the child shared our lot in part on the one hand, and were separated from me for about two months on the other, during which period I neither saw nor heard from them, you can easily imagine that these additional bereavements greatly contributed to my own sorrows. I have not written to you before for reasons too obvious to require any further explanation, and the present has for its object only to testify to the goodness and protecting care of our Heavenly Father, who in these various trials has not suffered us to succumb, nor our faith to decrease.

On our wedding day the Rev. Mr. Goodhart reminded us and gave us as a motto the beautiful promise, "As thy day so shall thy strength be;" and He in whom is yea and in Him Amen, has been faithful in that he promised, so that we have a good hope through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has delivered us out of six troubles, that the seventh also shall come nigh unto us.

Take therefore good courage, let faithful prayers ascend to the Throne of Grace, trust firmly that God in his own good time will answer our mutual supplications, and then hope assuredly that we shall come home, . . . , and the story of our captivity, which tended to bestow upon us more certainly that liberty with which the truth makes us free.

We shall then together raise up our Ebenezer, saying "Hitherto the Lord has helped us," and praise him for His wonderful dealings with the children of men. I only add a few things which concern more especially Mrs. Rosenthal and myself, as Mr. Stern has written all concerning himself to the time of my seizure and our imprisonment together. From that period our lot was one, so that I can safely refer you to his letter.

After the imprisonment of Mr. Stern I was in continued fear lest something untoward should happen to me, because I gave to him some letters to forward, one a missionary report to the Society, also to several friends delineations of the character and prospects of our work, to interest them in the same, and one was descriptive of our journey from the coast to the interior, and a six months' residence in this country, to which some personal remarks were added; these were among his seized

papers. Our anxiety was only too soon verified by the event. We were taken prisoners on the 5th of November, 1863; our animals, grain stored up for the next six months, clothes, books, medicines, money, in fact all we possessed, was seized, and we were for the next three days subjected to a series of insults, inconveniences, and wants in our house, and our servants were compelled to grind and bake day and night. In spite of this we were nearly starving for lack of bread. Some time after this event, the personal effects of Mrs. Rosenthal were returned, but only to be re-taken, subsequently and finally, and she and our child were left entirely destitute of clothing. When we arrived at Gondar I was chained hand and foot, and put in a separate tent from that of Mrs. Rosenthal; both were filled by soldiers to excess. Mrs. Rosenthal was actually obliged to beg and cry to have permission for two female servants to sleep by her side. On the Friday following my fetters were removed, and I joyfully anticipated entire release; but imagine my surprise and disappointment when instead of that I was brought before a gorgeous assembled multitude to be judged (*vide* Mr. Stern's first day of judgment). Mr. Stern and myself were both condemned to death according to the dictates of the "Fetha Negast," a book firmly believed by the Abyssinians to be of Divine origin; and although I repeatedly begged for mercy during the examination, I only received the answer to reply to the questions put to me. We both made one more attempt to be heard, Mr. S. in Arabic, and myself in Amharic, but were simply told "buckra" (to-morrow). During the trial two different soldiers holding my chains fell down at my side and were carried off like corpses.

We were now confined to the same tent, and hand and foot irons were put on in such a manner that we could not stand upright. My fetters were of a specially cruel construction. Usually the manacles are separated by two or three links of chain; mine, however, constantly kept my feet within one-eighth of an inch close together, and when I desired to move I was obliged to crawl upon both hands and feet. These are designated slave irons. I omit the intervening time that elapsed until the chaining of the Consul and the other Europeans. Mr. S.'s and my condition were a little ameliorated before that proceeding; but what Mrs. Flad, Mrs. Rosenthal, and the poor children suffered in Gondar during this 3rd January, 1864, and the following two days, baffles description. They were maltreated, received the most abusive language, and were deprived of food. In their extremity Mrs. R. opened the Bible at random, and her eyes fell upon the composing words of Joseph to his brethren, "Fear not, I will nourish you and your little ones." God did bless the supply of Mrs. R.'s nourishment so that she kept the two poor babes (ours and Mrs. Flad's) for three days from famishing.

They were, however, soon brought to the camp, and at the end of January permitted to visit us. Oh, my God, what a meeting was this of mine with my poor wife and child after two months' separation under such trying circumstances!

I pass over the liberation of the German missionaries, a painful illness and operation of Mrs. R., and a dangerous fever of the child, and come to Sunday, February 29.

On that day the King asked something of Mr. Stern in reference to the Bible, which I happened to answer, and being thus informed, he gave immediate orders for the opening of my chains. I was indulged also to occupy the same tent with Mrs. R., within a few yards of the European prisoners, and, thank God, we both say, we were never afterwards separated.

Thus we remained until the fearful evening of the 12th May, only alluded to by Mr. S., when we were tortured. Mrs. R., hearing our groans and cries, rushed out of her tent towards us, and, with the baby in her arms, who was then only ten months old, was beaten, knocked down, trod upon, and dragged back to the tent senseless. The marks of this treatment were visible after many days. That evening the poor child relapsed, and remained weak and sickly for many months.

When Mrs. R. revived, she lamented and agonized over the supposed death of myself and Mr. Stern. I was at last conducted back to her, lacerated, and with the distorted features of a madman.

The same tragedy was re-performed the following evening upon three of us, and Mrs. Rosenthal's sad pleasure consisted afterwards in healing our impotent arms. I was again chained, and have remained so ever since. We passed the incessant rains of a tropical winter in an old torn tent, experienced many disappointed hopes, were dragged, two and two chained ~~together~~, ~~across the country on mules~~, ~~every moment~~ in danger of pulling one another off our animals and breaking our necks, and on arriving here, were huddled together with about 200 persons of various ranks, ages, and sexes, with real or supposed crimes attached to them, and variously chained, and stuffed into a place about 60 feet in diameter. Mrs. R. is not nor ever was tied,

although she is considered a prisoner. To sum up the whole, we have been in perils of the sword, in perils on the road, in perils of the climate, in perils of the pestilence (the small-pox carrying off thousands in our immediate neighbourhood), in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often; Mr. S. and myself in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness.

We came here to preach the Gospel, but God has taught us practical lessons out of it; we came to be active missionaries, but He has made us suffering ones; and we believe His assurance that—"As we have suffered with Him, we shall also reign with him." Many dangers, but frequent deliverances; many trials, but sufficient strength; many fears, but abundant support; many sorrows, but strong consolations from above; many wants, but gracious supplies; and many an instant reply to fervent prayers. "When thou passest through the waters," &c. We have, indeed, experienced the believer's portion in an eminent and extraordinary degree; no exemption from, but great help under affliction; no overflowings, no scaldings. Why, then, should we despair for the future? "The wrath of man shall praise thee, O God; the remainder of his wrath thou wilt restrain." Our covenant God will bring us back to you; restore to us our Christian privileges in a Christian country, and our lost liberty, and, "though He tarry long, yet will I wait for His time."

Hitherto conciliatory letters and peaceable measures have failed to produce the desired effect.

Meanwhile, farewell. We and our little one are quite well. We send our love to you and all Christian friends. Mrs. R. adds a few lines herself. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

(Signed) A. ROSENTHAL.

My dear Emma,

Be kind enough to write to my parents; address M. Rosenthal, in Furstenburg, Mecklenburgh.

No. 499.

Mr. T. Plowden to Earl Russell.—(*Received July* 1.)

My Lord, *Oriental Club, Hanover Square, June* 26, 1865.

IN the papers relating to the Abyssinian captives, as published in the "Daily News" of the 21st ultimo, a letter of your Lordship, dated 13th November, 1861,* is quoted, in which it is stated that "the Queen having heard that the King of Abyssinia paid a ransom for the late Mr. Consul Plowden, and being desirous of making some acknowledgment for his kindness, had directed that a suitable present should be sent to the King."

I beg leave respectfully to inform your Lordship that the ransom above mentioned was paid out of the estate of the late Mr. Consul Plowden, the money having been advanced in the first instance by certain Gondar merchants, to whom it was repaid, as above stated, through Mr. Barroni, my late brother's agent at Massowah.

As my brother's representative I take advantage of this opportunity to correct a statement of Mr. Beke, which has also appeared in these papers, viz., that Mr. Consul Plowden "lost his life while bearing arms in his (the King's) cause."

This is contrary to the facts. My brother was returning from the King's Court to Massowah, attended only by his private servants, and without any escort, when he was intercepted near Gondar by a party of rebels under one Garred, attacked and wounded, and taken prisoner. He was ransomed in the manner above stated, and died at Gondar nine days after, from the effects of his wounds.

I have, &c.

(Signed) TREVOR C. PLOWDEN.

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* No. 322.

No. 500.

Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(*Received July* 10.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, July* 7, 1865.

ON several occasions I have ventured to express to your Lordship my readiness to be the medium of communication with the Emperor of Abyssinia, with a view to the liberation of Consul Cameron and his companions in captivity; but it would appear that Her Majesty's Government shrink from the responsibility of availing themselves of my services, lest I also should be made a prisoner, or even put to death, by the irritated monarch.

Such being the case, I see no means of relieving Her Majesty's Government from their difficulty, except by my undertaking the task of approaching the Abyssinian Sovereign on my own personal responsibility. This I now beg leave to state unreservedly I am prepared to do; and further, I am content to visit the Abyssinian Court in the character of a private traveller, not officially accredited, should such a course be deemed expedient.

Possessing, as I do, an acquaintance with all the circumstances and bearings of the case, I have not the slightest doubt of being able to bring His Abyssinian Majesty to see that, in imprisoning Consul Cameron, the British Missionaries, and other Europeans, he has made a great mistake; and that, in order to put himself right with the British nation and with the whole Christian world, he must immediately set them free.

I have likewise no doubt of being able to convince His Majesty that the only effectual way to secure the integrity and stability of his Empire, to preserve Christianity among his people, and to gain the friendship of England and all other European nations, is to cultivate the arts of peace in preference to those of war, and to develope the immense resources of his rich and fertile country; showing him how he might most readily do this by the means pointed out in my letter to your Lordship of May 19th last, which is printed among the papers laid before Parliament.

Should my undertaking be crowned with success—with respect to which I do not entertain any apprehension—I should have had the gratification of liberating the unfortunate captives, some of whom are my own personal friends, from their long imprisonment, as also of freeing Her Majesty's Government from a great embarrassment and the British nation from an equally great disgrace.

In the possible, but almost improbable, alternative of failure, I should have no one to blame but myself; whilst Her Majesty's Government would only be able to say that no means whatever had been neglected of bringing about a result which every friend of humanity must have so much at heart.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 501.

Mr. Layard to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 13, 1865.

EARL RUSSELL has had under his consideration your letter of the 7th instant, stating that it is your intention to go to Abyssinia on your own responsibility to endeavour to effect the liberation of Her Majesty's Consul, Captain Cameron, and the British subjects now in captivity in that country; and his Lordship now desires me to state to you that, if you proceed to Abyssinia as a private traveller, Her Majesty's Government cannot interfere in the matter; but he thinks it right to warn you at the same time that Her Majesty's Government are in possession of information derived from private sources describing the cruel and merciless character of King Theodore, which almost lead to the conclusion that he is not in his right mind. Her Majesty's Government, therefore, whilst they fully appreciate the motives of humanity and self devotion which actuate you in undertaking this journey, feel bound to declare most distinctly that they cannot hold themselves responsible for anything that may happen to you in Abyssinia, nor can they give you any authority whatever to enter into political arrangements with the King on their behalf, or to interfere in the political affairs of the country.

Whatever you choose to say to the King will, therefore be the expression of your own sentiments and views, for which Her Majesty's Government will in no wise be

responsible, and you will no doubt see the propriety of making it as clearly understood by King Theodore and his agents, as Lord Russell desires you to understand yourself, that if you go to Abyssinia you proceed entirely as a private traveller and that in no sense are you to be considered as an organ of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 502.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Merivale.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 14, 1865.

WITH reference to my letter of the 17th of February last,* I am directed by Earl Russell to request that you will move Secretary Sir C. Wood to give instructions to Mr. Hormuzd Rassam at Massowah to the following effect:—

In case the 500 muskets, which Her Majesty's Government have sent to Aden to be placed at Mr. Rassam's disposal for presentation to King Theodore of Abyssinia, have been forwarded to Massowah, he is at once to send them back to Aden, retaining only fifty of which he is authorized to dispose as he may judge proper.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 503.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(*Received July* 17.)

Sir, *Aden, June* 28, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for the information of Earl Russell a further communication from Mr. Rassam.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 503.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, June* 23, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of Government, that since the date of my last letter to your address of the 29th ultimo,† I have received no reliable intelligence regarding the prisoners or the movements of King Theodorus.

2. I also regret to say that up to this time no tidings have been received either from, or of, Ibrahim, the person whom I sent up with my third letter to the King, and I am only afraid that he has met with the same reception as my former messengers.

3. In paragraph 9 of my letter of the 10th April,‡ I reported that Ibrahim had promised to return in forty days from the day of his departure hence, on the 30th March, but from some cause or another, about the middle of April, he had not gone up further than Tembian, when he ought to have reached the King. At that rate he could not have reached Magdala before the end of that month, especially as he had to go to Debra Tabor (hitherto spelt erroneously "Dubartaboot") to get his brother Samuel to assist him in obtaining a reply for me from the King.

4. In Consul Cameron's note of the 30th April (a copy of which I forward to you with my letter of the 29th ultimo),§ I was informed that the King had gone again to Shoa, and was expected back in about a month. That would bring His Majesty's absence from Magdala to the end of last month, and as Ibrahim could not possibly follow the King into a hostile county, of course, he must have waited for him at Magdala, consequently he could not have delivered my third letter before the beginning of this month.

5. I must confess that I am beginning to give up all hopes of gaining the release of the poor captives by conciliatory measures. If I do not receive glad tidings from

* No. 452. † Inclosure 1 in No. 498. Inclosure 1 in No. 483. Inclosure 4 in No. 498.

Ibrahim before the end of this month, I shall take it for granted that my third letter has met with the same result as those that preceded it.

6. Wishing to prolong the sufferings of the captives, the King has undoubtedly made up his mind to treat all our efforts with contempt, and I cannot see what further steps we can take than we have already used, to hasten their liberation, and any hostile movement on our part might cost them their lives or aggravate their already unhappy condition.

7. On the 6th instant I despatched a special messenger, on a dromedary to Matemma with 800 German crowns, which Consul Cameron and the imprisoned missionaries had asked me to send for them to the care of M. Eiberlie, of the Jerusalem mission. The messenger promised to reach that place in a month, as he had to travel through the Egyptian territory *vid* Barka, Kassala, and Gadarif.

8. It is rumoured that Wukshum Gobazie has taken possession of the greater part of Tigré, and was within a day's journey of Adowa? it is premised that he has by this time occupied that city.

9. Tisso Gobazie is reported to have extended his conquest to within two days from Debra Tabor, and it is conjectured that he has by this time got the Germans of Gaffat under his power, which I fancy they will not be sorry for.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 504.

Earl Russell to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 21, 1865.

MR. W. GIFFORD PALGRAVE, a gentleman well known for his travels in Arabia, having offered to proceed to the Court of King Theodore of Abyssinia with a view to effecting, if possible, the liberation of Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, and other British subjects now held in captivity in that country, I have determined to avail myself of Mr. Palgrave's services.

I have directed Mr. Palgrave to proceed at once to Egypt, and on his arrival there to place himself under your orders: You will endeavour to ascertain, on your arrival in Egypt, whether it would be most desirable for Mr. Palgrave to attempt to reach the head-quarters of the King of Abyssinia through the Egyptian provinces on the Upper Nile, or through Massowah or some other port on the Red Sea.

From the information received by Her Majesty's Government it would appear that formidable rebellions have broken out in the territories of King Theodore, that his capital has fallen into the hands of his enemies, and that the districts between the Turkish province now under Egyptian jurisdiction on the borders of the Red Sea and the interior of Abyssinia, are no longer in his power.

It will consequently require much prudence and caution on your part in determining the route by which Mr. Palgrave should proceed on his mission.

If you should decide, in consequence of the information you are able to obtain in Egypt, that Mr. Palgrave's best course will be to proceed to Abyssinia through the Egyptian provinces on the Upper Nile, you will request the Viceroy, in the name of Her Majesty's Government, or in his absence the officer left in charge of the Government of Egypt, to furnish every assistance to Mr. Palgrave, and to direct instructions to be sent to the Egyptian authorities on the Abyssinian borders to protect Mr. Palgrave and to afford him every facility in the prosecution of his journey.

If you should think it desirable to do so, you may request the Viceroy or the officer in charge of the Egyptian Government to furnish Mr. Palgrave with a letter directed to King Theodore in behalf of the captives, but it is evident, considering the relations which exist between the King and the Egyptian Government, that such a letter, if furnished, should be used with the greatest caution by Mr. Palgrave, and only in the event of absolute necessity.

Should you be of opinion that Mr. Palgrave's best plan would be to enter Abyssinia from Massowah or some other port on the Red Sea, you will ask the Egyptian Government to afford him similar facilities in passing through the Province of Massowah, now placed under the immediate authority of the Viceroy.

It may also be advisable to procure for Mr. Palgrave letters of recommendation from the Coptic Patriarch to the Aboona and clergy of Abyssinia.

I have already informed the Secretary of State for India of Mr. Palgrave's mission,

and have requested that instructions may be sent to the Resident at Aden to furnish Mr. Palgrave with all the assistance he may require for the prosecution of his journey. You will inform Colonel Merewether, the Resident at Aden, as soon as you have decided upon the route which Mr. Palgrave is to follow.

Should Mr. Palgrave proceed to Abyssinia through the Turkish territories now under the jurisdiction of the Pasha of Egypt on the Red Sea, you will instruct him to go in the first instance to Massowah, and to place himself in communication with Mr. Rassam. That gentleman will be able to furnish him with the fullest information that can be obtained with regard to the present state of Abyssinia, and as to the best course to be pursued in making the attempt to reach King Theodore. You will explain distinctly to Mr. Palgrave that his mission is in no way connected with Mr. Rassam, who will be instructed by the Secretary of State for India to return to Aden* with the Queen's letter as soon as Mr. Palgrave shall have departed for the interior.

If on your arrival in Egypt you should find that Mr. Rassam has left Massowah for the Court of King Theodore, or is about to do so, or if Mr. Palgrave on his arrival at Massowah should find that Mr. Rassam has already left for Abyssinia, or has made arrangements for doing so, Mr. Palgrave should not proceed with his mission. He will in this case either remain in or return to Egypt, as the case may be, until I can furnish you with further instructions. You are further authorized to stop at your discretion the journey of Mr. Palgrave by the Nile if you should find the accounts from Mr. Rassam such as to induce you to think that that gentleman will shortly proceed in person to the Court of King Theodore. In that case, Mr. Palgrave will either remain in Egypt or proceed to Massowah to confer with Mr. Rassam, as you may judge most expedient.

The object of Mr. Palgrave's Mission is to procure the liberation of Consul Cameron and the other prisoners. On his arrival at the Court of King Theodore, he will, if necessary, deliver to His Majesty himself, or, if unable to do so, he will place in the hands of his principal Minister a copy of the inclosed Memorandum, with which I have furnished Mr. Palgrave, inviting King Theodore, if he wishes to be friendly to the British Crown, to release Consul Cameron and the other British subjects, and informing him that he must not expect friendly conduct from the Government of Her Majesty the Queen if he refuses to do so. Should Mr. Palgrave, however, have reason to believe that he can obtain the liberation of the captives without making use of the Memorandum, which might have the effect of further irritating the King, he is at liberty to use his discretion in the matter.

Should Mr. Palgrave succeed in liberating the prisoners, or should he find it impossible to accomplish the object of his mission, he will at once return to Egypt and await such further instructions as I may consider it advisable to give him through you.

You will give Mr. Palgrave clearly to understand that his mission is limited to a specific object—the liberation of the prisoners. He may give general assurances to King Theodore, that it is the desire of Her Majesty's Government to maintain friendly intercourse with Abyssinia, and to extend the commercial relations of the two countries. He may also say that, when the prisoners are released, Her Majesty's Government will point out the mode in which commerce between Great Britain and Abyssinia may be promoted. But he is not authorized to enter into any formal engagements with the King on any subject whatever, nor to hold out any hopes to him of assistance from the British Government in any war or expedition against his neighbour. Mr. Palgrave is, however, at liberty to state to the King, in the event of his thinking it expedient to do so, that, if his Majesty should at once release the captives and permit them and other British subjects in Abyssinia to depart freely from his territories with their property, Her Majesty's Government will, on that occasion, require no reparation or indemnity for their imprisonment, and will be willing to overlook what has occurred. But Mr. Palgrave will, at the same time, take an opportunity of representing to the King the violation of international law and the great disrespect to the Queen's Government of which he has been guilty in detaining against their will, imprisoning, and maltreating Her Majesty's Consul, and other subjects of Her Majesty.

You will further inform Mr. Palgrave that he is to abstain from mixing himself up with the political affairs of the country, from taking part in any struggle for power which may be going on in Abyssinia, and from giving any encouragement or hopes of assistance to any person in rebellion against King Theodore.

If, after the liberation of the prisoners, King Theodore should ask whether Her

* See No. 507.

Majesty's Government would receive a mission to be sent by him to this country, Mr. Palgrave will inform his Majesty that he will represent his wishes to Colonel Stanton.

Mr. Palgrave's personal expenses together with those of the interpreter and attendants, whom he may hire in Egypt will be paid by Her Majesty's Government. You will provide him with such funds as may be required for the journey and reimburse yourself by drawing upon the Chief Clerk of this Office.

Mr. Palgrave proposes to take with him, besides one dragoman, some personal attendant, four armed Nubians, both for appearance sake and in case of casualties on the road. This suggestion appears to me not unreasonable.

Mr. Palgrave also desires to have an official seal. I have no objection to sanctioning his request, considering the importance attached to a seal in the East; but Mr. Palgrave will submit his official seal to you for your approval, and you will take care that he employs no designation of his official character other than that authorized by my instructions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 505.

Earl Russell to Mr. Palgrave.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 21, 1865.

AS I have decided upon availing myself of your offer to proceed to the Court of King Theodore of Abyssinia, with a view to obtaining, if possible, the liberation of Mr. Consul Cameron, and other British subjects now held in captivity by that monarch, I have to instruct you to proceed at your earliest convenience to Egypt, and to place yourself on your arrival there under the orders of Her Majesty's Consul-General, Colonel Stanton. I have given to Colonel Stanton your instructions with regard to your Mission. He will communicate them to you, and you will act entirely under his directions.

Your expenses, and those of your interpreter and attendants, will be paid by Her Majesty's Government, and Colonel Stanton is instructed to furnish you with the necessary funds.

In conclusion, I have only to urge upon you the greatest caution and prudence in carrying out this important and delicate Mission which I have confided to you, and to express an ardent hope that you may be successful in obtaining the liberation of the unfortunate prisoners who have been exposed to so much suffering.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 506.

Earl Russell to Mr. Palgrave.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 24, 1865.

YOU are authorized to communicate the substance of the Memorandum sent herewith, if you shall find it useful, to the King of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

Inclosure in No. 506.

Memorandum to be presented to King Theodore of Abyssinia, or to his Chief Minister, by Mr. W. Gifford Palgrave.

IF His Majesty the Emperor of Abyssinia desires to be on friendly terms with the British Crown he must release Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, and the other British subjects now kept in confinement in Abyssinia. He may then expect the most friendly conduct, and the most friendly intercourse, on the part of the British Government and Her Majesty the Queen.

Should His Majesty the Emperor of Abyssinia refuse to release Captain Cameron and the other prisoners, His Majesty must not expect friendly conduct on the part of the Government of Her Majesty.

The Government of Her Majesty the Queen wish for friendly intercourse and peaceful commerce with Abyssinia.

This Memorandum will be presented to His Majesty the Emperor, or to His Majesty's Principal Minister, by Mr. William Gifford Palgrave, who, as the Agent of the Government of Her Majesty the Queen, has been instructed to deliver it to His Majesty.

Foreign Office, July 21, 1865. RUSSELL.

No. 507.

Mr. Layard to Lord Dufferin.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 24, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to state to you, for the information of Secretary Sir Charles Wood, that his Lordship has determined to avail himself of the services of Mr. William Gifford Palgrave, a gentleman well known for his recent travels in Arabia, who has offered to proceed to the Court of King Theodore of Abyssinia, for the purpose of effecting, if possible, the liberation of Captain Cameron and other English subjects now in confinement in that country.

Mr. Palgrave will not be the bearer of a letter from Her Majesty, but he will be directed to communicate a message from Earl Russell to King Theodore, or to his Chief Minister, to the effect that, if the King wishes to be on friendly terms with the British Crown, he must release Her Majesty's Consul and the other British subjects now kept in confinement in Abyssinia; and that, in the event of his refusing to release the prisoners, he must not expect friendly conduct from the Government of Her Majesty the Queen.

I am further directed to inform you that Earl Russell is of opinion that, whilst Mr. Palgrave is on this mission to the King of Abyssinia it would be advisable, to prevent any misunderstanding, that Mr. Rassam should return with Her Majesty's letter to Aden; and his Lordship requests that instructions may be sent to Mr. Rassam, and the other members of the Mission, to leave Massowah as soon as Mr. Palgrave arrives at that place, or, in the event of Mr. Palgrave proceeding to Abyssinia through Egypt, as soon as Mr. Rassam shall have received information from Colonel Stanton to that effect. Mr. Rassam should also carry with him to Aden the arms which have been sent to Massowah as a present to the King of Abyssinia. The result of Mr. Palgrave's Mission will determine whether it will be necessary for Mr. Rassam to proceed hereafter to the Court of King Theodore with Her Majesty's letter.

Mr. Palgrave will proceed to Egypt with Colonel Stanton, Her Majesty's Consul-General in that country, who will give Mr. Palgrave such directions as may be necessary as to his journey. Should Colonel Stanton be of opinion that Mr. Palgrave should proceed to Abyssinia through Massowah, or some other port on the Red Sea, Earl Russell requests that Sir Charles Wood will direct instructions to be given to the Resident at Aden, to insure to Mr. Palgrave all the facilities he may require for prosecuting his journey, and his Lordship would further suggest that the "Victoria," or some other vessel of war, should be directed to call at regular intervals at Massowah for any letters or despatches that Mr. Palgrave may desire to send to Europe, and with a view of obtaining information as to that gentleman's proceedings.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 508.

Mr. Layard to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, July* 24, 1865.

WITH reference to my letter of the 24th instant, I am directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India in Council, copies of the instructions issued at this Office to Her Majesty's Agent and

Consul-General in Egypt, and to Mr. Palgrave,* bearing upon the mission of the latter to the Court of Abyssinia, to endeavour to obtain the liberation of Mr. Consul Cameron, and other British subjects now detained in captivity in that country, together with a Memorandum, which it is proposed that Mr. Palgrave should present to the King.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 509.

Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(*Received July* 25.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, July* 21, 1865.

WITH reference to the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 7th instant,† expressing my readiness to go to Abyssinia on my own responsibility, with a view to the liberation of Her Majesty's Consul, Captain Cameron, and his companions in captivity in that country, I now beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Layard's letter of the 13th instant,‡ in reply to the same, in which he states, by your Lordship's desire, that if I proceed to Abyssinia as a private traveller, Her Majesty's Government cannot interfere in the matter; but that your Lordship warns me that Her Majesty's Government are in possession of information derived from private sources, describing the cruel and merciless character of King Theodore, which would almost lead to the conclusion that he is not in his right senses.

And Mr. Layard further informs me that if I undertake this journey, Her Majesty's Government cannot hold themselves responsible for anything that may happen to me in Abyssinia, nor can they give me any authority whatever to enter into any political arrangements with the King on their behalf, or to interfere in the political affairs of the country, and that whatever I may choose to say to the King will therefore be the expression of my own sentiments and views, for which Her Majesty's Government will in no wise be responsible.

And lastly, Mr. Layard represents to me the propriety of my making it clearly understood to King Theodore and his Agents that I proceed to Abyssinia entirely as a private traveller, and that in no sense am I to be considered as an organ of Her Majesty's Government.

In taking due note of your Lordship's desires, as thus conveyed to me, I would beg leave to represent that, so desirous am I, for my own sake, not to be considered as an organ of Her Majesty's Government, that I would hope to be excused for not even offering to be the bearer of despatches from your Lordship to Consul Cameron, on account of the extreme ill-feeling which unhappily exists between the British Government and the Abyssinian monarch.

Mr. Layard, by your Lordship's direction, speaks of the cruel and merciless character of King Theodore, which almost leads to the conclusion that he is not in his right senses; and, on the other hand, I learn from a letter from one of Consul Cameron's fellow-captives, written at Magdala in April last, only three months ago, that that monarch "considers the members of Her Britannic Majesty's Government" —I trust your Lordship will forgive me for daring to repeat the words now lying written before me—"the greatest miscreants that ever breathed."

Under such circumstances, your Lordship will perceive how necessary it is for me to avoid everything that might lead the irritated monarch to believe me to be a messenger, even though unrecognized, of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 510.

Mrs. Stern and others to Earl Russell.—(*Received August* 1.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, July* 30, 1865.

THE great anxiety for the lives and release of the captives in Abyssinia must be the excuse for troubling your Lordship with this letter.

We, the friends and relatives of these unfortunate people, wrote to Dr. Beke to

* Nos. 504 and 506. † No. 500. ‡ No. 501.

ask him for an interview on the subject of the offer which he made to Her Majesty's Government to go out to that country on his own personal responsibility; and in consequence of the great uncertainty in which we have so long been left as to their fate, we have been induced to treat with him respecting his kind offer. But as we find this would involve a considerable outlay, which we have not the means of making without a public appeal, we write to say that such a proceeding is not at all intended to interfere with any action which Her Majesty's Government may be taking in the matter, but only to subserve that action, if needful, by additional influence, the object of which arises purely from a strong desire to rescue these our unfortunate friends and relatives from the painful captivity and suffering which they have endured for nearly two years, and are still enduring.

We beg most respectfully to add our most earnest entreaty that Her Majesty's Government will at the same time continue their benevolent efforts towards the accomplishment of this most desirable end, and to subscribe ourselves, &c.

(Signed) CHARLOTTE E. STERN, Wife of the Rev. H. A. Stern.
CHARLES HENRY PURDAY, Father-in-law of the same,
24, Great Marlborough Street.
CHARLOTTE E. STERN, JUN., Daughter of the Rev. H. Stern.
EVELINA C. STERN, Ditto.
LOUISA M. STERN, Ditto.
HENRY A. STERN, Son of the Rev. H. A. Stern.
ALETTA CAMERON, Mother to Consul Cameron.
M. DESBOROUGH, Sister to Captain Cameron.
L. DESBOROUGH, Brother-in-law to Consul Cameron.
E. BLACKALL, Sister to Consul Cameron.
A. BLACKALL, Brother-in-law to Consul Cameron.
L. C. DESBOROUGH, Nephew to Consul Cameron.
C. H. DESBOROUGH, Niece to Consul Cameron.
MARY ANN PURDAY, Mother-in-law of the Rev. H. A. Stern.
M. A. PURDAY, Sister-in-law to the Rev. H. A. Stern.
C. H. PURDAY, JUN., Brother-in-law of the same.
J. T. PURDAY, Ditto.
F. S. PURDAY, Ditto.
E. C. PURDAY, Sister-in-law of the same.
SARAH T. MORGAN, Ditto.

No. 511.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(Received August

Sir, *Aden, July* 31, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith further despatches just received from Mr. Rassam at Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 511.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, July* 22, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to report that about two hours after the departure of the "Victoria" for Aden this morning, the private messenger whom I had sent up to Magdala with a note to Consul Cameron on the 23rd of March, returned here with an answer, of which I send herewith a copy for the information of Government.

2. I have also received a short report from Consul Cameron addressed to Dr. Shaw of the Geographical Society in London, and two notes to the Rev. Mr. Goodhart, of 16, Lincoln's-inn-Fields, all of which I forward herewith inclosed for transmission to their destinations.

3. The cause the messenger gave me for his long delay was sickness with which he was attacked at Sacoota on going up, and in Hamasain in coming back.

4. As the "Victoria" may not return to this place for some time, I have deemed it

advisable to engage a native boat to carry these communications to Aden forthwith, as I know that Her Majesty's Government will be glad to receive the latest intelligence from the prisoners without loss of time.

5. It is reported that the King has gone into Shoa again, as he thinks that unless he subdues that important kingdom, it is of no use to bother himself in quelling the rebellion which is gaining more strength every day in other parts of Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 511.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala, May* 29, 1865.

THANKS for your note which arrived all right. What can you do for us you ask? Send up money; send by Matemma and Tigré; try the latter especially: send three messengers by Tigré, each with 100 dollars; unless you do this we may die of starvation. We are threatened with both siege and famine; we have only 180 dollars in hand, so for God's sake look sharp about this. Messengers will be able to make their way by Tigré; there is nothing whatever about us going on. If the King remains here we will also remain during the winter; if he moves to Debra Tabor or Tigré, we will be dragged along with him. A thousand thanks, dear Rassam, for your news about my mother and sister; may God be with them and us till these calamities be overpast. Write to Hertslet, my sister, and Dr. Kerans such good news as you can. God bless you, dear Rassam: remember me to dear Playfair.

Yours ever,
(Signed) C. D. C.

Inclosure 3 in No. 511.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala, May* 29, 1865.

Pay D. M's men well.

D. M. (the Chief, you know, whose man brought me the news from you) says that if you send money by his people it would be well to add a man of your own. It may be well to let you know that your four messengers are in the camp; they are miserable, and have been asking me for money . . .* Prisoners like ourselves, minus chains. Money, money, dear Rassam, again send us money; also chocolate, preserved fish, or meat, or vegetables, and simple medicines for eye diseases or stomach complaints. For D. M.'s wife, who is here, send me some scents and dye for the eyelids; also Dr. Macraire—opium, ammonia, camphor, and anything good for rheumatism and bruises.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. D. C.

Inclosure 4 in No. 511.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala, May* 29, 1865.

. . . . * says Waldo Mariam is a rascal, but don't hurt him, it may endanger our lives, but don't send him again: employ him at a distance from us . . . * get him out of the way so that he may be able to do no mischief. About money, I have heard again from G.; their game is up; they have none to spare; so your bill to S. is useless.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. D. C.

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* Illegible in original.

No. 512.

Captain Desborough to Mr. Hammond.—(Received August 8.)

Sir, *Reading, August 7, 1865.*

AT the request of Mrs. Cameron I take the liberty of asking for any information that you may have lately received as to the state of the unhappy captives in Abyssinia; and whether hopes are still entertained of their being restored to their liberty. Mrs. Cameron is also very anxious to know whether it is true that Mr. Palgrave has been sent to Massowah to replace Mr. Rassam.

Trusting you will kindly excuse the liberty I am taking, I have, &c.

(Signed) L. DESBOROUGH.

No. 513.

Mr. Layard to Captain Desborough.

Foreign Office, August 9, 1865.

MR. LAYARD presents his compliments to Mr. Desborough and in Mr. Hammond's absence from the office begs to inform him, in reply to his letter of the 7th instant that, although no recent information of any decided nature in regard to the captives in Abyssinia has been received in this office, Her Majesty's Government still trust that their captivity may not be much further protracted.

Mr. Layard begs leave to add that Mr. Palgrave is about to proceed to Abyssinia, with the object, if possible, of obtaining the release of the captives, but not to replace Mr. Rassam.

No. 514.

Mr. Murray to Mrs. Stern.

Madam, *Foreign Office, August 12, 1855.*

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of the letter signed by yourself and others, and dated the 30th ultimo,* relative to the public appeal which seems to be contemplated on your part with a view to raising funds to enable Dr. Beke to proceed to Abyssinia to endeavour to procure the liberation of the British captives.

All that his Lordship can advise you under the circumstances is not to insert yourself, or, if possible, to allow others to insert, in the newspapers, letters from your husband, or relating to the captives which may find their way to Abyssinia, and prove injurious to Mr. Stern and to the other British subjects whom you are desirous of serving.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 515.

Mr. Purday to Earl Russell.—(Received August 14.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, August 14, 1865.*

IN forwarding to your Lordship the inclosed document (signed by all the immediate relatives of the unhappy prisoners now, and for the last twenty-one months, in chained confinement in Abyssinia), I would humbly state that we have had no reply to a similar document, signed by only some of these relatives, and forwarded to your Lordship, addressed to the Foreign Office, about a fortnight since; the one now sent having been delayed in consequence of its transmission to various parts of the country for signature.

And I would humbly ask your Lordship to kindly state whether your Lordship sees any impropriety in the object thereby aimed at, viz., the earnest feeling that we are bound by the ties of humanity and relationship to endeavour to obtain the release of these our suffering relatives by private means, in case the possibility of your Lordship's messenger failing to approach His Majesty the King of Abyssinia, and not succeeding in his mission, should he obtain the desired audience.

Waiting your Lordship's reply, I beg, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY,
Father-in-law of the Rev. H. A. Stern.

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* No. 510.

Inclosure in No. 515.

Mrs. Stern and others to Earl Russell.

My Lord, *London, July* 30, 1865.

FEELING deeply the miserable condition of Her Majesty's subjects now imprisoned in Abyssinia, we, their near relatives and friends, venture to address your Lordship upon the subject.

Being aware that Dr. Beke had proposed proceeding to Abyssinia upon his own responsibility, with the view of obtaining the release of the captives, we sought and obtained an interview with that gentleman; and in consequence of the painful state of uncertainty in which we have been so long left, we have been induced to treat with him respecting his offer. But we find the carrying out this mission will be attended with a considerable outlay which we have not the means of meeting without appealing to the public.

Before taking any further steps, we write to assure your Lordship that such a proceeding is not intended to interfere with any course of action that Her Majesty's Government may be taking in the matter, but rather to supplement it. And it arises purely from a strong desire to rescue our unhappy relatives and friends from the painful state of captivity and suffering which they have now endured for nearly two years, and are still enduring.

In conclusion we beg most respectfully to add our entreaty that Her Majesty's Government will at the same time continue their benevolent efforts to obtain the release of the wretched captives.

We beg, &c.

(Signed) CHARLOTTE E. STERN, Wife of Rev. H. A. Stern.
CHARLOTTE STERN, Daughter of Rev. H. A. Stern.
EVELINA C. STERN, Ditto.
LOUISA M. STERN, Ditto.
HENRY A. STERN, Son of Rev. H. A. Stern.
ALETTA CAMERON, Mother to Consul Cameron.
M. DESBOROUGH, Sister to Consul Cameron.
L. DESBOROUGH, Brother-in-law to Consul Cameron.
E. BLACKALL, Sister to Consul Cameron.
A. BLACKALL, Brother-in-law to Consul Cameron.
L. C. DESBOROUGH, Nephew to Consul Cameron.
C. N. DESBOROUGH, Niece to Consul Cameron.
LAURENCE C. KERANS, M.D., Father to Mr. L. Kerans.
AUGUSTA A. KERANS, Mother to Mr. L. Kerans.
T. G. KERANS, Lieutenant, 84th Regiment, Brother to Mr. L. Kerans.
ROBERT KERANS, M.D., Ditto.
GEORGE KERANS, Ditto.
LYONS KERANS, Ditto.
ANNA L. KERANS, Sister to Mr. L. Kerans.
SARAH KERANS, Ditto.
ELIZABETH KERANS, Ditto.
H. PURDAY, Father-in-law to the Rev. H. A. Stern.
MARY ANN PURDAY, Mother-in-law to the Rev. H. A. Stern.
M. A. PURDAY, Sister-in-law of the Rev. H. A. Stern.
ELIZABETH C. PURDAY, Ditto.
SARAH F. MORGAN, Ditto.
WILLIAM HENRY MORGAN, Clerk, Brother-in-law to the Rev. H. A. Stern.
C. H. PURDAY, Jun., Ditto.
J. T. PURDAY, Ditto.
F. S. PURDAY, Ditto.
MARY YOUNG, Mother of Mrs. Rosenthal.
EMMA ROSENTHAL, Sister to Mr. Rosenthal.
ELIZA EISNER, Sister to Mr. Rosenthal.
LOUIS EISNER, Brother-in-law to Mrs. Rosenthal.

No. 516.

Mr. Purday to Mr. Layard.—(*Received August* 18.)

Sir, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, August* 17, 1865.

I AM requested by my daughter, Mrs. Stern, to acknowledge your letter of the 12th instant,* in reply to the letter of the 30th ultimo, signed by herself and the other relatives of the British captives in Abyssinia.

From your letter, which was not received till after the despatch of my letter to Earl Russell of the 14th instant,† it appears that all his Lordship can advise Mrs. Stern under the circumstances is not to insert herself, nor, if possible, to allow others to insert in the newspapers, letters from her husband, or relating to the captives, which may find their way to Abyssinia, and prove injurious to Mr. Stern and the other British subjects.

Whilst thanking his Lordship for this advice, I cannot but express the regret which the distressed relatives of the unhappy prisoners feel that this principle was not acted upon by some members of Her Majesty's Government, in the debates on this subject in Parliament.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 517.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard, August 3, 1865.—(*Received August* 23.)

[Transmitting letters from captives.]

Inclosure 1 in No. 517.

The Rev. H. Rosenthal to the Rev. C. D. Goodhart.

Rev. and dear Sir, *Magdala Camp, May* 29, 1865.

I AVAIL myself of the opportunity to write a few lines informing you of our existence. I am happy to say that myself and wife are quite well, despite the many sufferings which you no doubt heard we had to pass through, and can only ascribe our preservation to the peculiar favour God beareth towards his people. What a great blessing if it can only be appreciated by those who have lost their freedom, and are anxiously waiting for deliverance. But when will that happy time arrive for us, we hope from one week to another, and one month to another, that release will be brought to us, but we have already been disappointed so frequently that even apparent good tidings do not in the least tend to cheer us, though we pray fervently and believe firmly that when the gracious designs of our Father which at present are unknown to us shall have been accomplished, He will also prepare a way for us out of this land—the Lord knows how to bring good out of evil, we have experienced this truth on our own souls, and although we are deeply grieved to see a promising mission so abruptly broken up, yet we hope that after the termination of these troubles, on the ruin of the former, one of more permanent footing and of more unrestrained action can be established, bearing fruit one hundred fold to the glory of God. We beg you and all Christian friends to pray for us.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) H. ROSENTHAL.

P.S.—Want of paper compels me to be very brief.

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* No. 514. † No. 515.

Inclosure 2 in No. 517.

The Rev. H. Stern to the Rev. Mr. Goodhart.

My dear Mr. Goodhart, *Amba Magdala, May* 30, 1865.

AS there is a messenger leaving for Massowah, I creep into my lair, and, hidden under my shama, scribble a few lines. Had I paper, I would have continued the sad history of our trials and troubles, but unfortunately I do not possess more than this slip. I must, therefore, wait until our friends supply us with a few sheets. Our position since my last has undergone no change. Day after day comes to its close in the usual painful or reckless monotony of savage life; sometimes tidings reach us which afford a thrill of joy, and perhaps for a week we ruminate on freedom and the blessings of civilised life, and then again the vision of hope becomes damped, and the soul either seeks comfort and consolation in God and his word, or sinks into the wonted state of apathy. I firmly believe that our Heavenly Father will yet deliver us, and, without wearying my mind with speculations whether this is to be effected by internal political changes (a topic on which I will not dilate) or by external pressure, I patiently leave all in the hands of Him who shapes events to further His divine and holy purpose. At present we are daily anticipating the beginning of the rainy season; last year we also dreaded the winter. But He who in mercy preserved us in times past will also graciously watch over us in the time to come.

As I am reminded of the approach of winter, I will give you a hasty sketch of the place where we and upwards of 200 unhappy natives of all ranks and conditions may have to pass the ensuing inclement season of winter. Just picture to your imagination an isolated locality rising out of the midst of a jumble of conical hills, deep ravines, and serrated ridges, and you have Amba Magdala. On the summit there are clusters of thatched huts occupied by about 1,000 troops; not far from the Church, which you recognise by an apex surmounted by a glittering cross, you gaze on a mass of wretched hovels that stand in mocking contrast around four spacious circular dwellings; you approach a few steps nearer, and you behold a strong thorn fence guarded by groups of sooty soldiers, close to whom lie basking in the sun bands of unfortunates, loaded with galling fetters. This is the royal prison, and those wretched huts outside the enclosure are occupied by the élite of the prisoners during the day; but towards evening all must repair within the fence, where, after being counted, they are driven like wild beasts within the reeking walls of those conically-shaped structures. Insects and all that is repulsive, of whatever name or colour, swarm in these jails; and really, if Providence had not tempered human nature so as to render it capable of enduring every hardship, I believe even few Abyssinians would long resist the fatal influence of this poisonous atmosphere. By special favour, we are allowed to make our abode close to the walls of one of these houses, and there, under a black woollen awning, Captain Cameron, Rosenthal, Makerer, and myself pass the day and night, and the rest, who have huts outside, only the night. Please to remember me and my fellow-prisoners at the Throne of Grace, and that God may abundantly bless you is the prayer of yours, in bonds,

(Signed) HENRY A. STERN.

P.S.—Will you kindly forward a copy of this to Mrs. Stern, with my love to her and the children.

Inclosure 3 in No. 517.

Consul Cameron to Dr. Shaw.

My dear Shaw, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, May* 28, 1865.

I SENT you a note the other day to let you know that I am still alive, and have not forgotten yourself and other old friends. I wished to have sent you a paper on the resources of the country by this opportunity, but must put it off. I ought however to have mentioned wine and wool in my last scrap. The vine grows well, both in the valleys and uplands everywhere. This country, especially in the interior, where the country is colder, might rival Australia or the Cape for wool. There are several kinds —some short and delicate, another the fibre from one to two feet long, is produced where I am now, and in the highland of Shoa. It is worked up into cloaks, tents, &c., and is coarse but strong and durable. So much for this for the present. My object

now is to tell you how I am getting on. You must have heard the particulars long since of the grand crash among our mission stations here, and trial of what I suppose lawyers would call lèse-majesté. Myself and the other missionaries kept clear for some time, but I got orders from England to return to Massowah at once, and on my asking the necessary permission, the storm burst upon us all. We were asked to a little palaver with His Majesty, dressed ourselves in our Sunday best, it being Sunday, found ourselves suddenly halted and drawn up before two cannons (presents from the English Government, I believe), and, after a few questions, collared and put into a tent, and chained by the wrist to a black fellow.

After some weeks the German missionaries, lay missionaries, and workmen to the King, came from Debra Tabor, and obtained the release of Messrs. Flad, his wife and children, Mr. Cornelius, Messrs. Steigers and Brandeis, of the Scotland mission, and the Germans who were collecting stuffed specimens for me. They went to Debra Tabor as prisoners without chains. The rest of us, including my people at Gondar, who had been chained, and afterwards sent to join our party, were kept in durance.

There was a sort of friendship kept up by Bedlamite messages, talking of friendship between the two countries, until the 12th of May. On the morning of that day there was a public interview between the King and the Metropolitan, who had always been our fast and open friend, and a Billingsgate scene between the heads of Church and State ensued, in which the representative of the State taxed the other with having given the information to Mr. Stern on which the charges against the latter had been founded. The Bishop denied, and, I suppose, expecting Mr. Stern's acquiescence, the King sent him down, and confronted him with Mr. Stern, who acted like a thorough-bred gentleman and bold-spoken man in denying anything like collusion. The King afterwards mounted his horse, and we saw him galloping like a madman over the plain. He returned at sunset. We had an indefinite but powerful feeling that something would happen. His tent was a stone's throw from ours; we heard him talking loudly to his followers; suddenly there was a rush of feet, and, before we could think where we were, we saw the King himself rushing down on us, with his sword drawn, at full speed, and a body of spearmen, shouting and shrieking, behind him. Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal were seized and questioned by the King himself. Neck for neck was the expression of the representative of Prester John—it meant, I will kill you unless you fall into my views; afterwards, your Government may kill me. There was a moment of confusion. All that it is necessary to recollect is, that poor Mrs. Rosenthal, an Englishwoman, rushed into my arms, saying "He is my countryman," and that she was knocked down with her baby in her arms. I was knocked down with the others, and our arms were tied as tight as possible with thongs and ropes. This is a mode of torture in Abyssinia to elicit secrets. It did not succeed that night, for Mr. Stern persisted in giving every answer but what Prester John wished. We were tortured for more than an hour, and doubtful whether we would be left to die in this frightful suffering, when Prester John sent a message saying, that as I had nothing to do with the matter, he would loose all for my sake. I pass over the next day—a day in which guards literally forced food down our throats in order to give us strength for a night of coming suffering. In the evening, after misery unspeakable, caused by mysterious messages advising us either to tell or that it would be bad for us, a man named Samuel, who had formerly been our spokesman to the King, came down, and, after a few words with Mr. Stern, led him and my major-domo, Mr. Macraire, out of the tent. Mr. Rosenthal was also ordered out; they were all again tortured cruelly, water being again poured on the ropes and thongs (as had been done to us the previous night, so that I can speak feelingly), and such leading questions put to Mr. Stern, that, lacerated as he was by the suffering of the previous evening, he could not resist saying things that implicated the Bishop. Macraire was tortured out of mere wantonness, because he had said that 20,000 Europeans could take the country. Myself and all our party, except Mrs. Rosenthal and the two above-named, were not tortured the second night. After days of indescribable panic, in which the slightest sound from the direction of the King's tent shook us, our arm chains (which are a minor matter) were taken off, and we were chained by the legs with merciless barbarity.

The chains were hammered on without the slightest mercy, my own so tight that the leg swelled to double the size. After a day's beseeching I got the shackles filed off. It took a day of the most horrible suffering to perform this operation. When I sent to the King he said, "let him wait, a little suffering more or less is nothing." We were dragged afterwards to the King's camp at Agogo near Gondar; here we passed the winter in a torn tent under torrents of rain, with a handful of parched peas daily for rations, from His Majesty. Our shirts had been torn off on the night of torture, so

naked and starved, and almost out of our senses from pain and suffering, we passed a tropical rainy season. But during the rains a letter arrived from the coast which we hoped would liberate us. There was nothing however said; after the rains we were dragged to Debra Tabor, where the other Europeans were; we were held out such hopes of being released there, that we even dressed ourselves directly in expectation of a call to the Royal presence. But as the end of all, we were brought up here still in chains, and here we have been ever since December last. How do we pass the time, now that we are settled thus? We wake at daylight, fearfully coarse coffee is brought in earthenware pots; we eat bread and honey. Till midday we talk, make notes by stealth or smoke, (there is plenty of country tobacco to be bought). We have visits from the guards who come to ask us, "Have you grass in your country? have you soldiers, have you a great King like ours?" I tell them, "I don't speak your language, go to my Dragoman." My Dragoman tells them wonderful stories. I am not troubled and every one satisfied. After midday we breakfast on good wheaten bread and meat. In the afternoon we resolve ourselves into a dispensary. Every one has been in the school, and has a doctor's degree; Dr. Kerans, my Secretary, son of the well known Physician of that name in County Galway,—arrah! by St. Patrick, but he shows the family talent still in drawing teeth and cutting up tumours like oranges. M. le Docteur Macraire, my head man, blinds those who can see, and finishes off the entirely blind as our optician. There is plenty of opthalmia here, so he has enough to do. [illegible] for all diseases above the waist emetics, all diseases below the waist purgatives. It must be a discovery in medicine. I have not lost a patient, we do an immense deal of good with our handful of medicine, especially as regards eye diseases. We have cured perhaps 300 cases. The patients are either prisoners or guardians of the mountain. This has ensured, at least, our being better treated than we were at first. Once a day my companion in misfortune, the Rev. Mr. Stern, has a short service. In the evening we are [illegible] to be counted like sheep, sunset brings supper. In the evening we gossip under an awning, or sit outside looking into the bright beautiful starlight of this pure African sky till late into the night and talking of home. The night itself brings nothing but [illegible] rendered more [illegible] by the clank of chains and the muttered prayers of our Abyssinian fellow prisoners (the poor devils pray all night in their grief). Fleas, bugs and rats run over our faces, and play at hide and seek between our feet. Happy he [illegible] pass into temporary oblivion amidst all this, so day follows day.

The clear sunshiny summer tide except [illegible] monotony of our existence [illegible] or the arrival of a new batch of prisioners, or sickness of which we have had our share, though now we are well. What the dreadful winter may produce God only knows. Our fellow prisoners take in all classes, first there are political prisoners, with historic names; these are great rascals and beggars, proud and supercilious, they send to us for all sorts of things with some preface like this, "I am a great man, and rich, when my money comes I will lend you 100 dollars, now give me some coffee or a sheep," or whatever it may be. We have nothing to do with these gentlemen; it is not altogether safe. After these come sundry military deserters and thieves and murderers, also Gallas prisoners of war; the latter are a proud manly race, much superior to these rascal Abyssinians. The Abyssinians have every vice, hypocrisy and self righteousness included; every rascal has a Psalter which he reads with a loud voice for hours every day; they keep fasts most rigidly, and confess. The greatest rascals have the biggest Psalters, and the best opinion of themselves. And so adieu, dear Shaw, and believe me that I shall never forget your kindness to me in happier days, there is one consolation in all this, this passive suffering of ours may do more good for Africa than a 1,000 books. Good bye, God bless you, dear Shaw, once more; remember me to White, Burton, and all other mutual friends.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. D. CAMERON.

No. 518.

Mr. Melvill to Mr. Hammond.—(*Received August* 24.)

Sir, *India Office, August* 23, 1865.

WITH reference to your letter of the 14th July,* I am directed by Sir C. Wood to forward, for the information of Earl Russell, the accompanying copy of a despatch

* No. 502.

from the Political Resident at Aden stating that the muskets referred to in the Foreign Office letter of the above date have never left Aden.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. COSMO MELVILL.

Inclosure in No. 518.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

Sir, *Aden, August* 2, 1865.

IN reference to your letter of the 17th July, received this morning, I have the honour to state that the muskets mentioned in the letter from the Foreign Office have never left Aden. I kept them here in preference to sending them to Massowah, as they could be better looked after until there was some greater probability of Mr. Rassam proceeding up country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 519.

*Mr. Layard to Captain Desborough.**

Foreign Office, September 5, 1865.

MR. LAYARD presents his compliments to Captain Desborough, and has great pleasure in informing him that a telegram has just been received from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, reporting that Consul Cameron had been released. No details have yet been received.

No. 520.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Layard.—(Received September 6.)

India Office, September 6, 1865.

MR. MERIVALE presents his compliments to Mr. Layard, and forwards the latest intelligence respecting the captives in Abyssinia.

Inclosure 1 in No. 520.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.

Sir, *Aden, July* 31, 1865.

I DO myself the honour to forward a copy of my latest despatch in this Department, dated this day, to the Government of Bombay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 520.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Secretary to Government, Bombay.

Sir, *Aden, July* 31, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for the information of his Excellency the Governor in Council, copies of further correspondence just received from Mr. Rassam at Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

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* A similar letter was addressed to Mrs. Cameron.

Inclosure 3 in No. 520.

Mr. Rassam to the Political Resident at Aden, July 22, 1865.

[See Inclosure 1 in No. 511.]

Inclosure 4 in No. 520.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam, May 29, 1865.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 511.]

Inclosure 5 in No. 520.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam, May 29, 1865.

[See Inclosure 3 in No. 511.]

Inclosure 6 in No. 520.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam, May 5, 1865.

[See Inclosure 4 in No. 511.]

No. 521.

Captain Desborough to Mr. Layard.—(Received September 7.)

Reading, September 6, 1865.

CAPTAIN DESBOROUGH presents his compliments to Mr. Layard, and begs to thank him for the gratifying intelligence conveyed in his letter. If not asking too much, Captain Desborough would feel greatly obliged by Mr. Layard giving him the dates of Captain Cameron's release, and when they reached the Foreign Office.

No. 522.

*Mr. Layard to Captain Desborough.**

Foreign Office, September 8, 1865.

MR. LAYARD presents his compliments to Captain Desborough, and begs to inform him that, according to the information received from Egypt since the date of the telegram of the 5th, it would appear that Captain Cameron has been released from his shackles but has not left Abyssinia, and that King Theodore has invited Mr. Rassam to proceed to his Court.

No. 523.

Earl Russell to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 9, 1865.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your telegrams,† reporting that Mr. Consul Cameron had been released from his chains, but had not left Abyssinia, and that King Theodore had invited Mr. Rassam to go to Abyssinia at once through Egypt.

You will have learnt by my telegram of this day's date the course which Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that it is now advisable should be pursued, viz., that Mr. Rassam should go at once to King Theodore by way of Matemma, taking with him the Queen's Letter, but not the muskets which he was instructed to present to His Majesty.

You will, doubtless, by the time this despatch reaches you, have already in obedience

* A similar letter was addressed to Mrs. Cameron.

† See Inclosure 1 in No. 529.

to the instructions contained in my telegram, asked the Egyptian Government to give Mr. Rassam all the facilities which they were prepared to grant to Mr. Palgrave, and have informed the former that Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that he should be accompanied, if possible, by the officers who were with him at Massowah, and the latter gentleman that, whatever happens, he must not accompany Mr. Rassam, but must remain with you in Egypt, and assist you in your communications with the Egyptian authorities.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 524.

Earl Russell to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 11, 1865.

WITH reference to my telegraphic despatch of Saturday, the instructions contained in which were repeated in my despatch of the same date, I have to state that I addressed to you to-day at 5 P.M. a further telegraphic despatch, informing you that Mr. Rassam should set off as soon as possible; that he should ask King Theodore, but only as a favour, to release the Missionaries, but that he cannot insist upon their release. That he should inform the King that if His Majesty wishes to send an Embassy to England, Her Majesty's Government will endeavour to obtain a passage for it through Egypt, but that Her Majesty's Government must not assume that they can obtain the consent of the Viceroy to this request.

I also desired you to instruct Mr. Rassam to inform King Theodore that Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem will be instructed to give to Abyssinian subjects the same good offices as were afforded to them by his predecessor.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 525.

Mr. H. Layard to Earl Russell.—(Received September 12.)

The London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews,
My Lord, 16, *Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, September* 9, 1865.

HAVING seen this day in the public papers a notification from the Foreign Office, dated September 8, to the effect that Captain Cameron had been released from his chains, and was awaiting the arrival of Mr. Rassam in Abyssinia, who was on his way thither *viâ* Egypt, at the invitation of King Theodorus, I have the honour, on behalf of the Committee of the above-named Society, most respectful to solicit the continuance of your Lordship's kind efforts on behalf of the captive missionaries, and to instruct Mr. Rassam to use every endeavour to procure their total release, in common with that of Her Majesty's Consul.

Thankfully hailing the success of Mr. Rassam's Mission thus far, however much protracted, and praying for a speedy and satisfactory issue thereof, I have the honour to remain, &c.

(Signed) HENRY L. LAYARD,
Secretary of the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews.

No. 526.

Mrs. Cameron to Mr. Layard.—(Received September 13.)

Westfield House, Old Wells Road, Bath, August 6, 1865.

MRS. CAMERON presents her compliments to Mr. Layard, and is greatly obliged to him for this information regarding the release of her son, and trusts that satisfactory accounts of his present condition may soon be received from him.

No. 527.

Mr. Layard to Mr. Melvill.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 13, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to state to you, for the information of Secretary Sir Charles Wood, that a telegram was received on the 5th instant from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Alexandria, dated the same day, reporting that Mr. Rassam had just arrived at Suez, and had telegraphed that Mr. Consul Cameron was released.

In two subsequent telegrams from Alexandria on the 6th instant, and dated the same day, Colonel Stanton reports information from Mr. Rassam that King Theodore, on seeing Mr. Rassam's letter ordered Mr. Cameron to be released from his chains, and had invited Mr. Rassam to go to Abyssinia by way of Matemma on account of the rebellion in Tigré. No mention was made by the King of Her Majesty's letter, and the King's letter was neither sealed nor signed.

All Mr. Rassam's messengers had been well treated, and had returned to Massowah.

Colonel Stanton also reports that Mr. Rassam had informed the King in reply, that he must first obtain the permission of the Egyptian Government to pass through its territory, and that he would wait instructions at Alexandria: he adds, that though released from his chains, it is doubtful whether Mr. Cameron can leave Abyssinia; that Mr. Rassam feared further complications by delay, and wished to return to Massowah immediately to make preparations; and that he feared the worst results if Mr. Palgrave was allowed to go to the King.

Colonel Stanton further reports that all the arrangements of the Egyptian Government for Mr. Palgrave's journey were ready, and that the Viceroy would defray the expenses of it as far as Matemma; and he inquires whether Mr. Palgrave should not proceed at once on his mission to King Theodore.

I inclose a copy of the answer which Lord Russell has returned to Colonel Stanton's inquiry,* and am to add that the instructions which it contains were sent to Colonel Stanton by telegraph on Saturday.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 528.

Colonel Stanton to Earl Russell.—(Received September 16.)

Alexandria, September 6, 1865.

(Extract.)

I HAVE just seen Mr. Rassam, and learnt from him the actual state of affairs in Abyssinia, which appears to me most unsatisfactory.† There is positively no assurance that Captain Cameron is free; his fetters were struck off in the presence of Mr. Rassam's messengers, but the latter were then hurried off and not allowed to communicate with Captain Cameron before starting, and in the absence of any letter from him, or assurance of his safety, we have no guarantee that on their departure he was not imprisoned again.

The letter of King Theodore to Mr Rassam appears also unsatisfactory and equivocal; no mention whatever is made in it of the letter from Her Majesty, and although he expresses himself ready to receive Mr. Rassam, the letter being without seal or signature, its promises may easily be evaded and the letter itself ignored. Mr. Rassam's answer to it by making difficulties, is also not, in my opinion, calculated to improve the situation.

Mr. Rassam, as I have had the honour of reporting to to your Lordship by telegraph, awaits further instructions here; he wishes to return to Massowah at once to be able to inform the King of his having started on his journey to Matemma, and dreads the consequences of delay. He appears to think that the prisoners would now be released were he to proceed to the King's head-quarters. I confess, my Lord, I myself feel no such conviction, and think that better results may be obtained through Mr. Palgrave's means, than by Mr. Rassam now proceeding after the slighting manner in which he, as bearer of a letter from Her Majesty has been treated. I think, moreover, that Mr. Palgrave is personally more likely to succeed in such a mission than

* No. 523.

† See Inclosure in No. 529.

Mr. Rassam, and, although it may seem invidious to the latter to allow another agent to proceed in his stead, I believe the public service would be benefited by the change.

I beg, therefore, to submit, with all deference, to your Lordship that Mr. Rassam should be ordered to return to Aden without touching at Massowah in order that he may not interfere with Mr. Palgrave's mission in any manner, and that, should Her Majesty's Government still desire the letter from Her Majesty to be presented to King Theodore, the letter should be entrusted to Mr. Palgrave for delivery.

Since writing the above, I have received intelligence from Cairo, as I have also had the honour to inform your Lordship by telegraph, that the steamer and letters and other arrangements of the Egyptian Government for Mr. Palgrave's journey are ready and that the Viceroy himself will defray all expenses as far as Matemma; this appears to me a further reason for Mr. Palgrave's journey not being abandoned, and if, on his arrival in Abyssinia, he finds matters more promising than they at present appear, he can exert himself with all the better prospects of success in favour of the other captives.

There appears also, my Lord, to me, another urgent reason for no further delay in this matter, and that is the projected journey of Dr. Beke to Abyssinia; as I fear that any person, not officially recognized by Her Majesty's Government, arriving in that country with the view of effecting the liberation of the captives, could not, under existing circumstances, fail to endanger the chances of ultimate success.

No. 529.

Mr. Rassam to Earl Russell.—(*Received September* 16.)

My Lord, *Suez, September* 5, 1865.

HAVING deemed it necessary to come to Egypt direct from Massowah for the purpose of consulting with Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt upon matters connected with my Mission, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship copies of letters that I have addressed to the Resident at Aden regarding the release of Consul Cameron, and the reply of King Theodorus to my letters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 529.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, August* 15, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of Government, that on the 12th instant I received an answer from King Theodorus, wherein he asks me to go up to him by way of Matemma.

2. It appears, from the statement of the messengers, that on the receipt of my third letter His Majesty ordered the release of Captain Cameron, and wrote me a reply. The letter is neither courteous nor becoming, and contrary to all etiquette. The King omitted to seal it and affix his name thereto on the plea of the breach existing between him and us. His letter is written both in Amharic and Arabic, a translation of which I send herewith. (Inclosure 2.)

3. It will be perceived from its contents that King Theodorus complains bitterly of the conduct of Aboona Salama, the Rev. Mr. Stern, and Captain Cameron, all of whom he asserts had rewarded his kindness with ingratitude.

4. The King wrote at the same time a most friendly letter to the Naib of Arkeeko, Mohammed Bin Abd-ar-Raheem, which is properly sealed and signed; and as I am alluded to therein, and its purport may interest Government, I send herewith a translation of it. (Inclosure 3.)

5. The Naib of Arkeeko has also received two more letters; one from Samuel, the King's steward, and the other from Aboona Matta, the chief Arabic Scribe of the King; wherein they express their hope that I should go up at once, and they entertained no doubt as to the success of my mission. A translation of the letters are also appended herewith. (Inclosures 4 and 5.)

6. I further inclose a translation of another letter addressed by Samuel to Abdallah

Effendi (the Arabic writer of the British Consulate at Massowah), Inclosure 6, as it contains an allegation inconsistent with the King's plea for the omission of fixing his name and seal to the letter. The former sets forth the disturbances of the roads as the excuse, and the latter the absence of proper friendship between him and us. I place as little faith in the honesty of one as I do in the other, because I am impressed with the conviction that King Theodorus entertains an odd notion that by not sealing his letter or writing his name in it his future actions are kept unrestrained.

7. This letter has placed me in a very difficult position, not only because I am asked to go up through Kassala and Matemma in the most unhealthy time of the year, but its tone seems to warrant in some measure the warning given to me by Captain Cameron in his notes of the 6th and 9th April about the base design of King Theodorus. On the other hand, I anticipate deplorable results, in case I now retrace my steps by declining to go up, especially when the King has granted me permission for doing so, in his own peculiar way, and has very properly released Captain Cameron before my proceeding thitherward.

8. Unfortunately all my messengers were hurried off down to Massowah as soon as the King gave them the reply to me, and had no time to bring me a letter from Captain Cameron, which might have proved of some guidance to me. I have been in hopes that he would write and inform me of his liberation by a private messenger, and tell me what he thought of the King's object concerning his release. A note from him under the present circumstances will no doubt be of material assistance to me, and I yet hope that before I determine upon a decisive action I shall hear from him upon the subject.

9. If I go up to Abyssinia by way of Kassala and Matemma, I shall not be able to proceed on my journey before the middle of October, and I trust that before that time I shall be furnished with important communications from England and Abyssinia which may act as bases to my future proceedings.

10. The last messenger, Ibraheem, with his companion, Mohammed Saihawee, were not detained by the King more than a day. Their delay was occasioned on going up by the unsurmountable difficulties they had to contend with while passing through the revolted districts. Their statement, attached herewith (Inclosure 7), will explain the cause of their long absence, and how they were received by the King.

11. I also send the statement of one of the messengers whom I sent with my first letter to King Theodorus on my arrival here. (Inclosure 8.)

12. They arrived at Magdala on Tuesday, the 4th ultimo, and were dismissed, with the rest of my former messengers the next day, with what they were told was the answer to my letters.

13. All my messengers gave me a favourable account of their good treatment by the King, both as regards their maintenance and protection. They said, from his general conduct towards them, they never doubted that he was well-disposed towards the British. They all think that if I go up my mission will terminate with success; and in proof of the sincerity of their belief, they are wishing to accompany me up to the King.

14. They further informed me that, when the King sent them back to me, he appointed one of his followers to escort them through his territory where his power is still acknowledged, and ordered that they should be entertained at the public expense wherever they went, which command was attended to strictly for five stages down from Magdala.

15. I have also been told by the messengers that King Theodorus intends to come to Adowa in two or three months, and that His Majesty was heard to say that he wished to meet me there; but in consequence of the importunity of the messengers, he directed that I should go to him by way of Kassala and Matemma, on account of the insecurity of the roads viâ Tigré.

16. I regret to say that I cannot go by that route for the next two months, on account of the malignant fever which is said to infest the country between Kassala and Matemma during September and October. Even the natives of the country are afraid to travel about in that part of the Soudan during the unhealthy season.

17. Moreover, if I go up through the Egyptian territory, I require an order from the Viceroy of Egypt to enable me to travel with my companions through his dominions without hindrance and with dignity. I also wish to obtain some suitable presents for the King, as I learn that Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt had sent King Theodorus, by a Coptic messenger, valuable presents, and it would be quite ruinous to my mission were I to approach His Majesty with scarcely anything worth presenting to him while the Copt might make his appearance ultimately with the handsome presents he was intrusted with from Egypt. To meet this difficulty, I

purpose, if found feasible, to go up to Suez on the return of Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria" from Aden, when I shall be able to obtain in Egypt what I require, and to communicate with Earl Russell by telegraph about the future policy Her Majesty's Government wish me to pursue after what Captain Cameron has written.

18. In paragraph 10 of my letter of the 22nd January last, I reported to Government that Menelek, the grandson of Ras Sahiloo Selassee (the late King of Shoa), had made his escape from the King's camp and had gone to his native country. I now learn from the messengers that there was no truth in that rumour, but that a few days before they left Magdala that Prince had decamped and took refuge with Wekait, the Queen of the Wallo Gallas; in consequence of which, King Theodorus condemned all the Galla prisoners to a barbarous and most fearful torture, by ordering them to be deprived of their legs and arms and thrown down a precipice from the Magdala fortress, where those who escaped utter destruction were doomed to linger in fearful agony for some days, till death rid them of their miserable lives. Their Prince, the son of the Queen of the Wallo Gallas, who was also a prisoner with the King, met, at the same time with a similar fate.

19. I am told that, on the King hearing of the escape of the Shoa Prince, he ordered all the prisoners at Magdala (including the Europeans) to be handcuffed; that Captain Cameron had his arms, in addition to his legs, shackled before he was released.

20. My messengers gave me a sad account of the state of the disturbed districts through which they had to pass. Beside the anarchy and bloodshed a regular famine has devastated the land. Wakshum Gobasie has no power to govern properly, and it is alleged that already some dissensions have sprung up amongst his followers. He is now ruling in Adowa, the capital of Tigré, which place he took possession of about the beginning of last month.

21. Dakhlee Goorgees, who was formerly acting as Governor-General in Tigré, on the part of King Theodorus, put to death in a most cruel manner all the political prisoners who were in his custody. He never attempted to check the advance of the rebels, and when they approached Adowa he retired with all the Royalists towards the River Takkazzee, and left Wakshum Gobasie to occupy the capital of Tigré unopposed. Report says that he acted thus under orders from the King, who wished to avoid the shedding of blood.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 529.

King Theodore to Mr. Rassam.

(Translation.)

IN the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, to whom be praise for ever. Amen.

The reason I do not write to you my name, because Aboona Salama, the so-called Kokab [Stern], the Jew, and the one you called Consul, named Cameron (who was sent by you). I treated them with honour and friendship in my city. When I thus befriended them, on account of my anxiety to cultivate the friendship of the English Queen, they reviled me.

Plowden and Yohanna [John Bell], who were called Englishmen, were killed in my country, whose death, by the power of God, I avenged on those who killed them. On that account they [Aboona Salama, the Rev. Mr. Stern, and Captain Cameron] abused me and denounced me as a murderer.

Cameron, who is called Consul, represented to me that he was a servant of the Queen. I invested him with a robe of honour of my country and supplied him with provisions for the journey. I asked him to make me a friend of the Queen.

When he was sent on this mission he went and stayed some time with the Turks, and returned to me.

I spoke to him about the letter I sent through him to the Queen. He said that up to that time he had not received any intelligence concerning it.* "What have I done," said I, "that they should hate me and treat me with animosity." By the power of the Lord, my Creator, I kept silent.

* See Inclosures 8 and 9 in No. 541.

Be it known to Hormuzd Rassam that there exists just now a rebellion in Tigré. By the power of God, come round by way of Matemma. When you reach Matemma send me a messenger, and by the power of God I will send people to receive you.

Written on Wednesday, 29th of Surnee (5th July, 1865).

Inclosure 3 in No. 529.

King Theodore to the Naib of Arkeeko.

(Translation.)

IN the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, to whom be praise.

From the King of Kings, Theodorus, Emperor of all Abyssinia.

To our beloved son, the Nayab Mohammed, son of the Nayab Abd-ar-Raheem.

How are you, and how is your condition? With regard to ourselves, thanks be to God, we are well, prosperous, and in good health.

By the power of God and His favour, all your wishes and the desire of your heart shall be satisfied when we come to Tigré. You can then speak to us of your requirements face to face, &c.

*If your friend Rassam Sahib depart [hitherward] you should send letters by him.**

Wednesday, 10th Rahee Alawal (Safar), A.H. 1282 (5th July, A.D. 1865).

(L. S.)

P.S.—*Furthermore, a letter reached us inside yours from Rassam, the [Agent of the] English Government, which we understood. God willing, when he comes all his requests will be granted to him.**

Inclosure 4 in No. 529.

Samuel bin Ali to the Naib of Arkeeko, Mohammed bin Abdar Raheem.

(Translation.)

(After Compliments.)

WE have received the letter you sent to us, and understood it all.

We have not neglected your business, nor what is due to you. The King said, "After we go to Tigré everything will be granted to him, because no attention will be paid to correspondence. There is a greater advantage in the meeting."

We have to inform you, furthermore, that our cousin, our brother Ibraheem, is returning to you with orders from our Lord the King, that he should accompany the General [Mr. Rassam] to Matemmá by way of Bogos. When he reaches you, you should exert yourself in getting him [Mr. Rassam] to come to the King, and everything will be all right. Allah! Allah! (for God's sake) let them come quickly to us, and settle [the business].

We recommend to you our son, Mohammed Bin Hamed Shoon. Treat him with favour, and listen to his counsel, and act according to his advice. May you remain prosperous. Amen.

10th Jamad Awal [Safar], 1282. (July 5, 1865).

Inclosure 5 in No. 529.

Aboona Matta, Arabic Scribe of the King of Abyssinia, to the Naib of Arkeeko, Mohammed bin Abdar Raheem.

(Translation.)

(After Compliments.)

BE it known to you that in the most propitious of moments we received your letter and understood its contents.

With regard to what you have mentioned it has been postponed until our Lord the King goes to Tigré, which will take place soon (as you are aware), when all your wishes will be fulfilled. Do not have any concern about what touches you, because he [the King] likes you very much.

* The parts of the letter in italic are written by different hands.

With regard to the General [Mr. Rassam], he has got what he desired, for he [King Theodoros] has directed him to come hither by way of Matemma, &c.

10th Jamad Alakhir [Safar], 1282. (July 5, 1865).

Inclosure 6 in No. 529.

Samuel bin Ali, the King's Steward, to Abdallah Effendi, the Writer of the British Consulate at Massowah.

(Translation.)

(After Compliments.)

BE it known to you, oh dear brother, that an answer [from the King of Abyssinia] is on its way down to the General [Mr. Rassam], couched in friendly terms, as you will understand it.

The reason that it is neither signed nor sealed is on account of the misfortune which has been brought about by wicked men [rebels on the road]. When he [Mr. Rassam] reads it, explain to him the cause of the want of the signature and seal, which have not been omitted in vain, as God bears witness. You should do the needful with those you are acquainted. There is no harm in it [King's letter]. It means nothing but friendship and honour to the Sublime [British] Government.

It is necessary that his Mr. Rassam's appearance should be made in haste, in order that the General might meet with his hoped-for desire, &c.

Dated 10th Jamad Aakhir [Safer], 1282. (July 5, 1865).

Inclosure 7 in No. 529.

Statement of Ibrahim Walad Shoom and Mohammed Sihawey, who carried the third Letter to King Theodore, on the 30th of March, 1865.

ON leaving you we went up to the King of Abyssinia through Tigré, Tembean, and Lasta, and it took us nearly a month to reach the latter place on account of the disturbances on the road. Frequently we could only travel at night, and sometimes we had to conceal ourselves for a day or two through fear of the rebels. At Sokota we had to remain a month, as the road was very unsafe just then between it and Debra Tabor.

We wished to deliver the letter through Samuel, the King's Steward, and when we arrived at Sokota, and learned that he was just then at Debra Tabor, we sent to inform him of our duty, and craved his assistance.

He sent us an answer to the effect that we were welcome, and so we repaired straight to him at Debra Tabor, which we reached in twelve days. We found him busily engaged in packing up all the King's arms, guns, and ammunition, to take to Magdala; and after we had stayed there ten days, Samuel went on before us to Magdala, and left us to come with the things which he had got ready for the King.

We reached Magdala in nine days, on the morning of Tuesday the 4th of July. Samuel had promised on leaving Debra Tabor that he would speak to the King about the letter which was in our possession, and no sooner had we arrived at Samuel's house at Magdala than a messenger came to tell us that the King wanted to see us immediately, and so we repaired to him at once.

Before we delivered the letter to His Majesty, he asked us who had sent us up. We answered that you had done so. Then he said, "How did you manage to pass through the rebellious country?" We replied that, through his favour, and the favour of the British Government, we were enabled to do so. He asked us then if we had a letter from you, and in what language it was written? We said one was written in Arabic, and the other in English.

After he took the letter he asked us if we had any message to deliver? We asked His Majesty to read the letter, and we would tell him afterwards what we had to say. He said, "Never mind, I will read the letters afterwards; let me know what you have to say." We answered, "The English Agent told us to give you his best salams, and to say that he was afraid that his former letters had not been properly understood, and that he feared that there were some people who did not wish friendship between England and Abyssinia, and who misrepresented the objects of his mission; that the best proof of the friendship of the English towards your Majesty is the letter which he bears from the Queen to you, and which he is very anxious to deliver into your hands." He

said, "If he wanted to come, why did he not come with you?" We answered, "How could he come without your Majesty's permission?" Then he laughed, and said "All right, I will send him that permission." Then he told us to go back to our quarters, and after he had read the letter he would send for us.

On our return to our quarters he sent us abundance of his own food. After we had eaten he sent for us, and on arriving in his presence he called for all your three letters, and ordered his scribe, Aboona Matta, to read them over again. He said that your second letter was better than the first, and the third better than the second, and that the last pleased him very much, and that he was much obliged to the writer. He said that formerly England and Abyssinia were always very friendly, but the Consul did not act properly between the two countries, but he hoped that on seeing you everything would be placed on a proper footing.

He told us then to return to our quarters, and ordered Samuel to provide us with all necessaries. We replied, "By your favour, O King, there is no lack of food, but the greatest favour you could confer upon us would be to send us back to Massowah with an answer." He said to us that we had met with great difficulties on the road, and that as he intended to come down to Tigré himself after two months, we ought to wait, and that he would release the Consul. We said to him that we had promised you to be back in forty days, and then it was more than three months since we had left, and we did not like to prolong our absence much longer. He said then smilingly to us, "If the English Agent is really desirous to come up, how is he to pass through the rebellious country?" Samuel, who was then present, answered that there was a safe road viâ Matemma. The King immediately approved of that route, and told us to go back to our quarters, and come the next day for an answer.

Early the next day, the 5th of July, the King sent for us, and for Samuel, and for his Arabic and Amharic scribes. The Arabic letter was written by Aboona Matta, and the Amharic by one of the Amharic scribes. He told us that he would have sent people to escort you up, but they would be of no use until you arrived at Matemma, consequently he would send you the proper escort at your arrival there. He told us to ask you to write to him when you leave Massowah, in order that he might write to his Deputy at Matemma to receive you.

He then sent for all your former messengers, and told them to return with us to Massowah. He gave each of them 5 dollars, but to us he gave nothing, but promised to reward us on our return with you. He told us that he had neither signed nor sealed the letter which he sent you, because he was very angry with the Consul, and he promised to release him after our departure. We told him, "O King, we pray that you will fulfil your good intention before our departure that our hearts may be rejoiced, and that we could inform Mr. Rassam that we had seen the Consul released." He said, "Let it be; for the sake of Mr. Rassam and your trouble, you shall see the Consul liberated."

Then he ordered Samuel and Ras Jugidda, the General-in-chief, to accompany us to the Consul, and have him released before us, and then we could inform you that we had seen him liberated.

After the Consul was released before us, we wished to obtain a letter from him for you, but Samuel told us that it was impossible without an order from the King; and as we were directed by His Majesty to depart immediately the Consul was released, we were afraid to go back to ask this favour of him.

We then commenced our journey, and arrived at Massowah on the 12th of this month, having been delayed by the insecurity of the roads.

Before me, this 14th day of August, 1865.

(Signed) H. RASSAM,
First Assistant Political Resident at Aden, on Special Mission to Abyssinia.

Inclosure 8 in No. 529.

Statement of Mohammed Saeed, who went up with the first Letter to King Theodore, on the 24th of July, 1864.

I AND my companion, Mohammed Abawaso, went up to the King of Abyssinia in sixteen days, and delivered your letter into his hands immediately on our arrival at Gondar. Before he read the letter he asked us what kind of person the Basha (an Abyssinian title) was, who gave us the letter, and whether he had any troops with him?

We said that he had none. Afterwards he sent for his Arabic scribe to read the letter, and he sent one of his men to provide us with food and quarters. The next morning he sent for us and asked us whether the person who gave us the letter wished to come up. We said to him, "yes, he is very anxious to come up, and he told us that we must go down with an answer in forty days." The King then told us to go and wait. Afterwards we only got messages through Samuel not to fear, but to wait; His Majesty would send us back with an answer. About two months after that the King went on to Debra Tabor, and all the Europeans went to pray him to release the Consul and his companions; he told them to come the next morning, but at night he sent to them not to appear before him as he did not intend to do as they wished. Soon after that we asked Samuel to take us before the King again, as we were anxious to return to Massowah, our business being only to bring the letter and take back its answer. We were taken the next morning to the King's tent, but before we were admitted into the presence of His Majesty, Samuel came out to say that the King had sent to tell us to wait a little longer; he intended to go to Shoa, and on arriving there he would dismiss us with an answer.

While at Magdala, the messengers sent by the Nayab of Arkeeko arrived, with another letter from you. The letter was received and read, and the messengers were sent to join us in our quarters. The King treated us always as he did his followers, and always provided us with the necessary provisions, except when he was on a war expedition, when every one in his camp was scantily supplied. Weldee Selassee Gobazay, a Gondar merchant, who had arrived from Massowah about the beginning of July, went and spoke to the King about us (the messengers) who had been so long detained. He told him that he had seen you, and that you had complained of having been kept so long for an answer. He said to him, that it was not at all proper for him to keep silence so long; he ought either to dismiss the messengers with an answer or without. My companion, Mohammed Abawaso, was present when this conversation took place, and it was said that the King had promised to send us back at once.

On Tuesday, the 4th of July, Ibraheem and Mohammed Silawee reached the King's camp with your third letter. The next day we were all called before the King, who was then in the fortress of Magdala, and we were told to make preparations for leaving for Massowah. We saw at the time the King's Arabic and Amharic scribes: the former, Aboona Matta, the latter, Alaka Tekla, writing letters to you. The King asked us by what way we wished to return to Massowah. We said the Lasta route would be the safest. The letters were delivered to Samuel, and then we were told to come down and get ready; the letters were afterwards delivered to Ibraheem and Mohammed Silawee to give to you. About noon of the same day, we all left Magdala on our way down to Massowah; after we left the King we heard that Consul Cameron had been released, and that Ibraheem and Mohammed Silawee were present when the fetters were knocked off his legs. My companion and myself used to see the Consul very often, and once he sent us some money to buy clothes with. We had no time to see him after he was released, as we were hurried off on our journey to Massowah. The King's power has been on the decline ever since we reached his camp, and now he has not got half the force he had then, on account of desertion and deaths in his different engagements with the rebels. There was a rumour when we left Magdala that the King intended to come down against the chief rebel, Wakshum Gobazay, and on arriving at the river Takazze, we found the King's officers busily engaged in collecting sheep and cattle for their master's intended expedition.

My companion, Mohammed Abawaso, left us at Fanara, near Tembian, to go and pay his family a visit at Godufelassee in Serawe, and he said he would join us in Massowah on our arrival.

Before me, this 14th day of August, 1865.

(Signed) H. RASSAM,
First Assistant Political Resident at Aden, on Special Mission to Abyssinia.

Inclosure 9 in No. 529.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, August* 24, 1865.

MY letter of the 15th instant* will explain to Her Majesty's Government the turn the Abyssinian difficulty has assumed consequent upon the release of Captain Cameron, and the reply I received from King Theodorus.

* Inclosure 1 in No. 529.

2. The intelligence brought yesterday by the "Victoria" of the appointment by Her Majesty's Government of Mr. Gifford Palgrave, for obtaining the release of our Consul and the missionaries imprisoned by the King of Abyssinia, has more than ever necessitated my immediate departure for Egypt, in order that I might ascertain how far that gentleman has progressed with his Mission, and, if possible, to prevent our respective duties coming to a clash; which event would most assuredly bring about ill consequences, which we are anxious to avoid.

3. The non-arrival of any intelligence from Captain Cameron subsequent to his release, has placed me in an awkward predicament, both as regards my answer to King Theodorus, and the future course I shall have to pursue.

4. As the King might expect that I should leave Massowah for up-country soon after the receipt of his letter, I fear he would suspect that I had some covert reason for postponing my departure; consequently I consider it necessary for the safety of Captain Cameron and his yet imprisoned companions that I should write to His Majesty at once, and explain the cause of the delay.

5. In this letter, a copy of which I annex herewith for the information of Government, I have been careful to avoid using any expression which might give umbrage to the King, or bind Government to any ulterior policy.

6. In the meantime I hope to hear from England on my arrival in Egypt as to the intention of Her Majesty's Government regarding the obstacles set forth by Captain Cameron against my going up. That astounding revelation of his has placed no little impediment to the steps I intend to take.

7. My greatest endeavours have ever been to avoid increasing the trouble and anxiety of Government; and with this object in view, I am now left to choose one of two alternatives—either to disregard *in toto* Captain Cameron's warning, and act as I had formerly intended, or bring matters to a crisis by breaking my engagement with the King.

8. I must confess I anticipate evil results in case I pursue the latter course, being aware how cruel and vindictive a man King Theodorus is; but with all the risk attendant upon the former action, I deem it the most prudent to follow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 10 in No. 529.

Mr. Rassam to King Theodore.

Most Gracious Sovereign, *Massowah, August* 24, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 29th of the month of Sunnee, and beg to inform your Majesty that, in consequence of the prevailing sickness at Kassala and the neighbourhood, I dare not for the present come up to you viâ Matemma as you have directed.

Moreover, I am informed by the people of the country that, after the rains, the road between Kassala and Matemma is most unhealthy, on account of the malignant fever which infests the land for the next two months. Even the natives of the country avoid the journey through those districts at this season.

I have furthermore to obtain an order from the Viceroy of Egypt for passing with my party through his dominions with the necessary protection, because, when I was sent here by my Government, I was unprepared with the needful papers, they not having anticipated that I should be obliged to come to you through the Egyptian route. I shall, however, take the earliest opportunity to acquaint your Majesty of the day I intend to depart for Kassala and Matemma.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 530.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood.—(Communicated by India Office September 20.)

Sir, *Aden, August* 27, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt on the 15th instant of your letter dated 26th July, with accompaniments from the officer of Her Majesty's Secretary

of State for Foreign Affairs, copies of the latter were forwarded to Mr. Rassam, on the 20th instant by the "Victoria" whose return is hourly expected, bringing any fresh news which may have been received from Abyssinia.

2. Directly I am made acquainted with the route Mr. Palgrave has decided on taking, every arrangement which can shall be made to facilitate his progress, and to keep up communication with him; should he select the line by the Nile and Egyptian frontier. Mr. Rassam will be instructed that before leaving Massowah, he should arrange for the receipt and careful keeping of any letters from, and the transmission of others to, Mr. Palgrave, while the "Victoria" will be sent occasionally to Massowah to take and bring letters.

3. Two mails have arrived since the receipt of your letter, but I am still without any communication from Colonel Stanton; the next, expected on the 2nd proximo, will probably bring announcement of Mr. Palgrave's route having been fixed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 531.

Earl Russell to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 21, 1865.

YOU will have learned by my telegraphic despatch of the 12th instant that Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that it must be left to Mr. Rassam's discretion as to the route to be taken in order to reach King Theodore, and that they presume that he has ascertained that the road which he proposes to take is the best, and will be the most acceptable to the King.

You will doubtless, in conformity with my telegraphic instructions, have already explained this to the Egyptian Government.

I have also informed you that Mr. Rassam may request the Viceroy to give him a letter similar to that given by His Highness to Mr. Palgrave, if he thinks it would be advisable to do so, and that you are authorised to furnish him with any suitable presents which he may consider would be acceptable to King Theodore.

The names of places mentioned in your telegraphic despatch of September 11, as those which Mr. Rassam proposed to take in going to the King, were unintelligible.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 532.

Mr. Murray to the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews.

Foreign Office, September 21, 1865.

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant,* and to state to you in reply that every proper exertion will be made to obtain the release of British subjects and others who are held in captivity in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 533.

Earl Russell to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 22, 1865.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 6th instant,† the statements made by you confirm my opinion that it is desirable that, as invited by King Theodore to do, Mr. Rassam should proceed at once by way of Matemma to join the King, and that, in the meanwhile, Mr. Palgrave should remain at Alexandria; I fear that the delay which has already occurred in Mr. Rassam's journey may be injurious.

* No. 525.

† No. 528.

Mr. Rassam may explain to King Theodore that no orders have been given to Consul Cameron to interfere in the internal affairs of Abyssinia or in any questions which might arise between the King and the Viceroy of Egypt.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 534.

Mr. Hammond to Mr. Melvill.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 22, 1865.

WITH reference to Mr. Layard's letter of the 13th instant,* I am directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you, for the information of Secretary Sir Charles Wood, copies of further instructions which his Lordship has addressed to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt,† respecting the course to be now pursued in consequence of the King of Abyssinia's invitation to Mr. Rassam to come to him by way of Matemma.

The substance of these instructions were sent to Colonel Stanton by telegraph on the 11th, 12th, and 19th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 535.

Mr. Palgrave to Earl Russell.—(Received September 27.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, September* 14, 1865.

COLONEL STANTON having communicated to me the contents of your Lordship's telegram of the 9th instant, in which you direct that the preparations made for the journey up the Nile to Abyssinia, in accordance with the instructions of the Foreign Office, should be handed over to Mr. H. Rassam, and that I myself should remain in Egypt, I have only to reply that your Lordship's orders shall be punctually executed and that the transfer shall be made as soon and as far as Mr. Rassam himself shall desire. When this is done I will send further details if requisite.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WM. GIFFORD PALGRAVE.

No. 536.

Colonel Stanton to Earl Russell.—(Received September 27.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, September* 14, 1865.

I HAVE communicated to Mr. Palgrave and to Mr. Rassam the instructions conveyed by your Lordship's telegrams, and have requested the former gentleman to remain for the present at Cairo, and to furnish me with any information he may be able to procure concerning the state of affairs in this country. Mr. Rassam will return immediately to Massowah to prepare for his journey to Matemma, via Bogos and Kassala.

As your Lordship has desired me to detain Mr. Palgrave in Egypt, I would gladly avail myself of so favourable an opportunity of obtaining a report on the general state of the Soudan, and particularly on the Slave Trade of the White Nile, and venture to submit to your Lordship that Mr. Palgrave may be allowed to proceed as far as Khartoum for this purpose, but with the clear understanding that he is not to interfere in any manner with Mr. Rassam's mission to Abyssinia.

In addition to the information he might be able to collect in the neighbourhood of Khartoum, Mr. Palgrave would then also be in a favourable position for continuing his journey as far as Abyssinia, should Mr. Rassam fail to obtain permission to enter that country; and I am bound to state to your Lordship that this contingency is looked upon by many persons here as far from improbable, as it is stated that the King considers his dignity slighted by the fact of the Queen's letter to him being entrusted for delivery

* No. 527. † Nos. 531 and 533.

to an Asiatic, instead of an Englishman, and that this has been the real cause of the delay in replying to the letters sent by Mr. Rassam. I should not have mentioned this rumour to your Lordship, had it not been confirmed to me by my French colleague, M. Outrey, who, in a conversation on the subject of Abyssinia, informed me he had been told that such was the case by the late French Consul at Djeddah, and the fact of no seal or signature having been attached to the letter Mr. Rassam has lately received from King Theodore, can hardly bear any other explanation than that of an intentional slight to that gentleman.

I beg also to mention to your Lordship that information has been received here of a serious mutiny having broken out amongst the Egyptian troops stationed at Kassala, the report being confirmed by the intelligence Mr. Rassam has himself received from that region; and, as the route that gentleman proposes to take to reach Matemma passes through this town, I fear his journey may be seriously interrupted by this outbreak, and that he may find considerable difficulty in getting through this part of the country. Mr. Rassam does not himself consider the matter as so serious, as the revolt is believed to be caused entirely by the long arrears of pay due to the troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 537.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(*Received September* 30.)

Sir, *Aden, September* 12, 1865.

THE important intelligence received last month by Mr. Rassam at Massowah will have been communicated by that gentleman on his arrival in Egypt. I have the honour now to forward, for the information of Earl Russell, the following additional information received this day.

2. When I dispatched the "Victoria" to Massowah on the 20th ultimo, I instructed Mr. Rassam to send her back as soon as possible that I might use her for the purpose of obtaining grain from Makulla. There being no signs of her up to the 5th instant, and no letter by native boat, I thought something must have happened to her. A few days before, Captain du Hazier, commanding His Imperial Majesty's gun-boat "Surcouf," had told me he proposed paying Massowah a visit. I, therefore, wrote and asked him if he would be good enough to proceed at once to see if anything could be learned about the "Victoria."

In that spirit of cordiality and friendly feeling which I have always found in the officers of His Imperial Majesty's navy serving on this station, he at once consented, and left that very evening with letters from me to Mr. Rassam.

3. This morning he returned bringing written information from M. Delmonte; a Roman Catholic missionary residing at Massowah, to the following effect: "that Mr. Cameron, the English Consul, is not released. Five days after the 'Victoria' left for Suez, a servant of Captain Cameron's arrived with an autograph letter from that gentleman. The servant had left Magdala, where the prisoners all were, ten days after the messengers carrying the King's letter. This man is positive in asserting that not only is Captain Cameron not released, but he still has fetters on his legs, which compel him to remain in a sitting posture; his hair, from being black, has turned grey in a year. King Theodorus has laid this trap (alluding to the invitation viâ Matemma), in consequence of some letters which Mr. Rassam has written, and the relations he has established with those in rebellion against him, the King. This is the servant's opinion, and that generally of the inhabitants of Massowah."

4. It was most unfortunate the autograph letter of Captain Cameron could not have been brought here by Captain du Hazier, as it would have thrown light upon the proceedings; but Mr. Rassam had directed that any letters from the interior coming during his absence, should be kept until his return, not thinking any other steamer would visit the port meanwhile. The people to whom he had given these instructions did not like to hand the letter over to Captain du Hazier, and this important document is unfortunately wanting now, just when it is of the utmost value. Before it could be obtained by means of another trip of the "Surcouf," and sent from there to Suez, everything will have been settled there, and Mr. Rassam either on his way to Matemma or back to this.

5. I would beg to bring particularly to the notice of Earl Russell, and to express

my great obligations for, the very prompt and courteous manner in which Captain du Hazier acted on my request that he should proceed to Massowah. There was no other steamer in the harbour, and, without his kind assistance, I could have done nothing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 538.

Earl Russell to Earl Cowley.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, October 5, 1865.*

I HAVE received from Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, the British Resident at Aden, an account of the services rendered by Captain du Hazier, of the French gunboat "Surcouf," in proceeding on the 5th ultimo, at his request to Massowah, in search of Her Majesty's steam vessel "Victoria," whose return to Aden from a voyage to that place had been unduly prolonged; and I have to instruct your Excellency to take the necessary steps for causing the thanks of Her Majesty's Government to be conveyed to Captain du Hazier, for the prompt and courteous manner in which he acted on the occasion in question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 539.

*Earl Russell to Colonel Stanton.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 5, 1865.*

ALTHOUGH it is too late to give you any directions for the guidance of Mr. Rassam beyond those which I have already transmitted by telegraph, it may be uesful, in order to prevent misconceptions, that I should enable you to state upon any proper occasion what has been and is the policy of the British Government regarding Abyssinia.

It should be borne in mind that Abyssinia is composed of several distinct provinces, some of which are separated from each other by lofty mountains and by rivers which are impassable during a portion of the year.

Hence these different provinces have often been ruled by separate Princes or Chiefs (Dedjatch), independent of each other.

In 1841 Captain Harris was sent from Bombay to the King of Shoa, with whom he concluded a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce, on the 16th of November, 1841.

In the same year, the Ruler of Tigré, Ras Oobeay or Ubie, called Ras of Abyssinia, sent Mr. Coffin, an English traveller, with a letter and presents for Her Majesty.

On Mr. Coffin's arrival at Cairo, he was informed, through Colonel Barnett, in December 1841, by direction of Lord Aberdeen, that he need not proceed further on his journey to England, and that he might deliver to Colonel Barnett any letter with which he was charged.

Mr. Coffin accordingly delivered the letter from Ras Ubie, together with presents, to Colonel Barnett, who sent the letter to England, but it cannot be ascertained whether the presents were also sent, the only allusion to them being found in a despatch from Colonel Barnett, dated September 19, 1841, in which he says they were still with Mr. Coffin at Cairo.

No reply, however, was returned to this letter, and Ras Ubie was thereupon so angry that he threatened violence to Mr. Coffin for not bringing him a return present from the Queen.

In January, 1848, Lord Palmerston, with a view to establish commercial relations with Abyssinia, appointed Mr. Plowden Consul for that country, and directed him to reside at Massowah.

Mr. Plowden was informed in his Letter of Appointment that he was sent to Massowah for the protection of British trade with Abyssinia and the countries adjacent thereto.

* Published in "London Gazette" of October 31, 1865; and laid before Parliament, 1866.

Consul Plowden proceeded to Gondar, and concluded a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Ras Ali on the 2nd November, 1849.

By this Treaty it was provided that His Majesty of Abyssinia would receive an Ambassador from Her Britannic Majesty, and "Her Britannic Majesty would in the same manner receive any Ambassador, Envoy, or Consul whom His Majesty of Abyssinia or his successors might see fit to appoint."

But, in 1854, Ras Ali was overthrown by one of his sons-in-law, who induced the Coptic Bishop to crown him Emperor of Abyssinia. This person was the present Emperor Theodore, who, so far from insisting on the observance of the Treaty of 1849, refused altogether to recognize that Treaty.

Consul Plowden was told by the British Government in 1857 that the Emperor was bound in good faith to recognize that Treaty, and that if he objected to any of its provisions he should propose modifications.

But from the triumph of the Emperor Theodore in 1856 to the present day, the Treaty has been a dead letter.

It may be argued that the British Government ought to have insisted on the validity of the Treaty on the one hand, and to have protected the Emperor of Abyssinia from the Turks on the other.

But considering the short tenure of power in the Abyssinian kings, whatever be their title, the difficulty of reaching with a regular British force their seat of empire, the little value of a victory gained at Gondar and Shoa, the risk of failure and the certainty of expense, it has seemed to the British Government a preferable course to withdraw as much as possible from Abyssinian engagements, Abyssinian Alliances, and British interference in Abyssinia.

This course, has not been taken without giving rise to groundless reproaches, many unfounded allegations, and some embarrassing and painful occurrences.

Of the former class is the following bold assertion, namely :—

"There is reason for believing that the Emperor Theodore holds Captain Cameron as a hostage for the recognition by England, already made in 1849, of the independence of Abyssinia, for the suppression of Egyptian aggressions along the frontier, and for the restitution of the church and convent at Jerusalem, torn from him and his people by the Copts, Armenians, and Turks."

Now with respect to the recognition of the independence of Abyssinia in 1849, it has been seen that it was England that asked for the recognition of the Treaty of 1849, and the Emperor Theodore who refused it. But the recognition of the independence of Abyssinia has never been withdrawn by England.

As to the suppression of Egyptian aggressions along the frontier, England has from time to time used her influence to prevent such aggressions, but will not consent to guarantee the integrity of the Abyssinian territory.

Such a guarantee would be, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, an unwise engagement, impracticable in execution.

The restitution of the Church and Convent at Jerusalem is a matter which requires some further explanation.

Any one who follows with attention the proceedings of the Turkish Government in the various provinces under its direct rule must be aware that the Christian sects, subjects of the Ottoman Porte, frequently persecute one another, and that the Sultan is often appealed to, to rescue individuals and communities from the mal-treatment or cruelty of their fellow-Christians.

Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Sublime Porte uses his good offices on such occasions, and generally with success.

In July 1852, Lord Malmesbury was appealed to by Bishop Gobat of Jerusalem, in behalf of Ras Ali and Dedjatch Oubea, who had adopted at a meeting at Gondar a resolution to the effect :—

"That Her Majesty should be requested to authorize you (the Bishop) to protect and superintend their countrymen visiting or residing in Jerusalem, and to authorize the British Agent residing at Jerusalem to lend you (the Bishop) his assistance for that purpose when required."

Lord Malmesbury's answer to this request was very clear and decisive :—

"I have to state to you in reply that Her Majesty's Government cannot undertake to protect officially the natives of Abyssinia who may chance to be residing in the territory of the Sublime Porte. But Her Majestys's Consul at Jerusalem will be instructed to use his good offices for them in case of need, as members of a Christian Church in spiritual communion with the Established Church in the Country."

You will see that the Earl of Malmesbury distinctly refused "to protect officially the

natives of Abyssinia who may chance to be residing in the territory of the Sublime Porte."

You will observe also that the good offices to be employed in their favour were intended for the benefit of those "who might chance to be residing in the territory of the Sublime Porte." Thus a distinction was made between those who might resort occasionally or casually to Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem of Abyssinian origin, who might be accounted Turkish subjects.

Thus limited, both as to the extent of the protection to be afforded, and as to the classes of persons on whose behalf good offices were to be exercised, the instruction of the Earl of Malmesbury must be allowed to have been proper and judicious. Accordingly, I referred Consul Finn on May 29th, 1862, to those instructions of 1852, observing:—

"I have nothing to add to those instructions except to enjoin you to act upon them with caution and prudence."

Those instructions remain still in force.

Coming now to the imprisonment of Consul Cameron, it appears from the papers presented to Parliament, that after he had conveyed the Queen's letter and some few presents to the Emperor of Abyssinia, he went to the country of Bogos, where he employed himself in reconciling some rival chiefs, sending on the Emperor's letter to the Queen to Massowah by the Abyssinian Messenger.

It appears further that the chief cause of the Emperor's anger with Consul Cameron was this journey to Bogos, coupled with the Emperor's suspicion that Consul Cameron had intrigued to set the Turks and Egyptians of the frontier against him, and aggravated in some degree by the return of Consul Cameron to Gondar without any answer to the Emperor's letter to the Queen.

It appears from King Theodore's letter to Mr. Rassam, sent home by that gentleman in his letter of the 5th of September,* that the King alleges that Captain Cameron "abused and denounced him as a murderer" in consequence of the vengeance which he took on the persons who killed Consul Plowden and Mr. Bell, and that when he had treated him well and asked him to make him (the King) a friend of the Queen, Captain Cameron "went and stayed some time with the Turks and returned to me (the King)," and further, that when the King spoke to Captain Cameron about the letter sent by him to the Queen, he said he had not received any intelligence concerning it.

There is no reason to suppose that Consul Cameron incited the Egyptian forces on the frontier to commit aggressions on the territory of Abyssinia. It is far more probable that the enemies of the British name in Abyssinia should have infused unjust suspicions into the mind of the Emperor. But, certainly, Consul Cameron in going to Bogos, acted without orders, and incurred the displeasure of his own Government.

It is now to be hoped that Mr. Rassam's explanation will procure for Captain Cameron permission to leave Abyssinia. He will be employed hereafter in a different part of the world, and will never have occasion to return to Abyssinia.

I have thus explained to you that the policy of the British Government has been founded entirely on the desire to promote trade and intercourse with Abyssinia.

I am well aware that there are persons who wish Her Majesty's Government to interfere in behalf of Abyssinia as a Christian country against Turkey and Egypt as Mahommedan countries.

But this policy has never been adopted by the British Government, and, I trust, never will be.

If we were to make ourselves the Protectors of the Emperor Theodore against the Sultan and his Viceroy of Egypt, we should become responsible for his acts, and be entangled in his quarrels with all his neighbours and rivals.

The obligations of the British Government are various enough, and heavy enough without undertaking so costly, hazardous, and unprofitable a Protectorate.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 540.

Colonel Stanton to Earl Russell.—(Received October 10.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, September 28, 1865.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that, from letters lately received by the German Missionaries at Cairo, and dated Khartoum the 18th of August, it

* No. 529.

appears that the mutiny amongst the Egyptian troops quartered in the Soudan, which I have already had the honour of mentioning to your Lordship, was increasing in importance at that date at Kassala; that the neighbouring tribes had joined the rebels; and that the communications with the Nile Valley were cut whilst the season prevented the Government forces from action, probably from the torrents being full at this season of the year.

It is reported, moreover, that about 4,000 negroes are in arms near Kassala against the Government, and that the European lion and ivory hunters, presumed to be the remnant of Count Bisson's expedition to that part of the country, are in great straights.

These missionaries have also received letters from Gaffat, giving good accounts of the German workmen in Abyssinia, but showing that King Theodore was much irritated by some missionary proceedings; they also contain a statement that some of the Germans had begged the King to let the English loose, and that he had answered that he had hitherto received no communication from the English, but that if he did the matter could be well arranged. The letter adds that the prisoners receive no ill usage from the Abyssinians, but that Bardel (who is also in prison) does his best to make the English miserable.

Mr. Palgrave, in forwarding me this information, states that he was shown these letters by the German Missionaries, but could not get copies of them as they were just going off by post to Jerusalem.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 541.

Colonel Stanton to Mr. Layard.—(*Received October* 10.)

My dear Sir, *Cairo, September* 30, 1865.

I HAVE this instant received the inclosed letters from Colonel Merewether, and have not had time to read more than those from Captain Cameron, as the last train that will be in time for this mail leaves in a few minutes. I am in hopes that Mr. Rassam will have gone on to Aden, in which case he will have heard from Colonel Merewether, the urgent necessity that exists for his now losing no time in going up to Abyssinia, and will have acted accordingly. It is evident that the prisoners are in a critical situation, and I fear but little credence can be placed in the report of Mr. Rassam's messengers that their chains were taken off in their presence, as none of the present letters mention anything of the sort. We can only hope that Mr. Rassam will now succeed in his journey, and that no further delay will take place. I really am unable to write more, as there is no time to do so, and must beg you to excuse my short note.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 541.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Colonel Stanton.

My dear Sir, *Aden, September* 19, 1865.

AFTER writing to you by the Calcutta mail, I asked the Captain of the French gun-boat to make a second trip to Massowah to bring back the letters from Captain Cameron, said to have arrived there. Most fortunately he made the best use of his time, and returned this afternoon with the letters, just in time to allow of my getting some of them copied.

They are most important; and so far from confirming Mr. Rassam's suspicions, the prayer is, that he should at once come up—the invitation of the King having been communicated to him—or their lives will be forfeited. I do, therefore, most earnestly hope nothing has prevented or interfered with Rassam's upward progress. There can be no doubt the King will regard any hesitation as a breach of faith, a sign of fear, and turn his wrath on the poor captives. On the other hand, a ready acceptance and prompt action may give them some immediate relief, and bring about perhaps their liberation in the end. The attempt should be made at all hazards; but the person who does go up should take the Queen's letter.

You will pardon my writing so abruptly; but one cannot help feeling most earnest when such an opportunity offers, and the time is too short to say much more.

The outgoing mail leaves so soon, that I have no time to make more copies than just sufficient for you to read, and send on, if you will kindly do so, to the Foreign Office, with, if you think advisable, this letter, for I have been unable to write to Mr. Layard.

It is uncertain where Mr. Rassam may be, so I inclose the originals to his address. Should he be within your reach, will you be good enough to have them forwarded to him.

You will observe none of the letters from Magdala say anything about intended treachery; but I should mention, that when the "Surcouf" visited Massowah the second time, the idea still existed there that treachery was meant. I would, however, attach no importance to this. If such was intended, ready and frank compliance with the invitation, would go far towards counteracting it, and causing it to be abandoned.

By the first opportunity, which I hope may be through the return of the "Victoria" to this from Suez, I will send up a supply of the different things asked for by Captain Cameron, in the hopes that some may reach.

In great haste, believe me, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 541.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, July* 14, 1865.

THANKS to your foresight and management, we are saved for the winter. I inclose you a memorandum of money received, &c. We have laid up our stores for the winter, and unless we are plundered again in a fit of anger, may hope, with God's blessing, to work through. All the prisoners who could stand upright, hands and feet were chained by the King's order on the 4th July, ourselves among the rest. Your third letter arrived the same day. The Metropolitan let us know this morning that we are to have the hand-chains removed. I suppose we must live in hope. I send you an authorization from M. Bardel to recover 80 dollars for him from Hadji Aden, formerly merchant of Gondar. I now also authorize you to recover 150 dollars for me, advanced under the same circumstances to Hadji Aden, at the instance of his wife and brother. He is a Mussulman, and an honest fellow. Perhaps he will settle it; if so, pay any debts of my own or Speedy's with it. On due examination, if Stella has not been paid, pray pay Father Delmonte for me. If you have not money enough, write to Hertslet for what may be required. I intended to have had the horse assessed, and bought him in at his value with the other rubbish the King gave me, putting the amount to the credit of Government. It must be considered Government property. It won't do, however, to sell it; the King would take it as an insult. You had better write about it to the Foreign Office; otherwise it might be sent to Aden, and sold there.

The King took back his other trash when he plundered me; he even sent down to Adowa for the saddle he gave me, which was all dropping to pieces, being worn out; I had left it there for repair. I have heard nothing about the mule. If it is at Hamazeyn, you should get it, and deal with it as Government pleases. As your third letter has come, you must come up, dear fellow, or Prester John will take it as a fresh insult. His gingerbread Empire is dropping fast to pieces; but as long as he has life in him he has power of mischief. God bless you in your enterprise. Always send preserved vegetables, medicines, chocolate, and tea; also money, sardines, and such portable things.

Again, God bless you.

(Signed) C. D. C.

Read the inclosed letters, and add anything you like.

C. D. C.

C. D. Cameron, Esq.

Money received from Massowah :—

		Dollars.
Brought by	Welda Marian	50
,,	,, afterwards	200
,,	Mr. Hart, messenger	100
,,	Mr. Hart, on bill	300
,,	Lumna	50
		700

Gerrarfill [?] has received from Daria [?] 50 dollars. He has not arrived yet.

All your letters have been received up to the present date.
July 14, 1865.

Inclosure 3 in No. 541.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, July* 16, 1865.

AS I wrote to you before, if you don't come up after your last letter, we will certainly suffer.

2. Leave the Bishop alone for the present.

3. The Gaffat people can't and won't have anything to do with your letter.

4. All the things have not arrived; the rice and some other things have not arrived.

5. About the being chained hand and foot, the right hand is chained to the foot-chains by a chain about a span long. The body is doubled up. The left hand is free.

6. About Macraire's procuration, put on either the Consulate seal or your own, with an attestation of my signature.

7. People here say you wish to bring presents. Small cannon, powder, and silk are what he cares most about.

8. Pray write to my sister for me. I can't bring myself to do it, chained as I am.

Remember me always to Playfair; also to your companion.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. D. C.

Inclosure 4 in No. 541.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, July* 21, 1865.

MY two servants start to-morrow, Lumna and Waldo, with another man, whom I hope you will reward well.

The person who has lent him to me wants some money to be sent to his son on the frontier. If you can send some little trifles by them, as watches, snuff-boxes, &c., it would be well. We are pretty well treated still by the guards, but these small presents work wonders. We have had a misfortune—25 dollars which I lent to the Bishop, and 70 deposited for safety in his hands, have been sequestrated. This is a serious affair as regards funds. I have divided everything with my fellow prisoners on equal terms, for the sake of keeping up peace and good feeling among us. The keeper of a menagerie has a pleasanter task than mine. I would like to know, however, whether these things are on my own account or not. We always want medicines, preserved vegetables, chocolate, tea, and money. God bless you, dear fellow. Once more, love to Playfair.

The Bishop is still a prisoner. Our chains are not likely to be opened.

Yours ever,
(Signed) C. D. C.

Inclosure 5 in No. 541.

Mr. Kerans to Dr. Kerans.

My dearest Father and Mother, *Magdala, July* 14, 1865.

I HAVE with much delight, this morning for the first time these last two years, received any news from home. I was glad to hear that all were well, except my poor dear uncle Lyons, whose death must have been a sad trial to you. I can hardly believe my eyes that such a fine strong man could die so young; certainly I have indeed lost one of the best uncles that ever lived; but we know that it was the will of Providence, and I trust and believe he is now gone to a happier world.

Now, dear father and mother, you must be very anxious to know how I am getting on. To begin with, I am now a year and six months in prison, in chains of about 20 lbs. weight on the legs, and now the right hand attached to the feet. You cannot imagine what fearful sufferings I have to go through every day; it has been much worse before than it is now, but still it is torment. Our only hope is in the goodness of God, who has delivered us many times when we were at the point of death, and I trust still, no matter how gloomy it appears, that He will ere long deliver us. I cannot write all I wish about our imprisonment, as it might cause great danger to me and my fellow-prisoners. Captain Cameron has indeed been to me one of the best friends; I only wish I could have been of more use to him than I have been. You know I was not at all the man for such work, but I thought as I had the offer, I might as well try what I could, if I fail, try something else. When I wrote last home I had no intention of going to Abyssinia; but being advised by Speedy to go, I thought that he, being more a man of the world than I am, I had better listen to his advice. However, I trust it will all turn out for best. As for my going home, I cannot say anything until I arrive at Massowah, if it is God's will that I should. I shall then be able to see if there is anything to be done in Africa, if there is I shall go home and see you all first, and then return; if not I will be able to judge on leaving you. Oh, how I long to get home; but I must put away all those feelings and try and work my own way in the world. I hope that the letter which is expected from the Queen will effect our liberty. I believe Mr. Rassam brings it to the King. I think as it is now the rainy season, he cannot possibly be here sooner than October.

I was glad to learn that Tom has got his lieutenancy, he certainly must have been out of all patience. I now and then, when I have opportunity, write a few lines to the wife of a missionary who lives about seven days' march from this; she has promised to write for me whenever she has an opportunity; this has been the first opportunity given me to write. Thank dear Annie much for all the letters; tell her I shall write as soon as I possibly can to her. I must now, dearest mother, conclude, hoping that I shall have an opportunity of seeing you and all who are near and dear to me. If God's will I shall. Good-bye, dearest mother.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) LAURENCE KERANS.

P.S.—Remember me kindly to Mr. Falgate, and all old friends.

Inclosure 6 in No. 541.

Consul Cameron to Dr. Kerans.

Dear Sir, *Magdala, July* 14, 1865.

I HAVE only yesterday received your letter commending your son to my care. I can assure you however that I have forestalled your wishes ever since he has been with me, as far as lay in my power.

He has had very little to do as my secretary, as before his arrival I was virtually a prisoner. He has, however, been very useful to me in other respects. His kind and conciliatory manners, and surgical skill, have been invaluable to our party, in winning over the natives, who were not at all inclined at first to treat him as well. Be sure that I will take every possible care of him, until, with God's blessing, I can restore him to you.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 7 in No. 541.

Consul Cameron to Dr. Shaw.

My dear Shaw, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, July* 14, 1865.

MY last letter gave you some of what writers of the last century would have called the humours of Abyssinian personal life. I must exhibit it to-day in another form.

Since writing to you, negotiations had been going on between the King and Waigero Warkeit, Queen Regent of the surrounding Galla tribes, to ensure peace between the two countries. Her people had been killing and mutilating, viz., cutting off the arms of the King's soldiers and hanging them about their necks, and so forth, and the King wished to put a stop to this.

In the midst of their negotiations on the 1st July, the young Prince Menelek, son of the late King of Shoa, Sahelo Selassie, rode away from the King's camp with 1,000 followers, and was met within sight of the King by a body of Galla and Shoa horsemen. The King was furious. The young Galla Prince Iman, son of Waigero Warkeit, was a hostage in his hands.

At daylight next morning Iman was called out with twenty-three other Gallas, most of them men of rank, and taken to the brink of the neighbouring precipice. There they were hacked with swords for about three-quarters of an hour; they had then their feet chopped off to take off the chains; as a finishing stroke, they were thrown over the rock. The King was present on horseback, galloping round them, boasting, in his usual style, about his being the slave of Christ, and prodding them with his spear.

Next day he vented his rage on the Bishop. We were rather afraid that we would be involved in the quarrel, but we escaped this time.

On the following morning he turned upon the poor devils of prisoners, and gave an arbitrary and causeless order that every one who could stand upright should be chained hands and feet. We were chained in this way with the rest. The same day a third letter arrived from Mr. Rassam, who is on the coast, with a letter from the Queen, requesting permission to come up and arrange matters. It has produced no change in our situations. The King left this yesterday. I believe he has gone to Yedgo. The Bishop is again a prisoner. All his effects are under sequestration, and soldiers sleep in his bed to watch him. He sent us a scant message this morning to say that he heard our hand-chains would be taken off in a few days. Please God it may be true!

This additional torture tells heavily upon Mr. Stern, my head servant, Macraire, and myself, who are the oldest of the party; but my two youngsters, Kerans and M'Kelvie, make light of this, as they do of everything else. Poor old man though I am now, it makes my blood boil in my veins with pure pride and pleasure to see these two lads, with their crops in the air and their noses in the dust, like partridges in a stubble field, and shouting "Rule, Britannia! and Britons never, never, never shall be slaves;" as if there were no such things as hand-chains in the world. You remember what Homer says—"Deprive a man of his liberty, and you take away half his value." I improve on it, and say, "Train a man to freedom, and you double his worth." But thank your friend Charles Mackay for his songs; he is our , as he is of all pioneers of civilization who speak our language. This would not be quite safe if he were understood; but the guards suppose that they are versions of the Psalter, and as they suspect we are Christians, leave us alone. If, as he assures us, there's a good time coming, I shall yet live to shake him by the hand again. Everything is breaking up here; and our exode, if we are to have one, may be brought about by a chain of circumstances as extraordinary as those by which we have been brought to our present position.

In the meantime, remember me, with all due respect, to Sir Roderick Murchison. I have a collection, geological, botanical, and zoological, the best, I sincerely believe, ever made yet, lying at Gaffat; but by what Cæsarean process to get it out, I know not as yet. Give my benediction to Burton, if the Vans haven't eaten him, and remember me in the kindest manner to Mr. White and all members of the Cosmos. And now adieu, dear Shaw, and believe me, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

I don't quite know what they think of this affair in Europe; the broadest view, I believe, the best. Prester John felt civilization closing on him, and that he must

either open his country or quarrel with England and France. As he is fond of quarrels, he has taken the initiative. All that he has done means simply this—"No stranger has ever had influence in my country from King Menelek's time till now; if you want influence, come and take it by force."

I believe, I think, that he will not accept the alternative. He is, however, ending like one of Nat Lee's mad tragedies, so we may still hope for the best.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. D. C.

P.S.—Pray send this to the "Times" for the information of all friends.
C. D. C.

Inclosure 8 in No. 541.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Hertslet.

My dear Hertslet, *Magdala, Abyssinia, January* 28, 1865.

I WISHED to write to you when Stern wrote to the Secretary of his Society in March last, but to tell truth I broke down, as there was nothing very pleasant to communicate.

I was chained in January last (1864), after having asked to go to my post, and begged the King to send Stern and Rosenthal out of the country.

The King chained me because the Government has sent no answer to his letter. He has sent me word repeatedly that he has nothing against myself.

Myself and my people were tortured with Stern and Rosenthal, I suppose lest we should encourage them not to implicate the Bishop in their affairs, as the King wished to extort something against him. He never explained why we were tortured, except that it was on Stern's account.

Our treatment afterwards was horrid in the extreme; we were chained by the legs with heavy irons, and kept all the winter in an old torn tent, on an allowance of a few handfuls of peas.

Fortunately we had got money from Gaffat, or we would all have been under the sod long since.

Being dragged up here in chains was not pleasant, but the exercise and mountain air did us good. We were allowed mules. Flad, Branteis, Staiger, Mrs. Flad, and children, Schiller, and her companion, are at Gaffat—prisoners at large; they have not been compelled to work.

We are in the prison here, but allowed to sleep under an awning outside. Half the aristocracy of Abyssinia is here, mixed up with thieves and murderers. All semblance of respect is gone long ago, and we are classed with the lowest criminals. We have no yoke on the neck, however; only twenty pounds of foot chains on our ancles.

What the end of this strange history will be defies conjecture. The King is fighting in Shoa, which is in rebellion. We rather hope that nothing may happen to him, as we might fall into rough hands, and be tortured or knocked on the head, according to the class who got hold of us.

Remember me to all friends, as well as to my relations, not forgetting Cortazzi, Dickson, Eldridge, and Burton. Our rule here is to hope for the best, and be prepared for the worst. But let all who care about us keep hoping for the best.

God bless you, dear Hertslet. I have drawn upon you two small cheques in favour of Burgrund and Mayer, of Gaffat.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. D. CAMERON.

P.S.—Stern, Rosenthal, Kerans, Macraire, Pietro, and McKilvie are here, also Mrs. Rosenthal and children: all are well, the two latter not chained. Keran's father lives at South Park, Abascraigh, Galway, Ireland.

Inclosure 9 in No. 541.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Hertslet.

My dear Hertslet, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, July* 14, 1865.

I RECEIVED a batch of letters from the coast yesterday, and hoped to have seen your handwriting among them. I would have given the world for a line about money matters. It is useless to ask you to write to me now. I shall either be dead or out of this country before I can hear from you. But I am extremely anxious to know whether the Pasha of Massowah has been paid the money I obtained through him for my first coming to Abyssinia. I intended to have brought enough money down with me to meet this, if it had not been sent to Massowah from England, as if everything had gone right, the Gaffat Europeans would have given me all their savings, 500*l.* or 600*l.*, so that I might have arranged the matter without troubling you. Perhaps the Pasha has reported me for not paying him; if so, I beg you will inform the authorities of the Foreign Office that I wrote to him, begging him to take all money that came from England, as I could get all the money I wanted through the Europeans here. This letter was torn up by my messenger, who was seized on the road a day or two before Mr. Stern's business. There is another point on which I wish to be quite clear, viz., in regard to the 200*l.* the King gave me. I offered it to the custom-house officer at Adowa, but he refused it, saying it was as much as his life was worth to take it back in cash, and that I ought to lay it out for the good of the country. I therefore, on my second visit, spoke to the Bishop to have it laid out for the foundation of a hospital at Gaffat, he approved the idea. Afterwards, however, the King was all for machinery, and I saw him personally offering to lay it out in machinery. When Stern's affair came on, and after the plunder of all the missionaries, and the breaking up of the mission, making up a destruction or pillage of property to the amount of 1,000*l.*, I did not feel justified in talking about presents of any kind, especially as I had told the King that I could only accept presents on the part of my Government, and could take nothing in my own name. For the rest, the King has said repeatedly he had nothing personally against me. He chained me because I had not obtained him a letter. His object, in fact, has been to bully and defy. He cares nothing about the European alliances, and has no fear of consequences, as he believes in his heart that he is quite a match for us. As to policy, he knows nothing about it. His maxim is to defy everybody to the last, depending on the Holy Trinity, whose instrument he believes himself to be, to get him out of all difficulties. What to do with such a character I know not. But Rassam's third letter came up a few days since. If he does not come here now, after having got leave, it may cost us our lives. Remember me to your own circle, and to all friends in the Foreign Office, and believe me ever, dear Hertslet, yours most sincerely and affectionately,

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

We were chained hands and feet on the 4th July. It is not pleasant.

C. D. C.

Inclosure 10 in No. 541.

The Rev. H. Stern to Rev. Mr. Goodhart.

My dear Sir, *Amba Magdala, July* 13, 1865.

I SHALL thank you if you will kindly forward the accompanying note. Should you feel disposed to read it you may do so. By next messengers, I hope to send the continuation of my sad story.

With best regards, yours, &c.

(Signed) H. A. STERN.

Inclósure 11 in No. 541.

The Rev. H. Stern to Mrs. Stern.

My dear Charlotte, *Amba Magdala, July* 13, 1865.

AS Captain Cameron is sending to Massowah, I scribble a line to say, that we are still in prison and fetters. We anticipated that Mr. Rassam, Her Majesty's

Agent at Massowah would by his friendly and conciliatory letters to the King, ere this have appeased his offended pride, and obtained our release from these galling chains. Our anticipations have, however, to our grief not been realised, and we must still for some time be patient and prayerful expectants of coming deliverance. His Majesty, about ten days ago, wrote to Mr. Rassam to come to Abyssinia; and his advent and the delivery of the Queen's letter, we believe, may effect our liberation. Just now everything here is in a transition state, and it is quite impossible to prognosticate the events of the ensuing few months. A general undisguised presentiment of a change is evinced in the open revolt of all the important provinces, and relentless despotism may soon experience a terrible retribution. My own and most of my fellow-prisoners' misfortunes may to a great extent be attributed to the crafty insinuations and insidious malice of godless unprincipled men, who in the ruin of others sought to attain their own nefarious and selfish ends. I do not, however, despond or despair. To-day I have been in chains twenty-one months [now two years], and although during that long, heart-wasting existence I have had to submit to fiendish tortures, and more than once have been obliged to face apparently a cruel death, yet I enjoy an infinite satisfaction in the consciousness that by an inflexible Christian firmness I saved others, and won influential friends to the cause of missions in Abyssinia.

His Majesty since our arrival here has not favoured us even with an *en passant* inquiry. Placed on a level with murderers, robbers, and other great criminals—our days have rolled on in the usual sad monotony of savage prison life. Within the last few days we have, however, again experienced something of His Majesty's feelings against the white prisoners. The cause of this fresh outburst of indignation is utterly unconnected with our affairs. On the night of the 1st July, Menelek, the Crown Prince of Shoa, and son-in-law to the Negoos Theodore, unexpectedly quitted the Royal camp, and accompanied by his followers (but not by his young wife) fled to his own country. The King, irritated by the desertion of another powerful prop of his throne, next morning executed all the Galla prisoners; then quarrelled with the Bishop, and at last his chafed spirit vented itself on all his Christian prisoners, by giving them besides foot-, hand-chains also. This art of tormenting, which is ascribed to the wise King of Israel, is a most cruel invention, particularly when, as in our case, the fetters are so short that one is actually bent double, and unable to move about by day, or to stretch one's weary limbs by night. There is a report that we are to be released from these abominable hand-shackles. I shall be thankful if it proves to be true, as the stooping attitude affects my head and causes great pain in the spine. I intended to continue the narrative of our troubles, but I have not sufficient quantity of paper. We expect messengers with provisions, clothing, paper, &c., from Massowah, and on their return, I shall send you a long but very sad letter.

God bless you all. Ever your, &c.

(Signed) HENRY A. STERN.

P.S.—Send a copy of this to Mr. Goodhart, as it may stimulate the prayers of friends in our behalf.

Inclosure 12 in No. 541.

M. A. Bardel to M. E. Bardel.

Mon cher Eugène, *Magdala, le* 12 *Juillet*, 1865.

UNE opportunité longtemps attendue m'est enfin offerte pour vous donner de mes nouvelles.

Il y a deux ans mon arrivée en Abyssinie délivra le Consul de France d'une prison certaine, et peut-être quelque chose de pire. Jusqu'au mois de Février 1864, je jouissais d'une grande faveur auprès du Roi, lorsque l'arrestation des Européens residants, le Consul d'Angleterre inclus, vint produire la crise actuelle. Je retournais du Soudan lorsque cela eut lieu. Le lendemain de mon arrivée ayant été reçu avec de grandes marques d'amitié par le Roi, je voulus faire l'essai de mon influence, en demandant la liberté du seul Français arrêté avec les autres Européens (le Lieutenant Macrère); cela me fut fatal et causa mon enchainement, qui eut lieu le 9 Février, 1864.

Depuis cette époque je déplore les effets de ma folle générosité.

Sans amis, sans sympathie, en raison de mon qualité de Français, je serais probablement mort de faim, sans la noble assistance du Consul d'Angleterre, Capitaine Cameron; car, suivant la coutume du pays, tous ce que nous possédions lors de notre arrestation fut confisqué.

Fortunément j'avais été assez heureux de prêter 5,000 ou 6,000 francs avant ces évènements au Consul Anglais. Cela me sauva. Sur ce point soyez donc tranquille, excepté la liberté de mes membres rien ne me manque. Notre situation est horrible moralement. La mort serait douce, en comparaison de pareilles tortures. Nous avons la main droite enchainée entre les deux pieds, par d'énormes anneaux.

Nous ne sommes cependant pas toujours tristes ; on s'accoûtume à tout. De grands efforts sont faits pour sauver notre vie par le Gouvernement Anglais. Réussirons-nous à quitter ce pays vivant c'est fort douteux. Je te prie de communiquer ma lettre à Charles pour ma sœur, je ne sais plus où elle reste. Fais mes compliments à M. Parraget, Risliot, Aubert, en un mot à mes anciens camarades. Il serait inutile de m'écrire, car nous sommes sur une montagne, forteresse dans le pays Galla. En cas d'accident je te donne le détail de ce que je possède actuellement. Cette somme devra être donnée à ma sœur.

Le Consul Anglais Cameron me doit	460	thalers
Le Sieur Stern, missionnaire, me doit	100	„
Le Sieur Hadje Hadham, marchand à Massowah, me doit ..	80	„
En total	640	„

En date du 12 Juillet, 1865. (Egalant la somme de 3,500 francs environ.)

Sur ce qui resterait de cette somme (en cas de mort) ma sœur payerait 200 à Edouard Langlebert. La reste appartiendrait à ma sœur.

Ne vous tormentez pas trop sur notre sort ; nous sommes prêts et resignés à tout.

Lorsque tu viens à Saville donne de mes nouvelles à M. Ricard Dobray ; tu sera payé de ta peine amplement, car tu connaîtras un excellent et digne gentleman.

Et maintenant adieu ou au revoir.

Embrasse ta femme pour moi.

A toi, &c.
(Signé) A. BARDEL.

Inclosure 13 in No. 541.

Mr. Rosenthal to Mr. Eisener and others.

My dear Friends, *Magdala Fortress, July* 1, 1865.

YOU must not be surprised if I do not write to you separately nor at any length, nor very legibly; because it is a difficult task to me, since my feet are loaded with heavy chains and my right hand fettered together with the feet in such a manner that I am not able to stand upright, and I believe a bed of three and a-half feet length is quite sufficient for me. For this reason you must excuse me, and be satisfied with a general short epistle until we have this country at our back, or are permitted to communicate to you verbally.

Before this time, when I had only foot chains, I refrained from writing entirely because it was more dangerous, and you will kindly remember, if new troubles had come upon me, I would not have suffered myself only, but my poor wife and child with me. It would have given us, indeed, great pleasure to hear often of you, our relations, our friends Messrs. Friedberg, Finley, and Ehrlich; but since you seem to act upon the principle of returning one letter for one received, I must remind you that there is no rule without exceptions, and that appearances are frequently deceptive.

We have forgotten you neither in our prayers nor in our conversation, but the peculiar and trying position in which we have been placed for the last twenty-one months, imposed a silence upon us which was just as painful to ourselves as it must have been to you. Our letters at present, even, contain many words with very little news concerning ourselves, you will be inclined to say. This also should be significant to you, and should lead to the question, why? I beg you all to be attentive as to the careful and inoffensive wording of any letters you may send to us.

We trust we shall soon be free, but do not know how long this may last yet. The Lord has laid a heavy burden upon us, but, thanks be to Him, hitherto His strength was sufficient for us, and in spite of the many reverses we have met with, we still hope on until the dayspring from on high has visited us and the sun of a gracious Providence again shines upon us. We have reason to be thankful for the past, and much cause to be confiding for the future.

His Majesty, who has taken no notice of two letters of — Rassam, Esq., the Resident from Aden, has at last answered to the third, in which (we are told) he is

asked to come up and settle the affair amicably, which that gentleman volunteered to do in his previous letters.

We hope Mr. Rassam's laudable undertaking will be crowned with success. It appears that His Majesty is already tired of the affair, but since he said (when we were first made prisoners) that when he would receive an answer to a letter directed to Her Britannic Majesty he would set us free, he makes it a point of honour to keep us until he attains his object. However rich your imagination may be, you can have no idea what our position has been for the last twenty-one months. Always in fear, not knowing what an hour may bring forth. Our last letters will enlighten you in some measure, as far as it goes, but if one of our number were to relate it he would find it difficult.

Yesterday we received a letter from you, dated October 1863, which informed us that Eliza's first-born is a day younger than our little Henry. May little Ellesa grow up in health, the fear of God, and prove a blessing to you, her parents, and all around her. She ought to be quite a young lady by this time. Other things were very saddening, but have too long ago passed to be remembered at present. One thing, however, there is which has caused us great anxiety for the last two years, and which I shall refer to in another place.

We are, thanks be to God, quite well, only our little son is not so forward in body, nor speaking, as is generally expected of children of his age, owing to his and his mamma's trials. He was about two months ago so reduced when cutting the back teeth that we did not expect him to live. Our God has heard our fervent prayers, and has not removed from us our only earthly comfort. Dear Ellen and myself have been watching about a fortnight, night after night, in constant apprehension lest our little darling should not see another daylight. The great physician has cured him without scientific men. A medical book we possess, and are pretty well acquainted with its contents. It advised to use one draught, and as our number of medicines is very limited we were compelled to take another in default. For instance—We ought to have given ipecacuanha as an antidote for reducing inflammation and choking irritation of the lungs. It got damp, was without effect, and we gave instead tartar emetic, in itself so very weakening and dangerous to little children. But we could not see our little one having one convulsion after another from want of breath without endeavouring to relieve him. This we believed saved him. Then again we ought to have given a gentle acting cough mixture, such as hemlock, sugar and ipecacuanha; but we discovered a new drug consisting of honey, fennel water, and a little tartar emetic. This also was unsuccessful, &c., but the praise we must give alone to Him who assists those who cast themselves helpless at His feet.

We are at present in the middle of winter, but it rained very little hitherto. In fact in former years there was more fall of rain before the winter began than there is this year near the end of it. We also are better off. We have a large comfortable tent, which we managed to fabricate ourselves nine months ago of sheeting, white Abyssinian cotton cloth, but since the rain began we have lined it in the interior with coarse black cloth manufactured in this country, so we are protected from the inclemency of the weather. Last year we were many a time obliged when the sun got warm in the morning to dry ourselves and our beds. I think it is much better to compare one's present circumstances with that of worse days and not that of better ones. It makes one thankful for present mercies and keeps one contented. If we were to make a comparison with English life we could be wretched well nigh to despair. This much I say, however, better a crust of bread in dear old England, than dainties here, if they were to be had. But then you know it does not require any great self-denial to be a missionary in a happy constituted country where every comfort may be obtained, and the Gospel must be preached "everywhere," it may be here for a testimony against them only in our own time, later perhaps for the receiving of it. As for missionary labour, I say it advisedly, there can be no more favourable spot in the whole universe. You could have rejoiced to read my report of September, 1863, which fell in the hands and was destroyed. Everywhere listening ears, every deference paid to the missionary, inquiries coming from far and near, distant journeys made to procure a Bible or Evangelium, and religious meetings well attended by old and young. We had five schools in different places, and four active and pious Jewish native agents. Alas, at present all is broken up, and destroyed apparently, but it may be to rise like Phœnix out of its ashes and then be and remain all prosperous and increasing. You remember the Church of Christ in all ages flourishing only after solitary wanderings in the "wilderness" having been in danger of poisonous insects and sirocco, and draughts and sight-depriving dust, and afterwards the Churches had rest and walked in the fear of God and

in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. The same may be the case with the rising Abyssinian Protestant Church. Really one cannot help being grieved at the remembrance of the sudden interruption of a promising mission after one is interested and has been engaged in the work, speaks the language, and feels already comfortable in one's domestic life. Humble as our home was, it was a happy home. I had contrived with my own hand to make many little things contributing to comfort, even to an upholstered armchair. We had a nice garden with plenty in it, the fallow ground of which I for the first time cultivated. What a pleasure to go and fetch oneself some radishes for tea or some English vegetables for dinner. And then, again, when I rode to Felasha villages. It may be some Jews were just leaving their place for another when I was approaching. They hurry back, summon young and old, male and female, under the venerable Waira tree before the village, where rendezvous are held and councils meet. My heart sickens when I think of all this, but after our heavy and protracted sufferings we should like to breathe once more the air of English liberty. I am sorry that a description of our journey from Massowah and a six months' residence in Gondar has not reached you. It caused me a winter's labour (and, by-the-bye, much trouble—you will understand this), and would have given you a good insight into Abyssinian life. It contained 250 quarto pages. The writing of it gave me much pleasure, because I know from our sea voyage it would give pleasure to you. I must conclude now, recommending you all to the love of God and trusting that we shall soon see one another. Mrs. Rosenthal's and my love to you all.

(Signed) U. ROSENTHAL.

P.S.—Dear Eisener, I would request you to write to my dear parents from time to time. I have only once written to them from here and have never heard of them. Assure them of our filial love and affection and explain the reason of our silence. Mr. Ehrick is requested to remember us kindly to the Revs. Reynolds, Colins, and Thornton, as also Mrs. Myles' family, Goulston-street-square. I need not repeat that this writing is also addressed to those friends before mentioned.

U. R.

No. 542.

Dr. Beke to Earl Russell.—(*Received October* 14.)

Ling's Private Hotel, 4, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall,
London, October 13, 1865.

My Lord,

THE distressing intelligence just received from the captives in Abyssinia, induces me to address your Lordship once more on the subject of my offer to attempt their release.

From my correspondence with your Lordship's Department it is manifest that I do not seek to be connected in any manner with Her Majesty's Government; my intention being to approach King Theodore as a suppliant in the names of the distressed relatives of the captives, from whom I should be the bearer of presents and a petition signed by all those who addressed a memorial to your Lordship on the 30th July.*

At the time when those persons so addressed your Lordship they were under the impression that they would receive material assistance from the Missionary Society which sent out Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal. But when Lord Shaftsbury, the President of that Society was applied to on the subject by Mr. Purday (Mr. Stern's father), his Lordship said that nothing could be done without the concurrence of Government, as two missions would only perplex matters; and the Committee of the Society have since passed a resolution, the minute of which I take the liberty of inclosing for your Lordship's inspection.

The Committee there express the opinion that it would be premature and inexpedient to promote any separate action, and they and their noble President will doubtless continue to entertain such an opinion as long as they imagine that by aiding my Mission they would be acting in opposition to your Lordship's wishes.

But I would venture to represent to your Lordship that the two missions emanating from two such totally different sources are not, in the slightest degree, incompatible. And even should it happen that my endeavours were crowned with success, and Mr. Rassam be thereby deprived of a portion of the merit to which he might otherwise be entitled, it surely is time for personal considerations of every kind to be set aside,

* No. 510.

when the object is to free our suffering countrymen from captivity and torture, perhaps even to save their lives, and at all events to put an end to what has now become a grievous national scandal and disgrace.

I do not ask the assistance or even the countenance of Her Majesty's Government, nor do I intend in any way to interfere with Mr. Rassam. All I desire is, that your Lordship would be pleased to let Lord Shaftsbury know that any measures which his Lordship or the Committee of the London Society may adopt, with a view to the liberation of their missionaries and the other British captives through my intervention, would not be displeasing to your Lordship, but, on the contrary, would be viewed with satisfaction.

I have, for some time past, been preparing for my journey and could therefore get ready to leave England at a moment's notice; and as I should enter Abyssinia at once without waiting to hear from the King, I have little doubt of being able to send home intelligence which, under God's blessing, I trust would be of a favourable character, before the approaching meeting of Parliament.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 543.

Lord Shaftesbury to Earl Russell.—(Received October 15.)

St. Giles's House, Cranbourne, Salisbury,
My dear Russell, *October* 14, 1865.

YOU would much oblige me and the Jewish Society by a little information in respect to proposed mission to Abyssinia.

Great efforts are being made by Mr. Stern's friends to sent out Dr. Beke to that savage, the Emperor. Now I have given the strongest advice that, if the Government have sent or intend to send out a mission, the whole affair should be left in their hands. In this way alone should we avoid confusion.

A report now is abroad that Mr. Palgrave is not to go; and, on belief of this, the friends of the captives are again very active in their efforts to dispatch Dr. Beke.

Public opinion will demand from us some endeavour to rescue the prisoners. But if you have the matter still under your guidance, I shall repeat the counsel I have hitherto given.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) SHAFTESBURY.

No. 544.

Earl Russell to the Earl of Shaftesbury.

My dear Shaftesbury, *Pembroke Lodge, October* 16, 1865.

AS King Theodore invited Rassam to his court, we have ordered him to go there, and have desired Palgrave to await in Egypt till we know the result of Rassam's mission.

You will, of course, exercise your own discretion as to the course you will advise the Jewish Society to pursue.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 545.

Earl Russell to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Pembroke Lodge, October* 16, 1865.

MR. RASSAM has now gone to Massowah with the view of making his way to the Court of King Theodore.

Her Majesty's Government have thought right to suspend the journey of Mr. Palgrave till we know the result of Mr. Rassam's mission.

You are, of course, at liberty to take any course you think best.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

No. 546.

Mr. Grey to Earl Russell.—(Received October 21.)

My Lord, *Paris, October 20, 1865.*

HAVING observed that Dr. Beke, in a letter published in the "Times" of the 18th instant, expressed some apprehension that the safety of the captives in Abyssinia might be endangered if an application for arms were again to be made by Menelek, the Crown Prince of Shoa, to the French Consular Agent at Aden, I yesterday gave M. Drouyn de Lhuys a copy of Dr. Beke's letter, and called his attention to the concluding paragraphs.

His Excellency at once promised to instruct the French Consul carefully to abstain from taking any part in the matter, or from giving any countenance to the son-in-law of the Emperor Theodore.

For the sake of convenience, I have the honour to inclose a copy of Dr. Beke's letter, extracted from the "Times."

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. G. GREY.

Inclosure in No. 546.

Extract from "The Times" of October 18.

To the Editor of "The Times."

Sir, *October 17, 1865.*

THE relatives of the captives in Abyssinia, as well as myself, have reason to feel grateful for the publicity you have so kindly given to the distressing case of our unfortunate countrymen, to attempt whose rescue I am about to proceed to Abyssinia.

I should not think of again troubling you so immediately on the subject were it not for a circumstance which, if not taken in time, might render nugatory not only my own mission (which I may be allowed to explain is solely on behalf of the relatives of the captives), but also that of Mr. Rassam on the part of Government, of which mine is entirely independent, by causing the prisoners to be summarily put to death before either of us could come to their deliverance.

Mr. Stern mentions, in his letter given in your impression of the 14th instant, the sudden flight from the Royal camp of Menelek, Crown Prince of Shoa, and son-in-law of the Emperor Theodore, in consequence of which the enraged Monarch caused all his Mahometan and Galla prisoners to be executed, and fetters to be placed on the hands of their Christian fellow-captives, in addition to those they already had on their legs—"20 lbs. of foot-chains on our ankles," as I copy from a letter of one of the wretched victims now before me.

Were it not for the manner in which the fact of Menelek's escape was made feelingly known to Mr. Stern and his friends, one might have been inclined to regard his statement as an almost verbal repetition of one made in the "Standard" of the 20th February last, respecting the flight of Menelek from the Royal camp, and the imprisonment of the Aboona, or Bishop, on the suspicion of having aided him in his escape.

On that occasion the fugitive, on his arrival in his native country, applied to the French Consular Agent at Aden for a supply of fire-arms. I cannot say whether or not the Representative of France was at all disposed to comply with the request; but I do know that some communication took place between him and the British authorities at Aden, and that the arms were not furnished. The Crown Prince, who without them was unable to make head against the Emperor, was defeated and taken prisoner, only to escape again as related by Mr. Stern.

As everything repeats itself in Abyssinia, there can be little doubt that Menelek will renew—perhaps has already renewed—his application for fire-arms, either to the French Consul or to some other Resident at Aden; and I would therefore avail myself of the medium of your widely-circulating journal to express the hope that suitable measures may be adopted by the authorities both at home and abroad, to prevent such an application from being successful, as the inevitable consequence would be the immediate execution of our hapless countrymen.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 547.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(*Received October* 23.)

Sir, *Aden, September* 25, 1865.

I HAD only just time to prepare and send by last mail, under flying seal, through Colonel Stanton,* copies of the letters sent down by the captives from Magdala. The messenger who brought them down, Lumna bin Hailo, servant of Captain Cameron, has since been questioned and his statement taken down. I have the honour to forward it herewith.

2. This statement corresponds exactly with what was written by Captain Cameron, and shows that the report of his release was not true; but I do not find anything in it to confirm the suspicions before reported as prevailing generally at Massowah after the arrival of this messenger, that treachery was intended by the King: on the contrary, Lumna distinctly states, at the end of his account, that it was openly mentioned, and he himself fully believed, that on Mr. Rassam's arrival the King would release the prisoners at once, though he doubted whether he would let them leave the country for some little time. He told the people of Massowah that the tale of Captain Cameron's release was false, and that he did not believe the King had ever said in his letter to Mr. Rassam that he had released the Consul.† On this much the doubts seem to have been raised—unless M. Delmonte has further private information with which I have not been made acquainted, but I do not think it likely that this should be the case.

3. Captain Cameron's servant has been well-treated here since his arrival, and will be sent back to Massowah in the "Victoria" directly she returns from Suez, taking with him as many of the things as possible which have been asked for by Captain Cameron.

4. I heard from Mr. Rassam by last mail that he proposed leaving Suez about the 16th instant on his return to Massowah, whence, after making his arrangements for his upward journey, he would come on here to procure some things he could not provide himself with elsewhere, and expected to arrive about the 26th. He does not give his reasons in full for preferring the route from Massowah viâ Kassala, to going up the Nile from Egypt, when he was there.

5. I would beg again to bring to the notice of Earl Russell the courtesy and cordial friendliness evinced a second time by Captain du Hazier, commanding His Imperial Majesty's steam gun-boat "Surcouf," in so promptly acceding to my request to make another trip to Massowah. He received my note at noon of the 14th instant, left at 4 P.M. of that day, and returned with the important letters and the messenger at 2 P.M. of the 19th. Knowing the great value of time, and how anxious I was to get the letters, if possible, before the mail from Bombay passed, he did, what I believe has never been attempted before, ran through the Dhalac group of islands and reefs into Massowah anchorage at night, and was thus able to get what was required and start on his return the first thing next morning. The usual custom has been to wait for daylight before venturing on the passage, it is so very difficult. By boldly attempting it he saved twelve hours, and returned to this on the afternoon of the 19th, just in time to enable me to forward copies of the letters by the mail which left early on the morning of the 20th.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

P.S. *29th September.*—The "Victoria" arrived this day at noon bringing Mr. Rassam and the other members of the mission. No other letters had arrived at Massowah; but intelligence had been received there that the rebels had succeeded in capturing Debra Tabor, thus confining King Theodorus to Magdala. The King is further said to be very sore pressed.

Mr. Rassam has explained his reasons for preferring the Massowah and Kassala route. First, because it was the line pointed out by the King; next, it gave the opportunity, had the King been successful against the rebels and been able to come to Adowa, for Mr. Rassam, on hearing again from the King, to meet him at Adowa instead of going to Matemma. This latter plan cannot now possibly be carried out by the King, so all that remains is for Mr. Rassam to proceed as quickly as possible to

* See Inclosure in No. 541.

† A reference to the correspondence forwarded by me on the 12th September (No. 537), will show that this opinion of Lumna's was quite correct. The story of the release appears first in the statement of Ibrahim Walad Shoom, supported by Mahomed Sihawie (Inclosures 7 and 8 in No. 529), and, from hearsay, by his companion Mahomed Saeed. No allusion even is made to it in the King's letter, or in the following ones.—W. L. M.

Matemma. He will return to Massowah directly some necessary repairs to the machinery of the "Victoria" have been completed. This will take up about six days, after which there will be no further delay. The "Victoria" will occasionally visit Massowah.

W. L. M.

Inclosure in No. 547.

STATEMENT of Lumna bin Hailo, inhabitant of Gondar in Abyssinia, a Messenger sent by Captain Cameron to Mr. Rassam, who states :—

I AM a servant of Captain Cameron's, and have been in his service for about four years.

In the month of Sumnee (June, July), Menelek, son of Hailo Malikat, a Galla Chief, who was a prisoner with the King, managed to effect his escape, when King Theodorus immediately ordered all the prisoners to be loaded with more chains, including the Europeans; the latter formerly were only chained by the hands, then they had chains put on hands and feet, and their hands fastened down so close to their feet, that they could not stand erect, in which state they now all are. The King also cut off the hands and feet of his Galla prisoners, and threw them over a cliff, being greatly enraged at the escape of their Chief. This news I heard just as I was about four days' journey from Magdala; and on arrival there I saw the prisoners thus chained. When I left Magdala about two months and sixteen days before for Massowah, they were not in this state.

My reason for going to Massowah was to take a letter from the Consul to Mr. Rassam at Moncooloo, and receive its answer and some money. There were two other men who accompanied me (Gozai and Wildo, not Waldo Mariam). Just before reaching Magdala, I also heard that the Consul had been released. It was, however, a false report, for when I gave him the letters and money, I found him in the state described.

Eight days after arriving, I again started from Magdala, with a letter from Consul Cameron. During my stay I saw the Consul daily. He appeared very well, and only suffered occasionally from his eyes and the torment of his fetters. The rest of the prisoners were also very well, Mr. Stern was looking very old. The Consul gave me the letter, and told me to take it quickly to Mr. Rassam.

I left Magdala, and in one month and sixteen days I arrived at Massowah, and found that Mr. Rassam had left for Suez; so I went to Abdulla Effendi, who had been ordered by Mr. Rassam to take care of any messengers that might arrive with letters for him. I told Abdulla about some money that Captain Cameron wanted, and remained with him.

About fourteen or fifteen days after my arrival at Massowah, a steamer "Surcouf" arrived, and M. Delmonte told the Commander what he had heard from me, viz., that Cameron and the others were still in prison, and that I had a letter from them. The steamer then left, and about eight days afterwards returned, bringing an order to Abdullah Effendi from the Governor of Aden, to send the letters I had, and me too, by her to Aden, so I came, but against my wish.

Consul Cameron told me that Ibrahim had been sent with a letter by the King to Rassam, in the month of Sumnee, and that I was to be careful not to let Ibrahim see me, or else I might get into trouble. The Consul did not tell me, and I did not hear in Magdala what the contents of this letter were; but after my arrival in Massowah, I heard that the King had written, inviting Mr. Rassam up by Matemma, telling him, that for his (Rassam's) sake he had released the Consul. On my hearing this from Abdullah Effendi and the Consulate servants, I told them it was false; that the Consul and the other Europeans were worse off than before with regard to their chains. I also said, I did not believe the King had ever said he had released them in his letter to Mr. Rassam.

I travelled very quietly, and kept as much concealed as possible, for I was afraid of being seen. When I left Magdala, Kasai was at Dulanta, from whence he went to Debra Tabor, where he organized an expedition against Warkait, who was then threatening the fortress of Magdala.

Theodore has lost many men, and has now only a few matchlock-men with him; the country is in a fearful state from revolt and famine. The King has not 2,000 men, and is in a very bad state of health from disease; he is very thin indeed. I used to

hear from the King's guards and others, that it was Kasai's intention to release the prisoners directly Mr. Rassam arrived; that he had sworn to do so. I think that on Mr. Rassam's arrival the King would release the prisoners, but would not allow them to leave the country for some little time, he is so frightened of everybody now.

Before me, this 20th day of September, 1865.

(Signed) G. R. COOPER, *Lieutenant*,
Assistant Political Resident, Aden.

No. 548.

Mr. Rassam to Mr. Layard.—(Received October 23.)

My dear Mr. Layard, *Aden, September* 29, 1865.

I HAVE just time to write to you a few lines by this opportunity, and acquaint you with my arrival here this afternoon for the purpose of getting some money and different articles for my journey up to Matemma. I hope to leave for Massowah in five days, and will start for up-country without loss of time. You will doubtless be as much surprised as I have been in finding that the report which was brought down by the messengers of the release of Cameron was false, and this is proved by some letters received lately from him, which Colonel Merewether has sent you copy of. I was never so startled in my life as I was on hearing on my return to Massowah that the intelligence about the release was not true, and this shows you how little can be depended upon the word of Abyssinians, most of whom, I am sorry to say, love false rumours better than the truth. However you will be glad to learn that Cameron has now changed his mind with regard to my going up to the King of Abyssinia, and wants me to proceed up with Her Majesty's letter. It is premised that once I meet Theodoros with the Royal letter, he would release all the prisoners. I hope and trust that this will be the case.

The last messenger reached Massowah from Cameron the night after my departure, and I only wish he had come a few hours earlier, which would have prevented me sending to you that trumped-up report. I cannot for the life of me make out why those two messengers (whom I had sent up with my third letter to the King) invented that lie, because it made no difference to the reward I wished to make them for bringing me an answer from His Majesty. I sent them up expressly to find out why Theodoros did not answer me, and, if possible, to bring me a reply. I certainly did ask them also to try and have the fetters of the prisoners taken off through the instrumentality of some influential officers at the King's Court; and for this I gave them some money to buy presents with beforehand. One of these messengers (who is very intelligent and is on intimate terms with some followers of the King, especially Samuel), I have sent up with the fourth letter to His Majesty, and I shall not be able to see him again until I go up to Matemma, where he promised to come and meet me. Unfortunately, I cannot for the present punish the men who fabricated the false news, as it may do the prisoners some injury; but I hope that some day or other I shall be able to arrive at the truth, and find out what induced them to deceive me. Not only I got Prideaux to write down their statements in my presence, but I examined them myself separately, and through different interpreters. They adhered firmly to their former statements.

Colonel Merewether has been exceedingly kind, and without his assistance and co-operation I know not how I could have managed my affairs here, especially about funds.

Your kind notes reached me to-day, and I return you my sincere thanks for them. I have no time to write more, as the mail closes in a few minutes; so I must conclude, and hope to write to you a much longer letter ere long.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 549.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(Received October 23.)

Sir, *Aden, October 6, 1865.*

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of Earl Russell, that Mr. Rassam left yesterday afternoon in the "Victoria," for Massowah, accompanied by Lieutenant Prideaux and Dr. Blanc. He was provided with a double set of stores for the captives, one a moderate supply to send direct from Massowah to Magdala, the other a large one to take with him to Matemma. He likewise had with him a variety of articles which he had purchased in Egypt as presents for the King and members of the Abyssinian Court, as also a supply of money for expenses on the road. The necessary funds for the above have been given by me from this Treasury, and I trust the arrangements will meet with Earl Russell's approval.

2. I most pressingly urged Mr. Rassam to the utmost expedition, and he assured me he would push on immediately that he obtained carriage; unfortunately when he called at Massowah on his way down he did not order the carriage to be prepared, as he had intended, on account of the news he found there that Debra Tabor had been taken. He therefore would not make the preparations for his upward journey until he had first consulted with me here. I pointed out to him that though King Theodorus would certainly be reduced to great and very narrow straits by the fall of Debra Tabor, that it was only a report, and, even if true, I still considered Mr. Rassam should, in accordance with the invitation he had received, push on with the least delay to Matemma, where he would learn the correct state of affairs, and be able to communicate with the King.

3. The "Victoria" is to remain at Massowah until Mr. Rassam leaves, which would, I should hope, be within a week after arrival; but should any unexpected circumstances cause further delay, he is to keep her ten days, and then send her down with report of progress. Before quitting Massowah he will make arrangements for some person to receive and forward to me any letters from himself or from the captives. This will be more fully reported on hereafter. The "Victoria" will occasionally be sent to Massowah to obtain intelligence.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 550.

Colonel Stanton to Earl Russell.—(Received October 23.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, October 4, 1865.*

I HAVE just received a letter from M. de Sainte Marie, acting as British Consul at Jeddah, dated the 20th September, forwarding the copy of an extract from a letter addressed to him by M. Delmonte, Acting French Consul at Massowah, together with another extract of a letter from the same gentleman to a merchant at Jeddah, and I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of the former extract and a translation of the latter (which is written in Italian).

These documents, which bear respectively the dates of the 2nd September and 30th August, refer probably to the letters from Captain Cameron, which I had the honour to forward by the last mail;* and it may be hoped that the statement of the messenger as to the state of Captain Cameron's health is exaggerated, as he himself in his letter made no allusion to any such sufferings as those mentioned in M. Delmonte's letter. The statement of the latter that he is assured that King Theodore has only invited Mr. Rassam to come to him at Gondar for the purpose of treating him in the same manner as he has treated Captain Cameron may, I imagine, be looked upon as his own private opinion on the matter, and, in the absence of any good grounds for such an opinion, hardly merits serious consideration, though it is possible the idea mentioned in the Italian translation that Mr. Rassam had placed himself in communication with the rebels may have entered the King's head, but the announcement that M. Bardel has been liberated and accompanies the King as adviser is, if true, more worthy of consideration, as it is reported by the German Missionaries that the prisoners have had their sufferings much increased through his means. There is, however, reason to doubt the truth of the report of his liberation, as no mention whatever was made of the circumstance in the last letters received from the prisoners.

* See Inclosure in No. 541.

I have had no intelligence of Mr. Rassam since his departure from Suez, but as he would certainly have heard from Colonel Merewether how urgent it was for him to start on his journey without delay, I hope shortly to be able to report to your Lordship that he has set off for Matemma.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 550.

M. Delmonte to M. de Sainte Marie.

(Extrait.) *Massowah, le 2 Septembre*, 1865.

IL y a quelques jours qu'un Envoyé du Roi de l'Abyssinie, Théodore, avait apporté à Mr. Rassam, chef de la Mission Politique Anglaise auprès de Sa Majesté, une lettre du Roi lui-même, dans laquelle, après l'avoir assuré que Mr. Cameron n'était plus lié, il l'invitait à se rendre lui-même à Debra Tabor, près de Gondar, car il désire avoir quelques entrevues avec l'Envoyé de Sa Majesté Britannique. Mr. Rassam crut cela de bonne foi, et il s'est rendu à Suez sur un bateau à vapeur pour en avertir immédiatement son Gouvernement.

Voilà que, pendant son absence, un domestique de Mr. Rassam vient porteur d'une lettre autographe du même Mr. Cameron. Le domestique m'assure que Mr. Cameron est toujours lié, et bien mal à son aise; car, ayant les fers aux pieds, ses jambes se sont enflées et à grande peine il peut se tenir de bout. On m'assure que Théodore est décidé à ne pas lui donner la liberté, et que, si Sa Majesté a invité Mr. Rassam à se rendre à Gondar, c'est pour le traiter de la même manière que son camarade. Il paraît que M. Bardel, qui était aux fers depuis plusieurs mois, ait obtenu sa liberté, et qu'il accompagne le Roi en qualité de conseiller.

Inclosure 2 in No. 550.

M. Delmonte to a Merchant at Jeddah.

(Translation.) *Massowah, August* 30, 1865.

ABYSSINIA continues infested by rebels, and there is no security either for Europeans or natives.

The English Consul is still suffering in chains, and, from what the Abyssinians tell me, there are no hopes of his being set at liberty. It is hardly two years ago that his hair was quite black; now it has all become as white as wool—a most evident proof that poor Mr. Cameron has suffered, and is still suffering much.

However, from what the servant of Mr. Cameron says, Mr. Rassam has placed himself in relations with several head rebels against the Emperor Theodore, and the latter, having found this out, has invited Mr. Rassam to repair thither; and there is no doubt that the Emperor will punish him.

No. 551.

Colonel Stanton to Mr. Layard.—(Received October 23.)

My dear Sir, *Alexandria, October* 12, 1865.

THE accompanying letter and inclosure from Colonel Merewether have just reached me, they contain further intelligence from Abyssinia, which proves that the report of Cameron having been loosed from his chains was false, and that, on the contrary, he was really chained hand and foot, and suffering much from his confinement.

There is, however, I am happy to see, a ray of hope in the statement of Cameron's servant that he had heard from the King's guards and others, that the King had sworn to release the prisoners directly Mr. Rassam arrived, and as it is difficult to imagine what advantage he may hope to gain by keeping them after that visit, there appears reason to believe in the truth of this statement.

The success of the rebels, if true, may, however, be a serious matter, as a despot of such a character as King Theodore is likely enough to revenge himself for his reverses on the unfortunate prisoners in his power. Our only hope is in Rassam's

speedy success, and Colonel Merewether will have impressed upon him the absolute necessity of wasting no time on his journey. I have no further intelligence of the state of the country about Kassala; but imagine the troops sent there, viâ Souakin, will have arrived ere this, and, unless the mutiny has been strongly supported by the local tribes, it may be hoped that this reinforcement will enable the authorities to make head against the mutineers. But I still fear that Rassam will find more difficulty on the road than he expected from this source.

Believe, me, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 552.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received October 24.)

Sir, *India Office, October 24, 1865.*

I AM directed by Sir Charles Wood to state, for the information of Earl Russell, that in a letter received from Aden respecting the Abyssinian captives, Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether brings to notice the courtesy evinced by Captain du Hazier, Commander of the French gun-boat "Surcouf," in so promptly making another trip to Massowah, which enabled the Resident to forward to the Foreign Office letters by the mail of the 20th September, and I am to suggest that his Lordship be moved to cause the thanks of Her Majesty's Government to be conveyed to Captain du Hazier, through the French Minister in this country.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HERMAN MERIVALE.

No. 553.

Mr. Murray to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 26, 1865.*

I AM directed by Earl Russell to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 25th September and 6th October,* and to thank you for the information therein conveyed respecting Mr. Rassam's proceedings.

Lord Russell entirely approves all that you have done with a view to procure the release of Captain Cameron. And his Lordship is of opinion that Mr. Rassam should hurry on with all speed as the only chance of releasing the captives in Abyssinia.

If you should have an opportunity of hurrying him and fixing his attention still more, Lord Russell hopes you will do so.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 554.

Earl Russell to Mr. Grey.

Sir *Foreign Office, October 31, 1865.*

WITH reference to my despatch to Earl Cowley of the 5th instant,† I have to state to you that I have been informed by the Secretary of State for India that the British Resident at Aden has brought to his notice a further act of courtesy which has been evinced by Captain du Hazier of the French gun boat "Surcouf," in making another trip to Massowah and back in time to enable the Resident to send home intelligence from Abyssinia by the Indian mail of the 20th ultimo; and I have to instruct you to take the necessary steps for causing the thanks of Her Majesty's Government to be conveyed to Captain du Hazier for the prompt manner in which he undertook the service in question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) RUSSELL.

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* Nos. 547 and 549.

† No. 538.

No. 555.

Mr. Gibson to Mr. Layard.—(*Received November* 6.)

Sir, 25, *Moorgate Street, London, October* 18, 1865.

SEEING that as yet nothing has been done effectual as to the eventual release of our Consul, Mr. Cameron, and his fellow-prisoners in Abyssinia, I am still willing to carry out the offer I made some time ago to the Foreign Office.* When my offer is accepted, I shall then be ready to show my plan, which is the only one that will succeed. I believe the mission of Rassam Effendi has done more harm than good, as His Majesty King Teodore hates everyone of Turkish extraction. This is the time of year to commence operation in that quarter of the world.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) THOS. GIBSON.

No. 556.

Colonel Stanton to Earl Russell.—(*Received Novmber* 6.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, October* 21, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 5th instant,† conveying for my information, in order that I may be able to state upon any proper occasion what has been, and is, the policy of the British Government respecting Abyssinia; and I beg to assure your Lordship that, in any statement I may be called upon to make on this subject, I will not fail to avail myself of the information contained in this despatch to explain the policy of Her Majesty's Government, against which so many groundless reproaches and unfounded allegations have been made.

I hrve, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 557.

Mr. Hammond to Mr. Gibson.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 8, 1865.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th ultimo,‡ renewing the offer made in your letter of the 23rd of June last,* to proceed to Abyssinia with a view of obtaining the release of Mr. Consul Cameron and the British Captives in Abyssinia, and in thanking you for this offer, I am to inform you that Her Majesty's Government have no occasion for your services in connexion with this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 558.

Mr. Rhodes to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received November* 12.)

My Lord, *Havre, November* 18, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to address your Lordships on the subject of Mr. Consul Cameron still in confinement in Abyssinia, offering my services with the view to obtaining his release.

I have fully examined the numerous difficulties that might have to be overcome to be successful, and confidently propose to your Lordships the following arrangements:—

1. That I be the bearer of a despatch from your Lordship to the King of Abyssinia, without other official capacity than that of a simple Foreign Messenger. That Her Majesty be pleased to confide to me Her Majesty's photographic likeness bearing her Sign Manual, and a letter of presentation of such likeness to the King.

2. That I be allowed to reside near the residence of the King, for one month,

* See No. 495. † No. 539. ‡ No. 555.

during which time I should be engaged in cultivating friendly intercourse with the authorities and principal inhabitants of the place.

3. That I be allowed to make such concessions on the part of the British Government as may engender good feeling towards our nation, without imperilling the life of a single British subject, or the interests of our countrymen engaged in commerce with that nation.

4. That I be allowed 10*l.* per diem for the period (not to exceed one month) I should reside near the residence of the King, and for my journey to and back from Abyssinia.

5. That I be allowed to depart during the month of December next.

6. That the knowledge of my mission be strictly confined to the Private Cabinet of your Lordship, and if necessary, to the Privy Council.

Having had here many cases of British subjects being imprisoned for divers causes, I have always intervened in their behalf with the Judical Authorities successfully.

From experience, and in a private character, I sincerely think, my Lord, that my efforts on this occasion would be equally crowned with success.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. PARKER RHODES.

No. 559.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Rhodes.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 23, 1865.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter marked Private of the 18th instant, offering to proceed to Abyssinia, in order to obtain the release of Mr. Consul Cameron and the other British captives in that country, and, in reply, I am directed by his Lordship to thank you for your offer, but to inform you, that as measures are in progress, through agents of Her Majesty's Government, with the view to the release of the captives, Lord Clarendon considers that it would be inexpedient, and probably injurious to the cause, to make a new appointment.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 560.

Colonel Stanton to Mr. Layard.—(Received November 23.)*

Sir, *Alexandria, November* 9, 1865.

THE inclosed letters from Colonel Merewether reached me shortly after the last mail to England was despatched, and consequently too late to enable me to forward them on by an earlier opportunity.

I sent by telegraph the information of Rassam's departure from Massowah, which I am sure will be gladly received in England, and as the last reports declare that the disturbances about Kassala are ended, we may reasonably hope that no insurmountable difficulties will be met with on the road to Matemma, and that Rassam and his party will be able to reach that spot by the middle of this month.

It is also satisfactory to find that the reports of the successes of the rebels in Abyssinia are not confirmed, and that the danger with which the captives were threatened on that account is avoided. Altogether Rassam appears to have started under favourable auspices, and I trust he will make the most of his opportunity and press on his journey.

Should I receive any trustworthy intelligence of his progress, I will not fail to inform you of the same by telegraph.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

No. 561.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(*Received November 23.*)

Sir, *Aden, October 19, 1865.*

I AM happy in being able to report, for the information of Earl Russell, that the "Victoria" arrived early this morning, bringing intelligence from Mr. Rassam, that he and his party had actually left Massowah on the evening of the 15th instant, just a month after their return to that place from Aden. Mr. Rassam lost no time in procuring the carriage necessary for his journey up country, and got off sooner than he had anticipated.

2. I have the honour to forward copies of the letters received from him by this opportunity. With regard to the correspondence I would observe, that while Mr. Rassam was last here, I pointed out to him the necessity of having some person at Massowah capable of arranging for the maintenance of communication after the Mission should have left, also to receive and forward any letters to or from the captives which might arrive, and generally to look after British interests. I thought it very desirable that Dr. Blanc and Lieutenant Prideaux should both accompany Mr. Rassam; I therefore authorized the latter to ask M. Munzinger, whom I had often heard very highly spoken of, whether he would undertake the duty, and, if he would, to at once place him in charge. I had been told that Mr. Speedy, when acting as Vice-Consul at Massowah, was to receive from Captain Cameron a sum equal to about 200 rupees per mensem. As this seemed to me a fair remuneration for the extra work thrown on M. Munzinger, I authorized Mr. Rassam to state that that would be the amount of the salary; both the appointment and salary, however, being contingent on the approval of Her Majesty's Government.

3. I trust that this arrangement will meet with the approval and sanction of Earl Russell; it certainly is the best that could be made; M. Munzinger being the only person at Massowah who possessed a sufficient knowledge of the English language to read and act on any communications which might be sent down by the captives.

4. As will be seen, M. Munzinger has accepted the trust, and assumed charge on the 15th instant. I have written to request him to keep up the Consulate at Massowah, and the Consul's house at Monkooloo, with the small establishment of writer and watchers, until instructions are received from Her Majesty's Government. Should Mr. Rassam's journey prove successful, as I have every expectation it may, if he once gets to Matemma, the final settlement about these Consular dwellings had better be left until Captain Cameron's return to Massowah.

5. The intelligence formerly received of Debra Tabor having been taken by the rebels does not appear to have been true.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 561.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, October 12, 1865.*

AGREEABLY to your direction regarding the appointment of a trustworthy Agent at Massowah for the purpose of communicating with Consul Cameron and his fellow prisoners, and for looking after British interests, I have the honour to inform you that I have offered the post to M. Munzinger, the Swiss merchant now acting as French Vice-Consul here; and, as you will see from the inclosed correspondence, he has accepted the appointment according to my proposal.

2. This gentleman, who is well known for his scientific researches, has been out in these parts for the last twelve years, and is respected both in Abyssinia and Massowah. He had been recommended by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the British Representatives in this country; and from the friendly assistance he has always rendered me ever since my arrival at Massowah, I doubt not but that he will perform the duty intrusted to him to the satisfaction of Government.

3. He understands English well, but he cannot write it properly, I have therefore asked him to communicate to you in French as well as in English, as he might not be able to express himself intelligibly in the latter tongue.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 561.

Mr. Rassam to M. Munzinger.

Sir, *Massowah, October* 11, 1865.

ON my last visit to Aden, Colonel Merewether, the Political Resident at that Settlement, spoke to me about the expediency of leaving an Agent at Massowah to look after British interests, and to communicate with Consul Cameron and his fellow-prisoners, after I proceed to the Court of the King of Abyssinia.

2. Having had the pleasure of knowing you so long, I could recommend no better person than yourself for the appointment, being well aware of the great interest you take in the fate of the unfortunate prisoners, and your readiness in rendering assistance and protection to all subjects of European Powers.

3. Colonel Merewether has therefore authorized me to offer you this temporary appointment, on a salary of 200 rupees per mensem, pending the sanction of Her Majesty's Government.

4. If you are willing to accept this post, I shall feel obliged by your informing me, in writing, of your resolution as soon as possible, in order that I may forward your acceptance to the proper authorities before my departure hence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 561.

M. Munzinger to Mr. Rassam.

Monsieur, *Massowah, le* 11 *Octobre*, 1865.

J'AI eu l'honneur de recevoir votre lettre en date d'aujourd'hui, me proposant la charge d'Agent Britannique pendant votre absence.

J'accepte cette charge avec d'autant plus de plaisir qu'elle me met à même de vous être agréable, et en même temps d'être utile aux prisonniers Européens.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) W. MUNZINGER,
Agent du Vice-Consulat de France.

Inclosure 4 in No. 561.

Mr. Rassam to M. Munzinger.

Sir, *Massowah, October* 11, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated this day, copy of which I shall transmit by the first opportunity to the Resident at Aden.

2. I beg further to inform you that the house occupied as a British Consulate is held at a rental of 10 dollars per mensem, and that two watchmen, one for the house at Massowah and the other for that at Monkooloo, have hitherto been employed at 4 and 3 dollars per mensem respectively. I, myself, see no necessity for retaining the house at Massowah, but I shall feel obliged by your communicating on the subject with Colonel Merewether, by whose decision you will abide. The rent of the house and the pay of the watchman at Monkooloo have been settled for the time I have been here to the end of September.

3. I have been paying the Arabic writer of the Consulate at the rate of 10 dollars per mensem, also up to the end of September, but I leave it to your option to continue his services or not.

4. It is understood that one of Her Majesty's vessels will call at this port once a month for the purpose of conveying despatches, &c. Should, however, any intelligence arrive from the prisoners of such a character as to necessitate its immediate transmission to Aden, you are at liberty to charter a buggalow, for the purpose of conveying your letters to the Resident.

5. As I have given authority to the Rev. Mr. Flad to draw on me up to the amount of 500 dollars, for the use of Captain Cameron, I have left that sum in deposit with the firm of Kershotum, Bainaux, merchants, of this place; and I shall also leave with the same parties 300 dollars, for any necessary expenses you may incur.

6. I shall feel obliged by your taking charge of the Consulate from the 15th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 5 in No. 561.

M. Munzinger to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Monsieur, *Massowah, le 15 Octobre,* 1865.

M. RASSAM m'a fait l'honneur de me confier les intérêts Britanniques pendant son absence. C'est à partir de demain que je commencerai à remplir les fonctions d'Agent Britannique intérimaire.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) W. MUNZINGER.

Inclosure 6 in No. 561.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Massowah, October* 15, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of Government, that I shall start this afternoon for Kassala and Matemma, aud hope to reach the latter place by the middle of next month.

2. I wrote to the King Theodorus to-day, apprizing him of my departure for his Court; and if he send me an escort, to meet me on my arrival at Matemma, I hope to be with him by the end of November.

3. There is no news of any importance to communicate save that the King had visited Debra Tabor in the month of August, on account of some plot said to have been planned by his Deputy there for throwing off his allegiance to the Crown; that His Majesty had seized the delinquent and took him back with him as prisoner to Magdala.

4. I regret to report that a few days ago cholera broke out at Massowah and its vicinity, and numerous deaths are taking place daily from its effects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 562.

The Earl of Clarendon to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 8, 1865.

I HAVE to state to you, with reference to your despatch to Mr. Layard of the 19th of October last,* that I approve of the arrangements which you made with Mr. Rassam previously to his starting for Matemma, for placing M. Munzinger in charge of the Consulate at Massowah; and assigning to him an allowance in that capacity at the rate of 200 rupees a month.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLARENDON.

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* No. 561.

See "London Gazette," July 24, 1860.
At the time of his appointment, Captain Cameron was on the shores of the Black Sea, from whence he arrived in England, Nov. 1860, and was detained in this country by order of the Foreign Office, until Nov. 1861, pending the arrival of Mr Stern, who was expected from Abyssinia.

No. 563.

Statement of Consul Cameron's Case by Captain Desborough.—(*Received December* 20, 1865.)

CAPTAIN CAMERON was appointed Consul in Abyssinia June 24th, 1860, but did not arrive at his post (Massowah) until early in 1862.

Vide papers presented to the House of Lords by order of Her Majesty.

Being intrusted with presents from Her Majesty the Queen to the King of Abyssinia, Captain Cameron proceeded to Gondar, the capital where that Monarch resided. But before doing so he, by orders from the Foreign Office, accompanied the Duke of Saxe Coburg on an excursion into the country of the Bogos, on the northern frontier of Abyssinia.

This delayed his arrival at King Theodore's Court until July, 1862.

Consul Cameron's reception was such as never foreigner received before. See Beke's pamphlet, page 23.

Having delivered his presents to the King, Consul Cameron, following the example of his predecessor, continued to reside with the Court.

See Beke's pamphlet, page 25; also papers referred to above.

The King, being most anxious to obtain the support of England, sent, through Captain Cameron, an autograph letter to Her Majesty the Queen. This letter Consul Cameron took charge of, but on his way to the coast he was stopped in Tigré, by a rebel chief, and compelled to take refuge in the sanctuary of Axum, from whence he despatched the letter to Massowah. This caused great delay in the transmission of the letter, which did not reach this country until February 1863.

See "Standard" newspaper, December 23, 1864.
See Beke's pamphlet, page 55, and "Standard," December 23, 1864.
Letters from prisoners in Abyssinia.
Many private letters from Consul Cameron to same effect.

Many months appear to have elapsed before any notice was taken of this letter, and it seems that Consul Cameron, and other British subjects were detained in prison, if not altogether yet chiefly upon that account; for a pencilled note from Captain Cameron, bearing date February 14, 1864, was received in this country May 25, 1864, in which these words appear:—"No release until civil answer to King's letter arrives."

See Beke's pamphlet, pp. 26, 29, and 30.
See Earl Russell's despatch in "London Gazette," Oct. 31 last.
Private letters of Consul Cameron, and also papers presented to House of Lords.

After forwarding his despatches and being released from Axum, Consul Cameron proceeded into the country of the Bogos, for the purpose of inquiring into some alleged aggressions on the part of the Governor of the adjoining Egyptian province of Taka, and to reconcile rival chiefs, acting as he believed in accordance with his instructions.

See Beke's pamphlet, page 34.
For causes, see Lord Russell's despatch.
Consul Cameron's private letters speak to same effect.

In the month of July, 1863, Consul Cameron, having returned from the northern frontier, rejoined the King. About this time a material change took place in their mutual relations.

See Beke's pamphlet, pp. 29–40.
"Standard," December 15, 1863.

The first intelligence of this altered relation reached England through the Paris newspapers, December 1863, in which it was announced, in the following words, that "The Emperor Theodore of Abyssinia had gained a victory over the population of Godjam. The Emperor is reported to have ordered the massacre of 15,000 prisoners, men, women, and children. He is also stated to have had the English Consul arrested, and to have set the French Consul at liberty."

See Missionaries' letters.

By letters received from the missionaries and Consul Cameron it appears that in January, 1864, the Consul was placed in leg chains, weighing twenty pounds, in which state he has been kept ever since.

The fact of the Consul's imprisonment was known in England, Dec. 15, 1863.
Her Majesty's letter was dated May 26, 1864.
See papers presented to House of Lords.

It would appear that for many months no steps whatever were taken to procure the release of Her Majesty's representative and his fellow-prisoners from their cruel and ignominious bondage. It was not until 1864 that Mr. Rassam was sent with a reply to the King's letter, and he arrived at Massowah in August 1864, where he remained until August 1865, when he received an invitation from King Theodore to visit his Court. Upon which he came to Egypt, it has been stated, for instructions. He left

Egypt *en route* to Abyssinia towards the end of October last. Captain Cameron writes, in a private letter dated 14th July, 1865, "Rassam's three letters came up a few days since; if he does not come up here now, after having got leave, it may cost us our lives."

He lost nearly, if not quite, three months of precious time by his return to Egypt.

Captain Cameron's family have from the first been most anxious that an English gentleman of some status in the country should be sent on a Mission to Abyssinia, with the object of obtaining the release of the prisoners. They have taken the liberty of urging their views upon the Government, suggesting the name of a gentleman who is in every way adapted to fulfil the duties required from one intrusted with so delicate a Mission—viz., Lieutenant-General Sir William Coghlan, K.C.B., who has been successfully employed by the Government of India, in negotiating with Asiatic princes, and who has on several occasions expressed his readiness to undertake such a Mission. From the great delay and small results attending Mr. Rassam's efforts, and from the doubts they feel as to his ultimate success, Captain Cameron's relations now venture to urge their anxious desire that the Government may be prepared to send out another Mission without any delay, should Mr. Rassam fail in obtaining the release of the captives.

See papers presented to the House of Lords by order of Her Majesty.

(Signed) L. DESBOROUGH, *Late Captain, 94th Regiment, Brother-in-law to Consul Cameron.*

Extracts from Private Letters received from Consul Cameron.

First, dated January 28, 1865:

"I was chained in January last (1864) after having asked to go to my post, and begged the King to send Stern and Rosenthal out of the country," &c.

"The King chained me because the Government had sent no answer to his letter. He has sent me word repeatedly that he has nothing against me."

"Myself and people were tortured with Stern and Rosenthal, lest we should encourage them not to implicate the Bishop in their affairs, as the King wished to extort something against him.

"Our treatment has been harsh in the extreme; we were chained by the legs with heavy irons,* and kept all the winter in an old torn tent, on an allowance of a few handfuls of peas."

On 14th July, 1865, he writes,—

"The King said repeatedly that he had nothing personally against him.

"He chained me because I had not obtained him a letter.

"We were chained hand and feet on the 4th July."

No. 564.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Layard.—(Received December 23.)

Sir, *Aden, December* 1, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to report that I dispatched Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria" to Massowah on the 22nd ultimo. She returned this morning, but brought no letters from Mr. Rassam. Ordinary tidings of the party were that they were progressing well, and expected to reach Matemma on the 27th November. A packet from me to Mr. Rassam, despatched from Massowah on the 16th November had reached Keren on the 20th and been forwarded on to Kassala, where it would arrive on the 27th. It was said Mr. Rassam had not passed through Keren but slightly to the northward of it, *en route* to Kassala.

2. The general intelligence from Abyssinia, as given by M. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate at Massowah, is to the effect that King Theodorus is still at Magdala, much troubled by the rebels, who fear him no longer. Warkeit, the Queen of the Walloo Gallas, has been imprisoned by her parents because she exposed herself too much, and because the tribe did not like being governed by a woman. Godjam is in the hands of the rebel Tudla Gwalou. He is hereditary Prince of the country and well spoken of by all. The two Gobazy's, Wakshum, and Tessoo, rebel leaders in Tigré, and Walkeit, are engaged in hostilities against each other. The former is at Adowa or Axum. The latter is in the neighbourhood of Gondar, and intended entering Tigré to attack Wakshum.

* In other letter he states chains weighing 20 lbs.

3. It was thought that the Emperor Theodorus would have to go himself to Matemma if he wished Mr. Rassam to visit Magdala.

4. News of the mission having reached Matemma should be received at Massowah about the 20th of December. The "Victoria" will revisit that port about that time. No communications had been received from the captives.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 565.

*Colonel Stanton to Mr. Layard.—(Received December 25.)**

(Extract.) *Cairo, December* 13, 1865.

THE inclosed letter from Colonel Merewether† has just reached me, and I have nothing to add to the information it contains; no intelligence of Rassam or his party having reached me, and I fear we cannot hear of his progress for some time to come.

I trust the remark in Colonel Merewether's letter as to the King coming to Matemma should he wish to visit Rassam to visit Magdala may not be founded, as I fear there is little chance of so favourable a result as the King coming himself to meet him, particularly as it appears the rebels are still in the field at Godjam. The statement that the rebels in Tigré and Walkeit are engaged in hostilities against each other, could lead to the supposition that one party (probably the Wakshum in Tigré) are not in opposition to King Theodore, but the statement is too general to allow of any positive conclusion being drawn.

Dr. Beke, who arrived in Egypt some time since is still here, he has informed me his intention is to proceed to Massowah and from thence try to reach Adowa; he talks of proceeding in about a week. I informed him I feared his journey might interfere with Rassam's mission, but I hope the latter will have accomplished his task before Dr. Beke can reach the country.

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* Laid before Parliament.

† No. 564.

1866.

No. 566.

*Mr. Purday to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received January 22.)**

My Lord, *January* 22, 1866.

YOUR Lordship having kindly promised to inform me whether Mr. Rassam's instructions include the release of the missionaries in Abyssinia, and being anxious to know this fact in consequence of Mrs. Stern's anxiety on the subject, I have taken the liberty to remind your Lordship of the promise given to me about a fortnight since.

I have had other letters from Dr. Beke, who says that no tidings have come to hand of either Mr. Rassam or the captives up to the 6th instant at Suez.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. H. PURDAY.

No. 567.

*Mr. Hammond to Mr. Purday.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 22, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, inquiring whether the instructions given to Mr. Rassam include the release of the missionaries in Abyssinia, and I am to state to you in reply, that Mr. Rassam was distinctly desired to ask for the release of the missionaries; but inasmuch as Her Majesty's Government have no right to make authoritative demands on foreign Powers in favour of any but British subjects, Mr. Rassam was cautioned against making his request on behalf of foreigners in an authoritative manner, such as he would be entitled to do on behalf of subjects of Her Majesty. As Mr. Rassam's general instructions, however, enjoin him to see that all the prisoners on whose account so much interest is necessarily excited are set free, Lord Clarendon cannot doubt that no exertion will be spared by him to secure this object, the more especially as Mr. Rassam was desired to present to King Theodore a letter from the Queen, in which Her Majesty graciously expressed her expectation that the King would dismiss Captain Cameron, and any other Europeans who may desire it, from his Court, and would afford them every assistance and protection on their journey to the destination to which they desire to proceed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 568.

Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 14.)*

(Extract.) *Aden, January* 21, 1866.

THE "Victoria" returned from Massowah this morning, bringing news from Rassam up to the 8th of November, and from Cameron to the 28th September. I inclose copies of Cameron's letters to Rassam; also one from Mr. Stern to Rassam.

These letters from the prisoners were received by M. Munzinger on the 16th of December. The delay on the road was caused by the messengers being afraid of the cholera, which they were told was raging at Massowah. M. Munzinger adds that he had received no news direct from the prisoners later than the 28th of September. It was said that King Theodore had come to Godjam, and M. Munzinger thought the news was authentic. When the King had come so much nearer to Matemma, Mr. Rassam

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

would not delay to enter into communication with him, and M. Munzinger felt sure that decisive news would very shortly be received. It was given out that the King was taking the prisoners with him, but that required confirmation.

Rassam will have told you all about his own progress in his letter to you. M. Munzinger reports that Rassam left Kassala on the 9th of November, and was expected to reach Matemma by the 20th January. Ere this, I hope he has had an interview with the King, and effected the release of the captives.

Dr. Beke arrived here on the 10th, and as the "Victoria" was proceeding to Massowah on the 11th, I gave him, and an Abyssinian Priest he had with him, a passage in her. Some of his stores had not arrived here yet, and he cannot go up country without them, so he told me; so I hope before they reach him we shall hear of Rassam's complete success, so as to render any further attempts of Dr. Beke unnecessary.

Inclosure 1 in No. 568.

*The Rev. H. Stern to Mr. Rassam.**

My dear Sir, *Amba Magdala, September* 12, 1865.

THE accompanying letter to Mrs. Stern was written some time ago, but I could not forward it as I had not a favourable moment. Like the one before it, it is at your disposal, and you can make of it whatever use you may deem desirable. It is a trying task to indite long epistles with manacles around the legs and right-hand wrist, but as I am anxious that our friends should have a faithful account of this sad captivity, I do not mind the inconvenience which writing in a crippled posture involves. Myself and several of my fellow-prisoners anticipate your advent like that of an Angel of Mercy, and I do not doubt, that under God, your laudable Mission will be attended with the happiest results. The rebels in Tigré I know from good authority, will not oppose your progress, but should you decide to take an opposite course, pray forward Her Majesty's letter, as otherwise the despot will suspect the veracity of that document. That our Heavenly Father may guide you by that wisdom which is infallible, is the prayer of

Yours, &c.
(Signed) HENRY STERN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 568.

*Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.**

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, September* 18, 1865.

I AM at last able to report the arrival of the things. I have not yet been able to compare them with your list, but believe they will be found all right. We hear you are on the road; Samuel sent me word yesterday to that effect. I have drawn a bill in your favour in duplicate for Bardel, to whom I owe money, and send a letter of advice for Hertslet. Pray let me know how you will manage regarding it, as Bardel wants the money to be lodged at Massowah for him. We have had some trouble in getting comfortably through the winter, owing to the difficulty of getting provisions; but there has been no one ill, except Rosenthal, who has been shut in for about ten days with neuralgia and sore eyes. I am stronger and better than I have ever been since leaving England. Please God all may end well. Pray send the two accompanying letters to England, and God bless you, my brave Rassam, and grant that we may leave this horrid country together.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Your brandy is excellent; you can send us some more.

C. D. C.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Inclosure 3 in No. 568.

*Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.**

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, September* 27, 1865.

AFTER waiting on account of one difficulty and another, I am at last enabled to send you messengers and letters. We have weathered the winter season gloriously, though not without trouble. Our great danger now lies in the uncertainty of communication. As long as we can keep up our stock of money we may hope on. If money fails we must starve. Pray keep us supplied through Gaffat, or any other way. I had only five dollars left when the last 150 dollars came. Every one says you are on the road. God send you success. The messenger you sent paid sixteen dollars on the road for customs, &c. Pray pay him. We have got everything right, I believe; a thousand thanks.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 4 in No. 568.

*Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.**

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, September* 28, 1865.

THE messenger's master wants more money; half to be left at his home, half to be sent on here. He also wants a cuckoo clock and a carpet. I write you these things because I promised him to do so yesterday.

As regards money, I don't think he is exorbitant. There is no disguising that he runs a fearful risk. The other requests are those of a child, but might perhaps be attended to, if it can be done without too much trouble. We are all well. The messengers leave to-morrow.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 5 in No. 568.

*Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.**

My dear Rassam,

THE Bishop is exceedingly anxious to have some French brandy. D. Merat the same. Pray send me plenty if you can. These men care about nothing but this and sweetmeats.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 569.

*Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 27.)**

My Lord, *Cairo, February* 16, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship the copies of three letters from Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant Colonel Merewether that reached me on the 12th instant unfortunately just too late for the Marseilles mail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 569.

*Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Matemma, November* 27, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of Government, that I arrived here from Massowah on the 21st instant, with my companions Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, six days later than I had reckoned upon, owing to our detention on the road for want of camels to carry our luggage.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

2. If it had not been for the great assistance rendered to me by the authorities of Massowah and Kassala, there is no knowing how much longer I might have been detained; especially in the latter place, on account of the great objection the Soudan cameleers seemed to have against serving Europeans or Turks.

3. On leaving Massowah, Abdallah Agha, the Governor of that place, sent with me, Abd-ul-Kareem, the brother of the Naib of Arkeeko, with a guard of fifteen men to escort me as far as the Egyptian province which begins at Barka. But on arriving amongst the Beni Aamir tribe, where I had intended to dismiss the guard and to change the camels I had obtained in the Massowah district, it was found that all the soldiers had been recalled to Kassala, on account of the late mutiny of part of the Soudan troops; and there were no camels to be had for carrying our baggage.

4. Sooner than leave me in the lurch, in that out-of-the-way place, Abd-ul-Kareem the brother of the Naib, kindly volunteered to see me safe at Kassala, and accordingly he accompanied me thither with the same guard and camels that had brought us from Massowah.

5. According to custom, the day before I reached Kassala, I sent to the Governor of Taka the letter of recommendation which was supplied to me by the Egyptian Government, and I was not a little amazed on arriving within a mile of the town, to see a guard of honour turn out to meet me, consisting of a regiment of Soudan Infantry and about 150 of the Bashi-bazouk Cavalry. Had I known that such a display was awaiting my arrival at Kassala, I would have certainly taken steps to prevent it as I am averse to such exhibitions.

6. On leaving that place, the authorities wished to send a large guard of honour to escort me as far as Matemma, but I prevailed upon them to reduce the number to five men, as I knew that this escort was more than enough for the occasion.

7. When I reached Kassala the whole of the mutiny had been totally suppressed, but not without unnecessary bloodshed.

8. Of the four regiments of mutineers, about 800 men had escaped destruction. These have been seized and imprisoned with their wives and children.

9. The prisoners are so badly looked after that while I was at Kassala they were dying in great numbers, and instead of their remains receiving proper interment, they were suffered to be thrown in ditches outside the town for the hyænas to devour. While I was riding one afternoon in the suburbs of the town I saw no less than three bodies of the wretched mutineers in this sickening state.

10. The town of Kassala has been almost deserted. That portion of its inhabitants who escaped the fury of the mutineers left the place with disgust and sought refuge amongst the more peaceable neighbouring tribes.

11. There were no eatables to be had in the place save bad meat and jewaree (millet), and even the highest Turkish officials had not tasted anything but bread made of that grain for the last five months.

12. Besides the anarchy and bloodshed, cholera and deadly fevers were the scourge of the place from the month of July to October; and even while I was there nearly one-tenth of the garrison was laid up with one kind of disease or another.

13. Jaafar Pasha, the Deputy Governor-General of the Soudan was expected daily from Souakin at Kassala when I left that place. The reason he had been so long detained on the road was, because he could not get the number of camels he required for his journey.

14. While at Kadarif, two days before I reached Matemma, I met Abd-ul-Malak, the Coptic messenger who was sent, in March last, by our late Consul-General in Egypt Sir Robert Colquhoun, with letters and presents to Aboona Selama, the Metropolitan of Abyssinia. He told me that he had tried his best to reach that prelate, but in consequence of the Aboona's imprisonment by the King, and the insecurity of the roads to Magdala, he could not manage it.

15. As the Bishop is still confined, and the letters addressed to him by Sir Robert Colquhoun might do a great deal of harm, were they to fall into the hands of King Theodorus, I advised him to return to Egypt with the articles he had been entrusted with. He attended to my advice and left me to return to Egypt.

16. I regret to bring to the notice of Government that Abd-ul-Malak has been provided with food and carriage free of expense, by the peasants in the Soudan district. ever since he came to this country; as I believe he had reported to the Egyptian authorities that the British Government had not supplied him with sufficient funds to take him to Abyssinia, to whose Sovereign, he had asserted, he had been sent with letters.

17. I spoke to Abd-ul-Malak upon the subject, and he corroborated what I had

heard. He told me that only 50 dollars were given to him in Egypt, which sum was hardly sufficient to carry him as far as Kassala. With regard to his reporting that he had been sent as emissary by the British Government to King Theodorus, he said that he was obliged to do so to gain respect, as he alleged that if he had only said that he was sent to the Aboona, no one would have taken any notice of him.

18. On arriving at Matemma, I learned that King Theodorus had been prowling about in the neighbourhood of Gondar, between this place and Debra Tabor, in search of some rebels, for more than a week. As soon as I obtained messengers the next day, I wrote and informed him of my arrival.

19. Mr. Eipperle (one of the lay missionaries of the Jerusalem Pilgrim Mission, who had gone to Debra Tabor with his wife for change of air, and returned to Matemma on the 22nd instant), informed me that he had left the King at this side of Lake Dembea, not more than six or seven days' journey hence, but that no one knew where he was going to.

20. Sheikh Joomaa, Chief of Matemma and all Gallabat, who returned from visiting the King after my arrival, gave me also the same information about the movements of His Majesty. News has reached me since then, however, that the King had gone to Godjam, and my messengers could not possibly reach him for ten days.

21. He is not expected to remain any length of time in that rebellious district, but it is feared that if he meet with a reverse he would be furious for some days after.

22. Mr. Eipperle informed me that the King was expecting me to come to him viâ Matemma when they left Debra Tabor together about the middle of this month. He entertained great hopes, as did the rest of the German gentlemen at Gaffat, that His Majesty would be reconciled to us soon as he receives Her Majesty's letter; but how long he is to prolong its receipt no one can predict. It is quite obvious that I must not attempt to reach him before he sends me an escort.

23. I am told by Mr. Eipperle that King Theodorus entertains utter contempt for all Europeans; and he has taken it into his head of late to nickname all Franks by a certain insulting epithet.

24. When Mr. Eipperle left Debra Tabor, the prisoners at Magdala were in the same wretched condition as regards their fetters and misery, as they were when Captain Cameron wrote to me at the end of July.

25. I am sorry to say that slavery is carried on in these parts on a most extensive scale. I am told that during the next two months thousands of unfortunate Galla girls and boys will be brought down to the fair, which is held here annually at this time of the year.

26. It is reported that even missionaries do not scruple to deal in this inhuman traffic. How far this assertion can be relied on I am unable to say; but I can vouch for one fact, and that is, there are certain lay missionaries who have been purchasing slaves for the purpose of bringing them up in the Christian faith, which proceeding is not only scandalous, but a disgrace to the name of any Christian Society.

27. It is premised that Austrian and Prussian laws allow the purchasing of slaves for the object of freeing them, but not for re-selling them. It ought to be known that so long as there are purchasers of slaves, there will be no lack of merciless beings to bring them to the market.

28. It is asserted that King Theodorus is still averse to the slave traffic; and if rumour speak true, the reason he went to Godjam was partly to intercept the slave-merchants, and dispossess them of all their property.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 569.

*Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Matemma, December* 1, 1865.

SINCE the date of my letter of the 27th ultimo, I received some communications from Gaffat and Magdala, copy of which I have the honour to inclose herewith, for the information of Government, marked as follows :—

(A.) One letter from Mr. Flad to me.
(B.) Three letters from Captain Cameron to me.
(C.) One letter from Captain Cameron to Mr. Hertslet, of the Foreign Office.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

2. I regret to say that a spirit of dissension has sprung up amongst the European prisoners at Magdala; and if matters do not mend soon, I fear that some great mischief will accrue therefrom, which might aggravate their already miserable condition, and increase our difficulties with the King.

3. Captain Cameron has been drawing on me several bills, which I have satisfied; but if he go on spending money, and call upon me for payment, I fear I shall not be able to meet his demands. I have only brought money with me sufficient for the current expenses of the mission, and it is quite impossible for me to obtain funds here or in Abyssinia by bills on Egypt, England, or Aden.

4. The 800 dollars I had sent to Captain Cameron in June last viâ Matemma, could not be brought hither on account of the late disturbances at Kassala and its neighbourhood; but the messenger to whom I had entrusted the money brought it to me while I was at Barka, and handed it over to me in perfect order.

5. The 500 dollars which had been sent by Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt for the use of Captain Cameron have not yet reached Matemma, nor is it known where the money has been sent to.

6. I am unable to understand the drift of Captain Cameron's request in asking me to place all the money sent by me to him on his private account with the Foreign Office.

7. All the sums I transmitted to him since I have been appointed to this mission I have debited Government with, and of course it is not for me to say whether that money is to be charged to his private account, or be borne by the State.

8. On the other hand, I do not see what claim the prisoners at Magdala and Gaffat have upon Her Majesty's Government. The stores and cash which Captain Cameron has supplied them with was an act of charity, and to prevent any misunderstanding on this score, I always took care to send the things direct to him.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 569.

Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam.†

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, November* 16, 1865.

FOR a long time I have been waiting anxiously for news from you. Now, a few days ago I heard that you had sent a letter to His Majesty, announcing your coming. Therefore I hasten to send you the inclosed letters of Captain Cameron.

I hope my servants, Engeda and Tadla, will meet you on the road, if possible, at Kassala.

I am obliged to send the servants with all speed, because of our pecuniary difficulties here. With the greatest difficulties I obtained 150 dollars for Captain Cameron and his people from the Europeans here, with the promise to repay them here, as soon as they want it. This will not last them long, because provisions are at a very high rate at the fortress.

As I am unable to provide the servants with money, which would be sufficient for their whole journey, I have begged Mr. T. Eipperle, at Matemma, to supply them with as much money as they want to reach you. Would you be kind enough to repay Mr. T. Eipperle when you are passing Matemma? He is also in possession of four notes of Captain Cameron:—1, a note of 200 dollars, for Mr. Saalmüller; 2, a note of 200 dollars, for Mr. Bender; 3, a note of 50 dollars, for Mr. Kienzle; 4, a note of 50 dollars, for Mr. Waldimier. All this money was drawn by myself for Captain Cameron. All the owners of these notes (except Mr. Bender) beg to have their notes paid to Mr. T. Eipperle, so that they could send for it in case they want it. Mr. Bender wishes to be repaid here.

I also inclose a note of 250 dollars in favour of Messrs. Essler and Schiller. They are in want of money; therefore they would be very grateful if you would kindly bring them that sum.

As soon as you have arrived at Matemma, or at Woachuy, I should be very much obliged if you would be kind enough to send my servants directly with 100 or 150 dollars, as I have sent nearly all my money to the fortress.

Allow me to observe that at present there is no money to be drawn here, and as

* See No. 578.

† Laid before Parliament, 1867.

you do not know how long you may be detained here it is good to provide yourself to last you for some time.

The provisions, &c., you had the kindness to send by Fanta, I was fortunate enough to get them to the fortress, before the road was closed up. Three times they came back, being afraid that they would fall into the King's hand. The fourth time they succeeded in getting everything there, but one mule and two donkeys fell on the road. I also had sent them provisions,—salt meat, potatoes, preserved milk, &c.

As the King had gone in another direction, it will for the future be very difficult to get anything there; and it would be very desirable if you would arrive soon to intercede for them, or else they would be starving, as they have not much money left. On the 14th instant two servants started, carrying 50 dollars, but, as the road is full of robbers, it is very uncertain whether they will reach the fortress.

The Consul is anxiously waiting for his servant Lumna, whom he had sent down in June (?); but he has not yet come back.

His Majesty the King is at present at Dembea; but nobody knows whether he will move.

You will meet with difficulties enough, as I have already stated to you in my last letter. There are persons who will use their influence to drag the matter on as long as possible. We pray most earnestly here that God would keep and protect you on your journey, and that he would allay all difficulties that impede your undertaking.

Pray excuse the liberty I take to send you some letters. I should be very glad if you would be so kind as to forward them.

I beg, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

Inclosure 4 in No. 569.

*Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.**

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, October* 10, 1865.

I WRITE you a few lines to tell you I have received a message from Gaffat, to the following effect: "If Mr. Rassam does not come now, you will all be lost first, and then ourselves."

I am requested to let you know this.

The King sent us a cow a-piece some time back,—the first notice he has taken of us, with one exception, since the torturing. He has also spoken rather kindly about us lately in public.

But we are still chained hand and foot.

I have requested Mr. Flad to write to you regarding a certain messenger of his, named Wundun Agenyo, and inclose you a note for 250 dollars for the support of two of my party,—prisoners at Gaffat.

The King is in Waddela. We are all well, and waiting anxiously for news from you.

God bless and prosper you, dear Rassam.

Yours ever,
(Signed) C. D. C.

Inclosure 5 in No. 569.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, October* 16, 1865.

I HAVE been obliged to draw on you for 200 dollars.

I do not know whether you can manage the matter, but I may tell you quietly that it would be wise to arrange as well as you can about Bardel and M'Kilvie. They are two born devils.

The latter, encouraged by the former, threatened in a fit of rage the other day to write to the King and report our correspondence, my bribing the guards, through the rings you sent, and especially Dejaj Maraad's concurrence with us.

I do not know that his executing this threat would have done much harm. But on the other hand, the King might have made use ~~of it to make~~ mischief.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Dejaj Maraad was dreadfully frightened, and I have been obliged to calm him.

I shall write to you officially about this hereafter.

But pray write to the Foreign Office, begging them to put all the money they have sent direct here (viz. to me), whether through Flad or by messengers, to my private account. Otherwise both you and myself will have no end of trouble.

Pray do this, dear Rassam, without delay.

My people, as well as others here, are poor, and of all nations, and unless you arrange the affair of money sent here in the way I indicate, you will be fearfully embarrassed by threats and discontent, if you do not yield to all sorts of extraordinary claims. Pray write to me that you have done this.

Flad, to whom I send this open, will give you the news. We are all well, but know nothing.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) C. D. C.

Inclosure 6 in No. 569.

*Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.**

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, Abyssinia, October* 17, 1865.

MY packets are not yet closed, so I write to you once more on the subject I alluded to yesterday, viz.: the desirability of putting all the money sent by you to me on my private account with the Foreign Office.

You must remember that our party are all prisoners, retained by force in the country: one-half being in chains, the others without them.

Unless the arrangement I have recommended be fallen in with, how is the division of this money to be adjusted.

Two of my own people at Gaffat I have supplied with money on my own responsibility, by a draft on Hertslet.

But if Mr. Stern and Rosenthal are supported here on sums supplied by me by driblets, and these sums put to the Government account, have the other Missionaries no claim also for Government support?

Suppose such a claim were made for them by others, how could it be arranged? Is the money sent to be redivided?

Or, is the sum paid to the Missionaries with me to be made a standard, the other Missionaries being allowed to claim on the same scale?

Or, on the other hand, are the expenses of the Gaffat prisoners to be made a standard? Then the prisoners here, of all classes, will have and raise an additional claim.

Then again, I have divided the money here according to the wants of the prisoners, including M. Bardel, who would otherwise have starved. Suppose a claim for redivison were made, it would not be easy to satisfy all parties.

You must remember that you are powerless in this country, and a single mischievous person, who might be wrongheaded enough to bring a money claim before the King might paralyze everything, and do a world of harm, as the King might like nothing better than to arbitrate in such a matter, merely in order to give you a new proof of his being absolute ruler in his own country, and the proper arbitrator of all affairs, whether among Europeans or his own people.

I may tell you that this has been on the point of being carried out, and a piteous letter written to the King, in order to lead him to meddle in our money matters.

The result might have been a most mischievous intermeddling, or the stopping our supplies altogether, or even a stripping of myself, and all of us of the little we possess.

I repeat that the shortest way to stop all this will be to put all the money I have received from you, provisionally, on my account, just like the money I have received without your aid—and to put off all adjustment till we are out of the country.

Otherwise there may be a new dilemma raised on this account.

All my people here have been maddening themselves about these questions, and that of indemnity, until they all seem mere bedlamites.

Pray attend to this, dear Rassam, for both our sakes, and believe me, &c.

Ever yours,
(Signed) C. D. C.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Inclosure 7 in No. 569.

*Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Matemma, December* 13, 1865.

I HAVE the honour to forward copy of further communications I have received from Gaffat and Magdala, which, though they have only reached me now, are of older date than the copy of those I transmitted to you with my letter of the 1st instant.†

2. They were sent down to me at Massowah, but on the messenger reaching Adowa, and learning that I had come up to Abyssinia by way of Kassala and Matemma, he retraced his steps to Gondar, and on hearing there that I was waiting at this place for an escort to take me to the King, he came on to me here.

3. I have also received two notes from Mrs. Flad which had been written to Miss Cameron and Mrs. Kerans at the request of the relatives, which I shall feel obliged by your forwarding to their destinations.

4. Further news reached Matemma yesterday about the movements of King Theodorus. He is said to be at a place called Chapal, below the high range of the Godjam Mountains, whither he had gone in pursuit of the rebels; but that he has not been able to do much, as the Godjamites had heard of his intended attack, and had retired to their fastnesses in the mountains before he could overtake them. The chief of the King's swordsmen had gone over to the enemy with a number of his corps.

5. Nothing as yet has been heard of my messengers whom I had sent on the 22nd ultimo to the King announcing my arrival at Matemma. They were seen passing through Gondar on their way to Godjam on the 27th of November.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 8 in No. 569.

*Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam.**

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, August* 1, 1865.

ON the 29th of June my servants, Tadla and David, arrived with all the things and the money you sent in a state of good preservation, and I forthwith sent it to Captain Cameron on the fortress; but I had some disappointment about it, as it unfortunately happened that His Majesty left the fortress, and as the people I sent were afraid to proceed any further, part of the things came back. However, I sent others off again, and I hope they will have arrived there now.

On the 18th of July, Fanta's companion arrived here, announcing that they had arrived with the goods below Lamalius (eight days' journey from here), but cannot proceed any further, as their animals are worn out, and likewise they said they had no money to pay the toll. I furnished him with mules and money to pay the toll, and sent him back instantly, together with one of my own servants, in order to get the King's hither. I hope they will arrive in a few days.

Allow me to express my deepest gratitude for your kindness towards me and my family. We receive it as a special gift of God. Mrs. Flad, in her confinement shortly ago, had neither sugar, tea, nor rice, and we could not get any here. Of the rice, sugar, and soap I gave to Mr. Schimper, and some to my fellow prisoners here.

With these provisions our suffering friends might have spent a comparatively easier winter than the last, had not a new calamity come over them.

No doubt ere this reaches you you will have heard of the escape of the Prince of Shoa, Prince Menelek, grandson of Sahela Selassie, and son-in-law to His Majesty King Theodorus. The King got so exasperated that he began to quarrel with the Bishop, and ordered to put all the prisoners into short hand-chains. It may be imagined that their condition is miserable indeed now.

As I know that Captain Cameron sent down his servant Lumna, you will get informed of their condition ere this reaches you. Our friends were put into short hand-chains a day or half a day before your kind letter arrived.

I learned by Samuel that your letter made a good impression on the King, and that he wrote an answer to your letter, and that he sent your messengers immediately down to you with his desire that you might soon come up. And Samuel added, that, after you have come, everything which is now crooked would get straight.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † Inclosure 2 in No. 569.

I hope that this my letter will reach you on the road hither.

It is a very difficult mission which you are about to undertake, but as you have already three times asked the King to be permitted to come up, you cannot possibly avoid coming yourself without endangering the safety of our friend Captain Cameron. But I trust, with God's grace, to whom we are recommending you daily, you will succeed in your noble undertaking.

Permit me the liberty I take now to give you some hints regarding the difficult position you will be placed in, even as soon as you reach this country.

Let me remind you that, as soon as you put your foot on Abyssinian ground, you will be surrounded with spies, who will report all your words and your actions to the King. Do not let any unfavourable impression (which no doubt you will have), either about the King, or his people, or the country and the manners of it, escape your lips. The King and his people are always on the alert to find out faults and shortcomings in the conduct of the Europeans, and he is only too glad if he has the least reason to calumniate their character and reputation.

Your patience will be brought to hot trial on the road and here, but do not allow your European attendants and domestics to quarrel with or beat an Abyssinian. All such little nonsenses have brought sorrow and trouble enough on our poor friends.

Do not for the present notice the Bishop, or any other high functionary, as His Majesty is very suspicious in this respect.

Pray don't bring with you Martscha Worky or Beroo, as the King is displeased with them; it would be very unfortunate for them as well as for you.

No doubt the King will take all pains to justify his conduct towards the English prisoners in your presence. At first he will most likely begin with showing you the Amharic translation of the writings of Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal and my wife. Secondly, he will tell you that he has received the English Consul, Captain Cameron, with all the decorum which he thought proper at the reception of an Ambassador of the Queen of England. He will tell you what presents he gave to Captain Cameron, and how he sent him with a letter for Her Majesty the Queen of England, wishing him to bring an answer. Instead of waiting at Massowah or Bogos for an answer, the Consul went down to Kassala to my enemies the Turks, and came round by Matemma without bringing the desired answer, and so on.

After all these and similar declarations, the King will put to you the blunt question, "Have I been right or wrong?" and you will perhaps be perplexed; but to get at your ends you will be obliged apparently to agree with him; for to gainsay him would be to spoil the whole matter at the beginning.

It is very probable that he will come with his odd notions about Sennaar and Soudan —that it belonged formerly to his dominions, and that he wants to have it. But what are you prepared to answer to this?—to laugh, you dare not.

He will, perhaps, also tell you his indignation about the behaviour of the English Consul at Jerusalem, in the affair of the Abyssinians and their convent.

I feel almost silly to give such pieces of information to an Ambassador of Her Majesty, but if you will come hither you will see that I am justified in doing so.

The King is since the 23rd of June at Debra Tabor. What direction he will take is unknown. Some say that he is going to Woggera and Semen.

I really must beg your pardon in having trespassed so long on your patience.

May God with His grace guide you in all your proceedings, and enable you to accomplish the liberation of our suffering friends.

This is the prayer of yours, &c.

(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

Inclosure 9 in No. 569.

*Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam.**

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, August* 21, 1865.

AT last your servants arrived with the goods, on the 19th of this month. I am only sorry to say that the white cotton stuffs are almost entirely ruined by the rains. The white shirts are still good for use, but are very much spoiled by the tin boxes. The flannel and flannel shirts however are in a good state. The brown soap is all right, but the windsor soap we had to scrape off from the stuffs, and had to make balls of it. Fortunately enough the eatables have all arrived in a perfect good state,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

including rice and sugar. Tea, I hope, when I have it well dried, will be fit for use. The needles were all "woss," but as Mrs. Flad has had plenty of sewing materials, she has hitherto provided them.

I should have wished to write to you directly after Tadla and David had arrived, but as I had expected your servants sooner I waited anxiously for their arrival. In the meantine, I learnt that Captain Cameron had sent down to you his servant, Lumna, so I thought that he will have informed you of all that is necessary.

I do not know whether you are acquainted with the character of Samuel, who has been for a long time the King's favourite, and in this his capacity has done great mischief in the whole matter. After Mr. Stern's imprisonment, before his papers were examined, Captain Cameron and myself thought to get him to act for our interest, we bribed him; Captain Cameron gave him 185 dollars, and I, 100 dollars, but when we had filled his pockets he did just the contrary. He promised to us he would surely get Mr. Stern released in a few days, but at the very same time it was he who advised the King to examine Mr. Stern's writings, and it was he who put suspicion in the King's mind concerning the Consul's going down to Kassala, and it is his working that the Consul was put in chains. I mention only this, as some Abyssinians might represent him as a fitting person to act for your interest.

Wolda Selassee Gobazey, a merchant and spy of the King, had praised before the King the English Ambassador beyond measure; he has told everywhere how kind and polite a reception he had met with you, and it is now stated as soon as you have arrived at Adowa, this man will be sent by His Majesty to receive you and bring you to the King.

On the 2nd instant His Majesty left Debra Tabor. He returned to his camp, where the Wollo Gallas had made an attack and killed some of his soldiers. At present he is between Lasta Jeddjio and Wadela.

On the 27th of July, my last messengers went to the fortress. They will come back in September, when the rivers begin to abate. At that time I shall send on the things to Captain Cameron.

I have drawn for Captain Cameron on you, in favour of Mr. Bender, at Gaffat, the sum of 200 (two hundred) dollars. The owner of the order will send it down to your agent after the rainy season is over. I inclose two letters of Mrs. Flad. Would you be kind enough to forward them.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

Inclosure 10 in No. 569.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

Dear Rassam, *July* 8, 1865.

I HAVE received your note. Many thanks.

The things are arrived. Thanks, too.

Your messengers arrived some days ago, and, I hear, all the messengers are sent to Massowah.

There is no shirking it now. Dear fellow, since you have asked to come up a third time you must come, or we may all be knocked on the head.

We were all chained hand and foot a few days back, the same day your letter arrived.

The letter arrived in the afternoon after we had been chained.

Send nothing to the Bishop or Dejaj M[araad] for the present; it make make much mischief.

I will send my own messenger in a day or two.

This is only a warning.

Yours ever, &c.
(Signed) C. D. C.

Inclosure 11 in No. 569.

*The Rev. H. Stern to Mr. Rassam.**

My dear Sir, *Amba Magdala, July* 9, 1865.

WE have been informed that His Majesty has requested you to come up to Abyssinia, in order that he may arrange with you our sad business. After all you have

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

heard you may perhaps feel a little hesitation to embark on such a mission. The enterprise is certainly laudable, and our Heavenly Father I feel sure will protect you on the road, and crown with success your self-denying efforts in behalf of the suffering and afflicted. Should circumstances lead you to adopt an opposite course, His Majesty would certainly resent even an imaginary insult on those in his power.

Our troubles have during the last few days been aggravated by an event with which we have not the remotest connection. On the night of the 1st instant, Prince Menelek, the son of Hailo Malakot, and son-in-law to His Majesty, unexpectedly quitted the camp, and together with his followers, departed for Shoa. The King had next morning a quarrel with the Bishop, and to finish the day's business, all the prisoners got, in addition to their feet, also short hand chains.

Mr. Flad may perhaps write you more, but as the royal troops are on the road to Begemder, by which the bearer has to pass, I must not be diffuse.

That God may bless and prosper your noble undertaking to effect our liberation, is the fervent prayer of yours, &c.

(Signed) H. A. STERN.

No. 570.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received February* 27.)*

My Lord, *Aden, February* 8, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report that Dr. Beke, proceeding on a mission from the friends of the captives in Abyssinia, arrived here on the morning of the 11th January. Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria" was about to leave for Massowah and I offered him a passage in her for Mrs. Beke, himself, and an Abyssinian priest who was travelling with him. He had intended waiting here some days for money and stores which were following him from England, but on being told that the "Victoria" in all probability would not revisit Massowah for some time to come, he took advantage of the opportunity and left on the 12th January. Captain Parr, Her Majesty's ship "Lyra," kindly said he would take up the stores and money when he proceeded to that port, which he would have to do shortly. They have been here about a fortnight, but I have been compelled to detain the "Lyra" till now in consequence of the unsettled state of one of the Arab tribes on the mainland near to this.

2. She will leave, however, on the 12th instant, and will bring back from Massowah any further intelligence which may have been received either from Captain Cameron or Mr. Rassam—none has been since that forwarded by me on the 21st ultimo.†

3. By the "Lyra" I have sent a letter to Dr. Beke, a copy of which I have the honour to forward herewith, and trust it will meet with your Lordship's approval. In the delicate and very difficult position in which Mr. Rassam is placed, I considered it my duty to point out to Dr. Beke how inexpedient an advance on his part now would be, and how likely to mar the success of Mr. Rassam's mission which is promising so well.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 570.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Dr. Beke.**

Sir, *Aden, February* 8, 1866.

HER MAJESTY'S ship "Lyra" will leave this for Massowah in a few days, and I take the opportunity of communicating to you the latest intelligence I have received from Abyssinia, both from the captives and from Mr. Rassam.

2. The letters from the former were up to the 28th September only, the messengers bringing them down having delayed in Tigré from dread of the cholera, said to be raging on the coast. On the above date Captain Cameron and his fellow prisoners were still at Magdala and all well, having got through the winter better than they had expected to do.

3. Mr. Rassam had reached Kassala on the 6th November, and left it again on the 9th, expecting to arrive at Matemma on the 20th idem.‡ From there he would immediately communicate with King Theodorus, and it was hoped would either meet or

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 568. ‡ The 21st: see No. 576.

speedily be joined by an escort to take him to the King. Of the latter's movements it was said that he had entered Godjam, so as to be nearer to Matemma, and that he had the captives with him. The first part of this report was supposed to be true, the latter not to be strictly relied on.

4. My object in mentioning the above is to show you exactly the position of affairs now, and while desirous of not in the least trammelling you in the execution of the kindly object you have in view, to suggest to you the unquestionable expediency of your deferring your entry into Abyssinia until something more decisive is heard of the result of Mr. Rassam's mission at Matemma. That gentleman has progressed as favourably and as rapidly as could under the circumstances be expected; he is proceeding to the King by the route selected by that potentate, and at this moment if not actually with him will be in direct communication, and engaged in negotiations regarding the release of the unfortunate captives whose safety and freedom is your chief point of solicitude.

5. With your knowledge of Abyssinia, its present ruler, and its people, I need not enter at length into the difficulties and complications that are likely to be raised, if, while these negotiations are going on, and before they have been brought to any issue, the King should hear that another mission (for your retinue will of course be greatly magnified) has entered Abyssinia, headed by an English gentleman of repute in the country itself, and having professedly the same object, viz., the liberation of the captives; it will also be pointed out to him that this second mission is entering the country not at his invitation, a point on which, as you know, he is particularly sensitive, and further that it is proceeding through the territory of those who are rebels to his authority, and that it is enabled to do so only by entering into friendly communication and association with those who are in arms against him. In any person's mind such a mode of procedure would naturally raise doubts—how much more so will it in a person of such a notoriously suspicious and hasty nature as the Emperor of Abyssinia—in the understanding of himself and those around him, it will be impossible to dissever you from the British Government, or to induce them to believe that you are acting separately and entirely in a private capacity; it will therefore seem as if Government was acting on two different plans, one of which would personally be most objectionable to him, and would immediately lead him to question the other. The confidence in which Mr. Rassam's mission, which has been brought about by careful management and long patient waiting, would be at once withdrawn, and the position of the captives rendered more critical than ever.

6. As far as we are able to judge, Mr. Rassam's mission has every chance of success; he is proceeding to join the King's Court at the invitation of that Monarch. On the 20th of November he was to have reached the place appointed, and if the King was in Godjam, there would not be above fourteen days' march between them, and further, he is the bearer of a letter from Her Majesty the Queen of England, which cannot fail to prove most satisfactory to his wounded dignity; but the receipt thereof, so all are agreed, is the point in which he has always laid the greatest stress, as the one essential before the question of the condition of the captives or any other could be entertained.

7. Under these circumstances I would strongly recommend your deferring your advance from Massowah, until further tidings have been received of Mr. Rassam's movements, such cannot be long delayed now, they may indeed be at Massowah at this moment, and to save time I shall by this opportunity write and request M. Munzinger, who is in charge of the British Consulate, to be good enough to communicate to you any authentic intelligence he may receive, that you may be the better able to judge how you can act with advantage to the cause you have undertaken.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 571.

Mr. Murray to Captain Desborough.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 9, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to inform you that his Lordship received a telegram last night from Alexandria, to the effect that Mr. Rassam had received letters on the 26th December from King Theodore inviting him to his Court. The King had sent an escort to meet him, and had afforded every facility for his journey.

Mr. Rassam expected to arrive at the King's Court on or before the 10th of January and considered that the information he had received warranted him entertaining grea hopes of a successful issue to his mission.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 572.

Mr. Purday to Mr. Murray.—(*Received March* 10.)

Sir, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, March* 10, 1866.

YOU will be pleased to present my best thanks to the Earl of Clarendon, for the information kindly conveyed by you of the receipt of the telegram respecting Mr. Rassam's mission, which I have good reason to hope will be effectnal.

The long delay in the transmission of Her Majesty's letter had led us to despair of Mr. Rassam's ever reaching its destination, and consequently created much anxiety in the minds of the relatives of the captives, which we sincerely hope may now be allayed by the early tidings of their release.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 573.

*Mr. Murray to Captain Desborough.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 17, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to inform you that a telegram has this day been received from Alexandria dated yesterday, to the effect that on the 4th of January, Mr. Rassam had reached Bulwoka, a place distant about fifty miles from Gondar; that the Chiefs of the districts through which they passed had treated him most civilly; and that the prisoners had been heard of up to the 27th of December.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 574.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received March* 26.)*

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 8, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship the copy of a letter from Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, Political Resident at Aden, dated Matemma, December 27, 1865, which reached me through the Prussian Consul-General this morning, and which incloses copies of letters received from the King of Abyssinia, inviting Mr. Rassam to proceed to Debra Tabor.

Mr. Rassam intended leaving Matemma on the 28th December, and expected to meet His Majesty near the Lake Dembea before the 10th January.

There appears from the courteous tone of the King's letter to Mr. Rassam reason to hope that the mission of that gentleman may be successful, and that the captives will ere this have been liberated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD STANTON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 574.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.†

Sir, *Matemma, December* 27, 1865.

MY letters of the 5th ultimo, and of the 1st and 13th instant,‡ which I forwarded to you viâ Kassala and Massowah on the 14th of this month, will explain to you how

* A similar letter was addressed to Mr. Purday.

† Laid before Parliament, 1867.

‡ Inclosures 1 and 7 in No. 569.

far I had progressed with my mission up to the date of the last letter. I have now the honour to report, for the information of Government, that I received yesterday two letters from King Theodorus, a translation of which I send herewith inclosed.

2. Both letters, which are written in Arabic, are most civil and friendly. The one of the latest date, which he sent as an apology for having omitted to affix his name and seal to the former letters, is quite perfect as regards the Royal seal and name.

3. It took the messengers I sent from here on the 22nd ultimo fifteen days to reach the King in Godjam; and no sooner did His Majesty receive my letter than he ordered letters to be written to the different Rulers on the way between Matemma and Debra Tabor to afford me and my party every assistance in their power, and to provide us with carriage and provisions free of expense through the whole route. He also ordered three of his officers, with the rank of "Basha," and decorated with the Royal shirt, to come with a large escort to meet us at Wahuee (the first village on the border of Abyssinia, two days' journey hence), for the purpose of conducting us to his Court. The King himself would meet me near the Lake in Dembea on my way there, where he purposes to have a private conference with me regarding the object of my mission.

4. As His Majesty thought that we should like to remain at Debra Tabor during our stay in Abyssinia (Gondar being now in a ruined state), he has written both to the authorities and to the Europeans there, to prepare everything for us which might conduce to our comfort.

5. The messengers give great hopes as to the success of my mission; and from the munificent way he has treated the whole (seven in number), the aspect of matters looks more cheering. He dressed them all handsomely, and presented each of them with a fine mule.

6. It is currently rumoured that the King had been heard to say that he would try the European prisoners again in my presence, and that he intended to constitute me a judge between him and them on the charge of treason.

7. The messenger whom I had last sent from Massowah, conveying to the King the report of my departure thence for Matemma on the 15th of October, did not reach His Majesty, on account of the disturbances on the road, until the 8th instant, or a day after he received my letter addressed to him from this place. In this case the King did not know that I had left Massowah until he heard of my arrival here; consequently, he lost no time in acting up to his promise of sending me an escort to take me up to him.

8. The King has also written to the Chief of Matemma to provide us with carriage and other necessaries as far as Wahuee, where the Royal Guard would be awaiting us. The required camels have already been engaged, and we purpose to leave to-morrow afternoon for Abyssinia, and hope to meet His Majesty before the 10th of next month.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 574.

*King Theodore to Mr. Rassam.**

(Translation.)

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, praise be to Him for ever. Amen.

TO the beloved and noble Hormuzd Rassam. After offering to you salutations and asking after your good health, we praise God abundantly that we are well and in the best of health. We inform you that we have received your note, dated the 22nd of November [qy. date], and understood it to the letter, and we thanked the Creator for your friendship. Now, oh beloved, we have explained to you that the omission of our name to this letter has been occasioned by the people whom I used to love, and who used to sit on my bed [*i.e.*, at my board], [but who] had reviled us. This is the obstacle which we mentioned to you while you were at Massowah. Now, seeing that God has brought you safely to these parts, we have sent peremptory orders to the Governors in the neighbourhood of Tchelga for receiving you and bringing you towards us.

Regarding the servants [messengers] who came to us while you were at Massowah, they got sick, and we found one of them, named Mohammed, not indisposed; him we

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

send to you according to your desire.* We have ordered the said Mohammed, if they [his companions] are recovered to take them with him. May you remain preserved.

The 1st of Nahsas [A.H.], 1282. [The 8th of December, 1865.]

Inclosure 3 in No. 574.

King Theodore to Mr. Rassam.†

(Translation.)

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, praise be to Him eternally.

FROM the King of Kings of Abyssinia, King Theodorus, to the beloved and true friend, Hormuzd Rassam, first Governor of Aden. After offering you abundance of salutations and presenting you with compliments, [we offer] to the Most High God abundant thanks. What necessitated the writing this, oh, dear one, is that we wrote to you formerly a number of letters, not containing the name and seal, on account of what had taken place on the part of insolent people, who outraged God, and [the one] whom He had made ruler, and we do not know, nor understand, whether these people are Jews or heathens, who do not know God. When we saw in this matter [five words obscure], we find it necessary to affix for you our name and seal; and we have placed the name and the Royal Seal, because, if these wicked men have reviled us, you, oh beloved, what evil have you done to us! Now we send you our name and our seal by your servants, in order that every time we might not act amiss, as formerly. Salam.

Written on Monday, the 4th of Nahsas [A.H.], 1282. [The 11th of December, 1865.]

No. 575.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received March* 27.)†

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 16, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship the accompanying despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether,‡ with its inclosures, which reached me this morning, and which contains further intelligence from Mr. Rassam.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 576.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received March* 27.)†

My Lord, *Aden, March* 3, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Her Majesty's ship "Lyra" returned from Massowah this day, bringing intelligence from the captives up to the 27th December, and from Mr. Rassam up to the 4th January.

2. Copies of the letters received from Captain Cameron are forwarded herewith. It will be seen from them that though all had suffered greatly from influenza, and Mrs. Rosenthal's child had died since last accounts, they were at the time of writing in fair health and as well as could be expected under the circumstances. They were anxiously looking for intelligence regarding Mr. Rassam's mission, of which they knew nothing beyond the reports of his having left the coast for up country. The money, 300 dollars, which Captain Cameron asks to be sent to Massowah on M. Bardel's account, was forwarded by me in Her Majesty's ship "Lyra." There would be no use attempting to send any more money direct to Captain Cameron for his use and that of the other captives, as long ere this I hope Mr. Rassam, who is well supplied with funds, will at least have communicated with them, if not have effected their release.

3. A copy of a letter from Mr. Flad at Gaffat is also appended. It is dated 28th

* I had asked the messenger who carried my letter to come himself to me when the escort was sent.—H. RASSAM.

† Laid before Parliament, 1867.

‡ No. 576.

December and 1st January, and in it he states "twice I have sent money up to the fortress to Captain Cameron, &c., so that they are well supplied for some time to come." All the letters were much damaged by wet, so that the writing in some parts was quite illegible.

4. I am glad to be able to give excellent reports of Mr. Rassam's successful progress. As I expected, he had only to push on and reach Matemma to find everything smooth before him. He appears to have arrived at that place on the 21st December. He there received a most friendly and courteous letter from the Emperor, who, to do proper honour to the mission, had sent three officers of rank, with a strong guard, to escort it to the Court. The Emperor himself was in Godjam, chastising the rebels there, but he intended to come and meet Mr. Rassam near the Lake Tsana, as the latter passed through Dembea on his way to to Debra Tabor. The Emperor would leave it to Mr. Rassam's option to reside either at Debra Tabor or Korata during his stay in Abyssinia, and orders had been sent to both those places to make arrangements for the proper reception and for the wants of the mission, while all the people between Matemma and Debra Tabor were directed to provide the party with everything required whether in the shape of provisions, carriage, or aught else. All the messengers Mr. Rassam had sent to the Emperor had been given dresses of honour and other presents. On the 4th January the mission was at Balwoha, between Wohnee and Tchelga, and only about fifty miles west of Gondar, expecting to move on that afternoon. They had been treated most civilly by the heads of the districts they had passed through since leaving Matemma.

5. The Emperor seems quite to have changed his tactics, and the best results may soon, I think, be confidently expected, though from the dilatory habits of the people of the country some time may yet elapse before the object of the mission will be quite completed. Mr. Flad mentions in his letter, that the Europeans at Gaffat (the King's artizans) had received two letters from His Majesty, saying that an English Ambassador, who came to seek his friendship, was on the road, and after he had met him he would send him to Gaffat. He had also ordered them to receive him with all honour due to his rank. Everybody, the Europeans and Abyssinians, conclude that His Majesty is inclined to settle the business on which Mr. Rassam was sent.

6. M. Munzinger, Acting British Consul at Massowah, informs me that on the 13th February, he had forwarded by native boat copies of all the letters now received in original by the "Lyra," also a despatch from Mr. Rassam to me. These have not yet reached me, but probably will in a day or so. He also said he does not expect any more letters before the middle of March. The "Victoria" will be sent to Massowah on the 15th, by which time I hope further good tidings will have arrived.

7. Dr. Beke was still at Massowah when the "Lyra" left on the 27th ultimo; but he proposed starting in a day or two and going about thirty miles inland. He has sent no official reply to my despatch,* requesting him to delay his attempt to enter Abyssinia until something definite was know of the success or otherwise of Mr. Rassam's mission; but in a demi-official note he informs me that he had already notified his arrival to the Emperor, and his intention to proceed to his Court as quickly as possible. His letter was despatched on the 30th January, and with it a copy of a petition from the relatives of the captives, written in Amharic and English, praying for mercy to the unfortunate prisoners. At the earliest that letter would not reach the Emperor before the middle of February. By that time, I trust Mr. Rassam will have been sufficiently long with the King to render the chances of any ill effects resulting from the apparently double and different missions being less than if he had not joined His Majesty, and having delivered Her Majesty's letter to King Theodorus, the latter would be more disposed to understand the real nature and object of Dr. Beke's proceedings.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 576.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.†

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, December* 11, 1865.

I HAVE received your note by Hadji Adam's man. He has been four months on the road and was lightened of the paper &c. by rebels.

There is no news here except that half of us are laid up with influenza, and that

* Inclosure in No. 570. † Laid before Parliament, 1867.

poor Mrs. Rosenthal's son has gone at last, after constant suffering in one shape or other almost since his birth.

Mrs. Rosenthal is *enceinte*. God alone knows what the end of all this misery will be.

We are all pretty quiet again among ourselves—the best of all things—but there are times when the position is horrible. The nerves, and consequently the temper, give way in spite of ourselves. I am anxiously looking out for money.

I have borrowed twenty dollars already which I can't pay. The Bishop has no money to lend us at present.

I send two letters, one for Dr. Kerans, the other for Hertslet.

Remember me most kindly to dear Playfair and Badger, if you are writing that way; and pray thank General Coghlan for a letter he has been kind enough to write to my people, and believe me, &c.

(Signed) C. D. C.

Inclosure 2 in No. 576.

*Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.**

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, December* 18, 1865.

I MERELY send you a few lines to say that we are all still alive, though suffering.

There is a nasty epidemic prevailing—a sort of influenza—and Stern, myself, Rosenthal, Mrs. Rosenthal, Kerans, and M. Bardel have all been shaken with it.

We are none of us too strong, I am sorry to say; it is all well as long as we are not touched by disease, but there is not one of us who can stand the slightest illness. Mrs. Rosenthal was confined last night, and has brought a little girl into this miserable society of ours. You might write the news to the Jews' Society. I wish you would arrange to have a few hundred dollars at my disposal on my private account. . . . . you can arrange it kindly. Send Mr. Flad twenty dollars for Mr. Kerans. Excuse my troubling you about this, but my people will soon be clamouring for advances on wages. I have written to Hertslet about it, also about all money sent, put, if possible, to my private account.

. . . . . †not forget to be remembered to dear Playfair and his wife, also to Mr. Badger, for whose kindness to my mother I am truly grateful. F. at G. will, I suppose, tell you the news. Good bye.

Yours ever,

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 3 in No. 576.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam.

My dear Rassam, *Magdala Prison, December* 27, 1865.

YOUR letter by Hadji Adam's man, written before you had heard from the King, came to hand some time back. I have acknowledged it; that by Waldóo only reached me three days ago. Waldoo has brought me 100 dollars. His companion has dropped on the road sick. I have arranged with D. M. to send for him after a few days; he has the other 100 dollars with him.

About bills mentioned in the letter to Mr. F. of G., which he has sent me, I have drawn four bills on you: one for the prisoners Shillee and Ellslee, my people, but separate from me, and at present prisoners at large at Galfat; this I believe was quite legitimate, as I was unable to forward them money from here. Then there have been two sent in favour of Bardel, one for 100 dollars, and one for 300 dollars, the latter to be paid into Delmonte's hands.

As I have never explained myself quite clearly in regard to Bardel, I may tell you that he was imprisoned by the King on a charge of having made mischief between His Majesty and the other Europeans, ourselves included.

Flad has written to him since his arrival here to this effect, "I have heard from good authority that you have been the cause of all our misfortunes." Hereafter the King may actually throw much of the blame of what has occurred on his shoulders.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† Illegible.

Under these circumstances, and as I owed him nearly 1,000 dollars, I have been careful not to advance him money except on his private account, which money however, I have taken provisionally from what you sent. The bill for 100 dollars also on my private account, has been intended to keep him going for the present, without mixing him up with us, who are prisoners on quite different grounds.

That for 300 dollars was intended for his future support in the event of his being retained in the country by the stern will of the King (who you may be assured will follow his own way in that and all other matters), after our affairs are settled either one way or the other. It was better I think to give you an opportunity of settling this matter on my private account if possible while you were out of the country, as once in you may have difficulty in obtaining funds on a large scale, in the event of matters being procrastinated.

The fellow must be paid in some way or other. I cannot leave him to starve while I am in his debt, nor in decency could you, especially as the money was lent me—was given at a moment when I had not a sous; and great part of it was expended in bribery before Stern's trial, and so was in some sort of political service to me.

My object in short in dealing with him thus has been to prevent him fixing himself on the British Government, in the face of the charges against him. It is all very well to divide a little sugar and rice upon perfectly equal terms, but when it comes to hundreds of dollars, would you or I be justified in putting him on the same footing as the other prisoners as an object of British sympathy and support, as long as he has means of his own, in the shape of a large debt due by me. So much for this, the fourth bill was to enable my people to spend a little money in their own way in curiosities, or to meet such debts as men will run up in spite of surveillance, without troubling me about the details.

I asked you to advance it as a favour, and if you could, always supposing that as we were both in the pay of the Foreign Office it would not inconvenience you, especially as I believed that you were in plentiful funds. Never use the word "demand" again, dear Rassam, either to me or others. What demand have I a right to make on you? Enough, both of us may have troubles enough before we get out of this country; so, as thanks to your good management, we have had enough to keep us plentifully supplied with food, and there is, heaven knows, plenty of money, therefore there is no use in my worrying either you or myself further about these matters, at least for the present.

I see that our friends the missionaries are putting on their armour to break lances after the most approved missionary fashion, across one anothers back's and facts "Tantæ ne animis cælestibus iræ."

I have always felt in this country like Daniel in the lions' den, only at present the lions are uppermost.

You are evidently not a man to need advice from myself or any one else. All I can do is to hope and pray that all may end well. I am not over well, but God be with you, dear Rassam; and with kind regards to your companions, and the kindest, when you write that way, to Messrs. Badger and Playfair, and Mrs. Playfair, believe me, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 4 in No. 576.

*Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam.**

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, December* 28, 1865.

ALREADY a week ago I had intended to send to you Gebree Michael; but just when he was on the spot to leave, news reached us that you had already passed Alafa, on your road to the King, and we were fully convinced that you would be here next week; but yesterday evening, when Fanta arrived, we learned that we were disappointed. However, I hope that you have now the note that you left behind you.

The 400 dollars you had the kindness to send by my servants, I have received. Twice I have sent money up to the fortress to Captain Cameron, &c., so that they are supplied for sometime to come. From the inclosed notes from Captain Cameron, you will learn the condition of our suffering friends in Magdala.

We very much grieved to hear of the death of Mr. Rosenthal's child; but the poor fellow was a sufferer from the very beginning; he died on the 8th of this month. On the 17th, Mrs. Rosenthal was delivered of a little daughter; both she and the child are well.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

The Europeans at Gaffat (the King's artizans), received two letters from His Majesty, in which he says, that an English Ambassador, who came to seek his friendship, is on the coast, and after he has met him he will send him to Gaffat. He also ordered them to receive you with all honours due to your rank. Everybody, the Europeans and Abyssinians conclude that his Majesty is inclined to settle the business you came for. Yet one can never get to the bottom of this man's character; but of course we hope for the best, and trust that God will bless your self-denying efforts.

As I hope to have the honour of meeting you soon, I postpone everything that I should have to say about the Europeans here. You will find yourself that they are persons mixed up together of a very different caste.

I don't know anything else which I should have to say for the present, besides what I have recommended in my letter from August.

I and Mrs. Flad feel so grateful for your continual kindness towards us, that we . . . . nothing to complain of . . . . present. The only thing . . . would beg of you no . . . . that after you have . . . . in liberating our unf . . . . friends you would bri . . . . your influence in our behalf too, as it is our most fervent wish to get out of this country.

On the 17th of this month, Lumna, the servant of the Consul, arrived here; the stores he had left at Gondar, because they demanded 11 dollars toll of him. I myself spoke to the Nijad Ras of Gondar . . . . giving him a present of two shirts, and promising to give him some gunpowder. I got the things here without paying the 11 dollars. Lumna says that he received from you 100 dollars; his expenses from Massowah to Gondar amounted to 75 dollars, as Tantoo Mershee, the merchant to whom you had intrusted him gave me the account, the remaining 25 dollars he handed me over, which I shall send to Captain Cameron. Waldoo also and his companions whom you had sent with money, have not yet arrived at Magdala.

Captain Cameron sent . . . . letter from . . . . dated 22nd of July, in which . . . . state that on the 25th of June . . . . had sent the sum of 800 dollars . . . . Mr. Eipperle, at Matemma. The . . sul wished me to send down . . . . it but . . . . nor Mr. Eipperle have mentioned anything about it. Mr. Schimper thanks you for your kind remembrances, and begs to say that he hopes he will soon have the honour of seeing you here.

(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

P.S.—1*st January*, 1866.—I kept Fanta here till now, in the hope of giving you some . . . . news of our friends in the fortress, as I have sent some messengers a fortnight ago, but they have not arrived; and I deem it better to send him now, as you may want him on the road. Report says, that the King had sent such a friendly letter to the English prisoners in the fortress; as soon as I hear of them I shall send to you. I send you some potatoes by Fanta. May the Lord lead you safely hither, and protect you, and prosper your efforts in this new year, is the sincere wish of yours, &c.

With respectful regards, I remain, &c.

T. M. F.

Inclosure 5 in No. 576.

*Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam.**

Dear Sir, *Gaffat, January* 3, 1866, *mid-day*, 1 *o'clock.*

JUST now my messenger arrived from Magdala, with the inclosed letters from Captain Cameron. I hasten to forward them; perhaps the man may reach Fanta on the road. The report that His Majesty Theodore has sent a friendly letter to the English prisoners at Magdala, has proved to be a gigantic lie.

In case you are called to the King from Tshelga, please to let the bearer of this return, in order that we might hear something about you.

(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

No. 577.

*Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received April 6.)**

My Lord, *Cairo, March 27, 1866.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the accompanying despatch from Colonel Merewether,† with its inclosures, that has just reached me by the Bombay mail.

With the exception of Mr. Rassam's private letter to Colonel Merewether, reporting his progress in Abyssinia, which appears most satisfactory, the inclosures contained in Colonel Merewether's despatch have already been forwarded to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 578.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received April 6.)**

My Lord, *Aden, March 17, 1866.*

THE letters alluded to in paragraph 6 of my despatch of the 3rd instant,‡ as having been sent from Massowah by native boat, only arrived to-day. The vessel was delayed by bad weather and contrary winds. I have the honour to forward herewith copies of the different documents received by her.

2. They are of more importance than I expected they would be, and, I regret to say, tell of most unfortunate dissensions amongst the captives themselves, which may lead to difficulties and injuriously affect Mr. Rassam's efforts for their release. It is true the intelligence is of old date, and the later news transmitted by me on the 3rd instant said no more about the quarrels; it may be hoped therefore matters have improved, and will remain so until Mr. Rassam joins the King, and has the advantage of direct personal communication with His Majesty.

3. Mr. Rassam's progress is most promising, and the tone of the King's letters most auspicious; while the instructions issued by the King, and the manner in which the Mission has been treated after entering Abyssinia, are everything that could be wished. The latest official communication is dated the 27th December, but I have a private letter giving account of the movement of the Mission up to the 11th January, when it was only twenty miles from Gondar. Extracts from this letter are appended for your Lordship's information.§

4. As regards Mr. Rassam's and Captain Cameron's remarks on the pecuniary transactions between them, I instructed the former to charge to Her Majesty's Government all disbursements made by him, whether to Captain Cameron or to anyone else. Any monies sent up to the captives were intended for the benefit of the whole, and to be distributed by Captain Cameron as he found best. When the captives have been safely extricated from their present position, and got out of the country, the total amount expended can be adjusted in any manner Her Majesty's Government may be pleased to desire. Much more than Mr. Rassam is likely to use would be well spent if it brings about that fortunate result.

5. By this mail I send 1,000 German crowns to Colonel Stanton to meet the bill drawn by Mr. Rassam; and I shall ask the former to, if possible, make an arrangement through the Egyptian Government that any further bills Mr. Rassam may have to draw may be cashed at any place where treasure may be belonging to the Egyptian Government, and I will at once, on receiving advice of the drafts being issued or presented in Egypt, remit the equivalent to Colonel Stanton. The 500 dollars alluded to, and which I asked Sir R. Colquhoun to send to Matemma, were returned from Khartoum, their safe dispatch to their destination not having been found feasible. It is of the utmost importance that Mr. Rassam should be well provided with funds, and I trust that the arrangements will meet with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 578. ‡ No. 576. § Inclosure 2 in No. 569.

Inclosure 1 in No. 578.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, November 27, 1865.

[See Inclosure 1 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 2 in No. 578.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, December 1, 1865.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 3 in No. 578.

Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam, November 16, 1865.

[See Inclosure 3 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 4 in No. 578.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam, October 10, 1865.

[See Inclosure 4 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 5 in No. 578.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam, October 16, 1865.

[See Inclosure 5 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 6 in No. 578.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam, October 17, 1865.

[See Inclosure 6 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 7 in No. 578.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, December 13, 1865.

[See Inclosure 7 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 8 in No. 578.

Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam, August 1, 1865.

[See Inclosure 8 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 9 in No. 578.

Mr. T. M. Flad to Mr. Rassam, August 21, 1865.

[See Inclosure 9 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 10 in No. 578.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Rassam, July 8, 1865.

[See Inclosure 10 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 11 in No. 578.

The Rev. H. Stern to Mr. Rassam, July 9, 1865.

[See Inclosure 11 in No. 569.]

Inclosure 12 in No. 578.

Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, December 27, 1865.

[See Inclosure 1 in No. 574.]

Inclosure 13 in No. 578.

King Theodore to Mr. Rassam, December 8, 1865.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 574.]

Inclosure 14 in No. 578.

King Theodore to Mr. Rassam, December 11, 1865.

[See Inclosure 3 in No. 574.]

Inclosure 15 in No. 578.

*Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Balcoalin, about 50 *miles to the N.N.W. of Gondar,*
between Walmee and Chulga, January 1, 1866.

My dear Colonel,

I DO hope that the new year will be more propitious to me, my party, and prisoners than last year; and from the turn the Abyssinian difficulty has taken lately, I have no doubt that our trouble will soon be compensated by the release of our captives. The inclosed official letter which I have been obliged to write on thin paper, on account of the difficulty there is of sending any communication to the sea-coast for fear of rebels and others, will give you in detail what had taken place lately, and I doubt not but that you will be extremely pleased at the way the King has been treating me even before he saw me. His letters could not have been more civil and friendly, nor the orders which he has sent to all the districts through which we have to pass for our good reception and entertainment could be more gratifying. He has sent three high officials to escort us from the border of Abyssinia to his Court, and he actually sent for the messengers I sent to him from Massowah, and told him that he would hold them responsible for getting us everything, even to the fowls and eggs. He told them that they were to act on his part as well as mine, and they were to obtain for us everything that could be got. In a letter which he forwarded to the Sheikh of Matemma and Galabat, he spoke in gratifying terms of me and said, "A beloved friend of mine named Hormuzd Rassam, an Englishman, is at present with you at Matemma, you are to convey him safely to the district of Chulga, where he will be received by our people as he is our beloved." Although the old chief was extremely kind at first before he heard from the King about us, this letter made him doubly so, and he immediately got us camels and sent us to Walmee (the first Abyssinian district) which place we reached on the morning of the 30th ultimo—two days from Matemma—at that place the Royal Guard was to be awaiting us, but on our arrival there two messengers came and informed me on the part of the Chiefs of the escort, that they had been obliged to go after the rebels with their party as they had heard that Tissoo Gobazzi had heard of my mission to the King, and had sent a large force to intercept my movements, and carry us all to their Chiefs with all our things. This movement of the King's officers stopped the progress of the rebels at once—otherwise we might have been by this time prisoners in the hands of the arch-rebel Walkait. The officers, who are called Bashas, sent orders at the same time to the Chief of Walmee to send us to this spot, where we are to remain till they returned from their expedition—as they said Walmee was a very dirty place (they could not have said a truer word) and Balwaha was in the neighbourhood of nine

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

villages, and where we have good water and shelter in the wood on the bank of the stream called by the same name of the spot. We left Walmee yesterday afternoon, and reached here at sunset—and I must confess that this place is far more pleasant to stay in a few days than the last village we last left. On our arrival here we found two Shooms (chiefs of villages) awaiting us with a bullock, bread for all our party, milk, eggs, fowls, and beer, which they had brought to us on the part of their Sovereign; of course as long as we remain here in Abyssinia we shall be his guests, and the authorities have to provide us with all eatables and carriage. I dare not offer to pay for what I get, as I am told that by doing so I offend the Emperor, which of course I would not do. Although we are all reckoned Royal guests, money is spent faster in making presents than if I had paid for everything I got, and I only wish I had brought some more money with me. As I managed to obtain funds from a German Missionary at Matemma (partly ready money and partly to be paid to me hereafter) I was obliged to draw on the Consul General in Egypt for 1,000 German crowns, as I could not manage to get anyone to accept a bill on Aden. If you will be writing to Colonel Stanton, kindly ask him to honour my order and draw on you for the amount; or, if you can manage it, it would be better if you could get the Resident Agent at Aden to accept the bill for 1,000 German crowns, and write to the Superintendent of his Company at Alexandria to cash it. I have written to Colonel Stanton, and asked him to settle the draft with you, as I do not like to complicate my accounts by drawing on the Foreign Office. I have sent a copy of the inclosed despatch to Colonel Stanton by a courier to Khartoum, as I was not certain that I should ever be able to send you the original, and if I sent it, whether it would reach you safely; one of my old messengers to the Rajah has undertaken to convey it to Massowah, and I intend to despatch him from Chulga on my arrival there; of course the thing will be done secretly. I hope it will not be long before I am able to write to you openly. Your kind letter of the 10th November, reached me at Matemma on the 18th ultimo; many thanks for it, and for all the notes you kindly inclosed. They reached me from Massowah in thirty-three days at Kassala—the authorities took charge of the packet and sent it on to Kadarif by a Government courier, and thence it was brought to me by the Bashibazooks. On the 14th of last month I sent you, viâ Kassala and Massowah, a large packet of letters, containing no end of news, official and private; and I hope that before the end of this month it would reach you safely, indeed, if the agents I wrote to will attend to my instructions, and the "Victoria" will arrive at Massowah in time to receive the packet, it might reach you about the middle of this month. I have sent copies of all my official letters to you to Egypt, in case the originals may delay or be lost on the road. Can you believe it, that great liar, the messenger who reported to me the release of Cameron, on account of the letter he brought me* again from the King, and for the sake of his relative Samuel, he is certainly very useful, and has the cheek of his Satanic Majesty,—I taxed him the other day with the deception he played upon me, and his cool answer was, that he wished to please me—and that as he had heard that the Emperor was going to release Cameron immediately, he thought he might just as well be the first person to inform me of the good tidings, "Had the report been bad," said he, "I would not have dared to utter it;"—did you ever hear of such cool confession? You will perceive that the King mentions him in his letter to me. He is called Mahomed Sabanee—the brother of Samuel, I did not employ him again after the first time. I have received two notes, one from Samuel, and the other from the King's Arabic Scribe: they both say that their master is pleased with me, and doubted not that he would treat me well. The sun is as powerful as ever, but I am told that as soon as we pass Chulga (in two days' journey hence) we shall not feel its heat any longer—how pleasant it will be! We are all, thank God, quite well, and with the exception of some of our servants having suffered for a short time from fever, every one of my party is in perfect health.

4*th January*.—The officers whom the King had sent to escort us made their appearance in the afternoon, they presented themselves to me as soon as they arrived, decorated with the Royal shirt. They were extremely civil, and would not sit down in my presence until I asked them to do so. They expressed themselves in very gratifying terms on the part of their Sovereign for my safe arrival to these parts, they told me they had sent agents all over the country to collect men and beasts of burden for removing us to the King's Court, and they expected them back to-morrow. I shall be glad when I know that I am in the King's camp. I am getting quite sick of this constant delay.

11*th*.—Saraba, near Chulga, about twenty miles from Gondar. We have had no end of delays since we left Balwaha on the 7th; the difficulty has been in procuring

* *Sic.*

men and beasts of burden to transport our luggage, which in this country is done by the King, as I am a royal guest. I proposed to the chief whom the King sent to escort me to him, that Blanc, Prideaux, and I might push on with our light kit, and the rest of our baggage could follow; but they would not listen to such an expedient, as they said they would not dare to do such a thing, as they knew it would displease His Majesty. I am told, however, that we shall be at the Lake in three days, and consequently we shall meet His Majesty. Two days afterwards, nothing could exceed the civility and attention which has been shown to me by His Majesty's loyal subjects ever since I left Walmee; and as for the Bashas (two of whom are brothers of Dejaj Hailo, the commandant of the Magdala garrison), they are over-courteous and condescending. I am told that their master had ordered them to honour and respect me as if I was himself. Wherever we go we are supplied with bread, cows, milk, fowls, eggs, honey, food for our animals, and beer or mead. Yesterday we ascended this plateau, which is, I think, above 8,000 feet above the level of the sea. The climate is most delicious, and, barring the rain, it is not unlike the English spring. I tried the heat of the sun yesterday at 2 P.M., and found it not higher than 83 degrees. The nights are intensely cold. I hope it will not be long before I shall have the felicity of sending you good and cheering tidings regarding the duty on which I have been sent.

I have received letters from C., which I send by a different messenger.

Yours ever,

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 579.

*Mr. Murray to Captain Desborough.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 6,* 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to inform you that his Lordship has received accounts dated February 7,† through Massowah, Aden, and Cairo, from Mr. Rassam, stating that he had been received in the best possible manner by the King, who, after the first interview, ordered that all the European prisoners, including the missionaries and Frenchmen, should be delivered at Debra Tabor to Mr. Rassam, who would take them with him out of Abyssinia about the end of March.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 580.

Mr. Purday to Mr. Hammond.—(Received April 7.)

Sir, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, April 7,* 1866.

I HAVE much gratification in acknowledging the receipt of your letter announcing the release of the Abyssinian captives,‡ and at the same time to present my own and Mrs. Stern's best thanks for the information the Foreign Office has given us at various times.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 581.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received April 23.)§

My Lord, *Cairo, April 9,* 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from Colonel Merewether, dated Aden, 28th March, which reached me shortly after the departure of the last homeward mail, and which contains the particulars of the Abyssinian intelligence I had the honour to forward to your Lordship by telegraph on the 5th instant.

The tenor of Colonel Merewether's despatch is of so satisfactory a nature that the

* A similar letter was addressed to Mr. Purday. † See No. 582. ‡ No. 579.

§ Laid before Parliament, 1867.

complete success of Mr. Rassam's Mission can hardly be any longer a matter of doubt, and it may reasonably be hoped that the captives have ere this been safely escorted across the Abyssinian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 582.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received April 23.)**

My Lord, *Aden, March 28, 1866.*

I HAVE the honour to report for your Lordship's information that the "Victoria" has just returned from Massowah, bringing news from Mr. Rassam up to the 7th of February, dated from Agau Muder, in South-Western Abyssinia, and stating that the Emperor had given him a most magnificent reception; a regular constituted Embassy from England could not have been treated with greater honour and attention.

A few hours after his first interview with His Majesty, the latter ordered the release of all the European prisoners, including the Missionaries and Frenchmen, and directed that they should all be made over to Mr. Rassam to take out with him from Abyssinia, which he hoped to leave about the end of March. The King had sent his Chamberlain to Magdala to unfetter the prisoners and to bring them to meet Mr. Rassam at Debra Tabor, to which place the latter and his companions were proceeding from the Court then in Godjam, and where he expected to receive the released captives about the end of February.

The Emperor has written a most polite letter to the Queen, which Mr. Rassam felt sure would please Her Majesty, and the British nation.

The Emperor had also made Mr. Rassam handsome presents, and was preparing more to give to the Mission, before leaving the country.

The above was received at Massowah on the 18th of March; we may therefore expect to hear of Mr. Rassam having actually met and received the released captives about the 10th or 12th proximo, when the "Victoria" will again visit Massowah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 583.

*Mr. Hammond to Colonel Stanton.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 26, 1866.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 9th of April,† conveying the highly satisfactory information that Mr. Rassam's mission had been successful, and that Captain Cameron and the other Europeans held in confinement by King Theodore had been released.

Under these circumstances Mr. Palgrave's services will no longer be required, and you will state to him that, as they cannot now be availed of, he is at liberty to return to England or to proceed elsewhere at his own convenience.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 584.

Mr. Hammond to Mr. Purday.‡*

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 28, 1866.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to inform you that his Lordship has received intelligence from Colonel Merewether, through Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt, dated April 20,§ to the effect that he had received a letter from Captain Cameron dated Magdala, February 26, stating that he and his fellow-prisoners had

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.
† No. 581.
‡ A similar letter was addressed to Captain Desborough.
§ See No. 588.

been released from their chains on the previous day, and were about to proceed to Gaffat to be given up to Mr. Rassam.

Captain Cameron's letter further reported everything as being friendly, and stated that Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal were not to be subject to any further trial.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 585.

Captain Desborough to Mr. Murray.—(Received April 30.)

Sir, *Reading, April 30, 1866.*

I THANK you for the letter received from you yesterday morning.* May I beg you will be so good as to express to Lord Clarendon, the sincere thanks of myself and family for his considerate kindness in forwarding the latest intelligence from Abyssinia. The last news is very encouraging, and we now hope soon to have the happiness of seeing our relative Captain Cameron amongst us, thanks to the patient exertions of Mr. Rassam.

I am, &c.
(Signed) L. DESBOROUGH.

No. 586.

Mr. Purday to Mr. Murray.—(Received April 30.)

Sir, *24, Great Marlborough Street, April 30, 1866.*

I HAVE the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th,* containing the gratifying further news of the release of our friends, the long-suffering captives in Abyssinia. Please to preseut my kind thanks, and that of Mrs. Stern and family, to the Earl of Clarendon for his politeness in giving us the earliest information of the news.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 587.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received May 14.)†

My Lord, *Alexandria, May 4, 1866.*

I HAVE the honour to forward the inclosed despatch from Colonel Merewether, dated Aden, 24th April, which has just reached me, under flying seal, and which gives further details of the Abyssinian intelligence forwarded to your Lordship by telegraph on the 27th ultimo.

This intelligence appears most satisfactory, and gives grounds for believing the whole of the captives have been set at liberty, and that the whole party may be expected to reach Massowah towards the end of May, or the beginning of June.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 588.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received May 14.)†

My Lord, *Aden, April 24, 1866.*

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Lordship's information, that the "Victoria" returned from Massowah on the night of the 20th instant. The mail steamer from Bombay passed through the same night, and there was only time to send by her the telegram which was forwarded through Colonel Stanton, C.B.

2. As mentioned therein, no letter had come down from Mr. Rassam. The short

* No. 584. † Laid before Parliament, 1867.

one written by Captain Cameron, from which extract was given in the telegram communicating the good tidings of the actual release, was addressed to M. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate at Massowah, and sent by that gentleman to me. M. Munzinger further reports, in a letter from Massowah, dated 16th April, that an Abyssinian convert, named Meereba Wurker, a man who had been educated in Bombay, and on whose statements reliance could be placed, had arrived a few days before from Korata, having quitted that place in the middle of March. He said that, at the time he left, the whole party, including the released prisoners, were assembled at Korata, all in good health and spirits. Mr. Rassam sent salutations, but did not like to write; he was very anxious to leave, but the Emperor was still absent, and it was necessary they should see him before they left. He was then at Zageh, on the south-western corner of Lake Tsana. It was stated that the Emperor was having valuable presents prepared for Her Majesty, and had called together the best goldsmiths in Abyssinia for that purpose.

3. It was thought that the Mission, with the released Europeans, the German gentlemen from Gaffat, were also at Korata, and were to be allowed to leave the country with the others, would not be able to start on their downward journey before the end of March or beginning of April. Korata is on the east side of Lake Tsana, about the middle of it. The party would have to pass round the head of the lake, through Dembia, to Matemma, and so by the route followed by Mr. Rassam in his upward journey. The road by Adowa was impracticable, the province of Tigré being still much disturbed. At this season of the year the distance from Korata to Massowah, through Matemma, cannot well be performed in less than two months, and, as the late captives are far from strong, it will be June before they can reach the coast. The "Victoria" will be there in readiness by the 1st June.

4. That, however, is a mere matter of time; all difficulties have now vanished; the captives have been released. The Emperor was exceedingly pleased at receiving Her Majesty's letter; caused the greatest consideration to be paid to Mr. Rassam and the Mission; and has shown himself most anxious to revive friendly communications.

5. A man named Michael Yoriss, an Abyssinian priest, came from Massowah in the "Victoria." He had been in Aden about three months before, and proffered his services to obtain information. I accepted them, and have the honour now to append copy of his statement, giving the intelligence he has collected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure No. 588.

*Statement of Michael Yoriss.**

AFTER leaving Aden, about three months and a-half ago, in Her Majesty's ship "Victoria," I proceeded from Massowah through Adowa and Hamasain to Gondar, and thence to Damot. When at Wandizeh, Lee Gabroo's town, I met Mr. Rassam and the Mission proceeding to Garota to meet the King; they were being very well treated by the people of the country, and had the King's officials with them. Leaving Mr. Rassam, I preceded him, and arrived at Garota, Damot, four days before him. I had an audience with the King, and was asked if I knew anything about the English that were coming up to him. I replied, I knew nothing about them. I was present when Mr. Rassam arrived at Damot, and had an interview with the King; he was well received and his presents accepted, and he was thanked for them. The King gave him dresses of honour and 5,000 dollars, and 50 dollars to each of the servants of the Mission. The King asked Mr. Rassam why he had remained two years at Massowah, why he had not come up. He replied, that the roads were reported unsafe, and that was his reason; that he had written several times to His Majesty for permission, and that directly it came for him to travel viâ Matemma he had availed himself of the permision, and started. The King then asked him if Consul Cameron was his brother. he replied that, no, he was not an Englishman himself, but still a servant of the British Government, and had been sent with a letter from the Queen of England. The King said he was very glad, and accepted it with pleasure; that he had no fault to find with Consul Cameron; that he liked the English very much, and had delivered a letter to Consul Cameron, to send to England for him; and that he had not yet received any answer, so he was displeased with Consul Cameron, but that he

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

liked him, and it was entirely owing to Samuel, his steward, that Cameron had been treated in the way he had, for which he had since disgraced Samuel, and turned him out of office; that Mr. Stern, he had a great aversion to, and all Jews, that he was led to believe they were Englishmen, and that he consequently treated them and honoured them well, and when he found that they abused him and his country, and behaved improperly, he got angry with them; but that, as now Mr. Rassam had brought an authentic letter from Her Majesty the Queen, he was very much pleased, and ordered Guffar Gholam, his wazeer (chamberlain) to proceed to Magdala, and release all the prisoners, Europeans, and take them all to Gaffat, and ordered Mr. Rassam to proceed to Korata, and there wait for them; that he had a little business to do, and would also come there himself shortly. I also had some business in the country, and travelled about. When I heard that Mr. Rassam had arrived at Korata I was at Damot, and I went to Zageh and Korata, saw them, and afterwards proceeded to Gaffat; thence to Nafas Mooja, where I met the whole of the Europeans going to Korata; all the Europeans that were at Gaffat, ladies included, were there too. They were four days' journey from Gaffat, and distant about two days' journey from Korata, but it would take them more than that to reach it; they all appeared quite well, but were evidently suffering from weakness and fatigue. I spoke to Captain Cameron, and he told me that he had written a letter informing of his having been released, and that the messenger who had it could go with me to Massowah, and that he would be paid by M. Munzinger. He told me the King was going to meet Mr. Rassam and him at Zageh or Begemder, close to Korata. It is about forty days since I saw Captain Cameron. After leaving him I went to Gondar, and thence made the best of my way to Massowah viâ Adowa, the messenger of Captain Cameron with me. I arrived at Massowah some days after the departure of the "Victoria," so I waited for her return. It will take Mr. Rassam and the Consul two months good to get to Massowah viâ Matemma, which is the route they are going to take. The country is still much disturbed, and I was several times stopped on the road by the rebels. The King will not I think detain Mr. Rassam and Captain Cameron longer than three or four days at Zageh; they ought to be at Massowah in about five weeks or so from to-day,

Before me, this 23rd day of April, 1866.

(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW, *Assistant Political Resident, Aden.*

No. 589.

*Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 23, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to inform you that his Lordship has received a telegram from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt,† reporting that letters had arrived from Mr. Rassam, dated Korata, April 9; all well; and that later intelligence had been received at Massowah, according to which Mr. Rassam had crossed the lake to take leave of the King, while the late prisoners had gone on to Gorgora at the north end of the lake, where Mr. Rassam would join them, and the whole party would then proceed to Matemma.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 590.

Mr. Purday to Mr. Murray.—(Received May 25.)

Sir, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, May* 24, 1866.

OBLIGE me by thanking the Earl of Clarendon for kindly favouring me with the communication of the good tidings from Abyssinia. May we have by the next mail the full account of their having reached Egypt!

I am, &c.

(Signed) C. H. PURDAY.

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* A similar letter was addressed to Captain Desborough.

† See No. 591.

No. 591.

*Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received May 28.)**

My Lord *Alexandria, May* 19, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch that has just reached me under flying seal from the Assistant Political Resident at Aden, and containing the latest intelligence from Abyssinia.

The Emperor continued to treat Mr. Rassam well, and not a day passed without His Majesty showing him marked attention. The messengers who brought this intelligence state that, on reaching Waghara on the 13th April, they heard it reported that Mr. Rassam had proceeded on the 11th to Zighié to take leave of His Majesty.

Captain Cameron and all the released prisoners, eighteen in number, were in perfect health, and all expected to leave about the middle of April.

The Emperor had received a letter from Dr. Beke inclosing a petition from the relatives of the prisoners, but it may be hoped no ill effects will result from Dr. Beke's interference, as matters have gone on so favourably with Mr. Rassam.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 591.

*Lieutenant Goodfellow to the Earl of Clarendon.**

My Lord, *Aden, May* 11, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report for your Lordship's information, that intelligence has been received from M. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate at Massowah, of the arrival on the 29th ultimo of two messengers from Mr. Rassam, with private letters, dated Korata on Lake Tsana, 9th April 1866. These letters M. Munzinger has retained until the "Victoria" should revisit the island, as he was afraid to transmit them by this opportunity, being uncertain as to the probable date of arrival at Aden of the vessel that has brought his present despatch; they will now consequently be delivered to Colonel Merewether in person at Massowah, and the information they contain doubtless communicated to your Lordship on the arrival of the "Victoria" at Suez.

2. Messengers were despatched, it appears, by Mr. Rassam with this self same packet of letters on the 23rd March last, but on reaching Waghara they were by some mistake stopped by the Emperor's people. His Majesty on hearing of their detention immediately sent and had them released, but instead of continuing their journey on to Massowah, the messengers returned to Mr. Rassam, who had therefore to engage other men to convey the letters to Massowah: the latter left Korata on the 9th April, and state that on reaching Waghara on the 13th idem, they heard it reported that Mr. Rassam had proceeded on the 11th to Zeghié to meet and there take leave of the King, whilst the rest of the party had started *en route* for Dembea, and that Mr. Rassam was to join them at Gorgora, whence they would continue their journey to Matemma.

3. Mr. Rassam states in a private letter to M. Munzinger of the 9th April, that the Emperor continued to treat him well; that not a day passed without His Majesty showing him marked attention, he and his party being provided with every necessary; and that further he had been presented with 10,000 dollars. Captain Cameron and all the released prisoners eighteen in number were in perfect health, but the former was somewhat weak; that they all expected to leave about the middle of the month (April).

4. Dr. Beke's letter had been received by the Emperor on the 15th March; the day after its arrival, His Majesty sent it to Mr. Rassam to read, together with the petition from the relatives of the prisoners—and Mr. Rassam thought that His Majesty wished to consult with him regarding the answer that should be sent; he considered it very probable that the messengers who had brought it would be dismissed at the same time that he left the Court, in which case he would despatch one also to give information of his departure from Korata for Matemma and Kassala. This messenger, M. Munzinger expected, would arrive in a few days at Massowah.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

No. 592.

*Consul Cameron to Mr. Hammond.—(Received June 5.)**

Dear Sir, *Korata, Abyssinia, March 16, 1866.*

I SENT the intelligence to Massowah on the 25th February of our having been released from chains the day before, owing to the successful intercession of Mr. Rassam.

We reached this on the 12th instant, having been handed over entirely to Mr. Rassam.

We were rather afraid of a public judgment, but this, thank God, has been spared us.

This morning the King sent a letter, containing the charges against us.

Those against myself are as follows :—

1. "Instead of going to Massowah, after my first visit to His Majesty, I went among the Turks, who were his enemies (namely, to Kassala); I suppose, as being in the Egyptian territory, as he considers that his quarrel with the Turks is limited to Egypt, and has nothing to do with Turkey."

2. "I abused him while there,"—how, is not known.

3. "After returning to his dominions, I could give no account as to whether there was an answer or not to his letter to Her Majesty."

There is also a very respectful and humbly worded letter for Her Majesty.

We hope to leave soon in company with the other prisoners, who were at large at Gaffat, and Mr. Rassam.

We are all well.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

[See No. 629.]

No. 593.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received June 5.)†

My Lord, *"Victoria," Red Sea, May 12, 1866.*

ON reaching Massowah yesterday I found letters waiting bringing news from Mr. Rassam's camp down to the 21st March. Part of Mr. Rassam's letter to me is in the form of a journal, and I cannot do better than quote that part, for the information of your Lordship, as giving a most interesting account of his first and after interviews with the Emperor Theodorus, and showing best how very gratifying and most satisfactory his reception has been:—

"On the morning of the 28th January we got in sight of the King's pavilion, and as I received a courteous letter from His Majesty on the road, about three miles from his camp, that he had graciously ordered all his officers of State to meet me in the road and escort me to the Court, Blanc, Prideaux, and I halted at 11·10 A.M., for about twenty minutes, to put on our uniform in a small tent which was pitched for the occasion, in order that we might be ready to meet the grandees of Abyssinia. At noon, we met the guard of honour that had been sent by His Majesty to welcome me. Ras Engada, the chief Minister, came forward on foot to welcome me on the part of his Royal Master, and made many civil speeches through Samuel (the King's steward), who had been sent by the Emperor to interpret. Of course both my companions and I immediately dismounted, and I said some civil words in answer to the Royal message. Ras Engada then presented me with a fine mule nicely caparisoned, and told me that his master had sent it to ride into the Royal camp, and that he hoped that I would excuse him for sending me such a mean present, that he only ventured to do so because he was away from home, but that he intended to present me with a more suitable animal and trappings before long. Ras Engada then rode before us with about 500 officers. The rest of the cavalry rode behind. We rode on at a quick pace until we reached the foot of the hill on which the King's pavilion was pitched, and after we dismounted I was invited by Ras Engada to take a little rest in a red cloth tent which had been erected by order of the King for our reception. After many civil speeches Ras Engada and Samuel left me, and went and reported our arrival to their liege. As soon as they left us, some refreshment was sent to

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† Moved for by Address of December 2, 1867.

us from the Royal kitchen, with ten cows and the same number of sheep, with some noney. About 3 o'clock I received a very civil note from His Majesty, wherein he expressed his desire to see me. A verbal message accompanied the note, which was to the effect that, although that day was Sunday, he could not delay his meeting me any longer; that I had waited a long time, and we must now see each other. My companions and I repaired immediately to the Royal pavilion. From the bottom of the hill, round the tents of the King's household, musketeers were arranged as a guard of honour on the right and left. By-the-bye, on my entering the red cloth tent, a salute was fired out of muskets, no cannons being available. As soon as I got in sight of the Royal presence the infantry soldiers began to discharge their muskets, and they continued to fire in regular order until I was ushered before His Majesty. The Royal pavilion was made of silk, and carpeted with the same kind of stuff. We found the Emperor sitting on a couch covered with silk, his throne having been left behind at Magdala. On either side of the tent stood all the Ministers and officers of the Court; and after I had handed His Majesty the Queen's letter, and interchanged a few civil words befitting the occasion, we were asked to sit down, which we did on the right hand of the Emperor. As I took care to hand over the Royal epistle without any translation, and there was no one in the Court able to read English, His Majesty laid it on the right side of the couch, and began by saying he was glad to see us, and trusted we were all well after the fatigues of the long journey. All the Ministers remained standing, and seemed very attentive to whatever was said by His Majesty, and my answers to his queries. The King then opened the subject of his grievances, and related everything that had taken place from the death of Messrs. Plowden and Bell. He blamed, in strong terms, the conduct of the missionaries, and especially the Rev. Mr. Stern, also Cameron. I had then to employ soothing arguments to allay his anger, and I was not a little gratified when I heard afterwards that His Majesty was greatly pleased at what I had said, and expressed his desire to befriend me. Although I took two interpreters with me, I left it to His Majesty's option to employ any other he liked, and, consequently, he employed Samuel to interpret between us, which I was very glad of, as this individual knows Amharic and Arabic very well, moreover he is well versed in the Court etiquette, and has unmistakeable desire to see England and Abyssinia on good terms. Before I quitted the Royal presence, His Majesty appointed him my introducer (in accordance with Abyssinian rule). Soon after my return to my tent, the King sent me Her Majesty's letter to translate into Amharic. We were a very long time about it, as it had, first, to be rendered into Arabic, and my interpreter and Samuel had to retranslate it to the chief Royal scribe in Amharic.

"29*th*.—Very early this morning His Majesty sent for me, and said he wished to see me for the purpose of talking over the question of my coming. I repaired to the Royal presence at once, taking Blanc and Prideaux with me. We found His Majesty outside the silk pavilion, and after welcoming us he invited us into the tent. He then ordered every one out, save Ras Engada, the chief Amharic scribe, Samuel, and my Mahometan interpreter, a native of Massowah. He repeated the ill-behaviour of the European prisoners, and expressed himself in gratifying terms in having at last seen me, and that I had proved England's friendship to him by my patience and conduct. He then ordered the Amharic scribe to read the letter which he had written to Her Majesty, wherein he reports his forgiveness to the European prisoners and their being made over to me to take out of Abyssinia. I am certain that the letter will please Her Majesty and the British public if it is allowed to be published. This letter was sent to me afterwards to translate into English. As the Emperor had appointed this afternoon for receiving the presents, Blanc, Prideaux, and I went to His Majesty, and after making a suitable speech, I presented him with what I had brought. He received them out in the open air, with Ras Engada standing. His Majesty having made an appropriate answer, said he accepted the presents, not for their value but for the sake of the presenter and in token of the renewal of friendship between him and the British nation. He seemed very much pleased with my selections.

"30*th*.—His Majesty sent a message early this morning that as he wished me to go to Korata, where I should have to wait till the prisoners were brought from Magdala, I was to prepare to start before noon; that he intended to see me on my way thither for a stage or two. The reason His Majesty wished me to stay at Korata was because it was a large town situated on the extreme limit of the south-east side of the Lake Tsana, where he thought we should enjoy the breeze of the lake, and while away the time in fishing and shooting. His Majesty left about 7 in the morning with the whole army, estimated at about 45,000 fighting men, and almost the same number of male and female followers. As the Emperor is on a war expedition against the people of Godjam, he had not allowed any of the ladies, either of his household or of his officers, to accompany the Royal cavalcade, having left them at Debra Tabor. Blanc, Prideaux, and I followed the Royal

party after our breakfast, at 10·45 A.M., and reached the King's camp at Sakala at 12·30 P.M. The place where I first met His Majesty and to-day's camp are in Damot, the district between Agau Medur and Godjam. At Sakala, His Majesty had ordered that we should encamp next to him, and we found that our reception tent of red cloth had already been pitched for us when we arrived, and we rested there till our own were ready. The whole army is divided into four divisions, and always encamps round the Court in separate regiments, and of course the most favourite of the division take the right side of the King. Most of the troops have not their tents with them, and it is surprising how quickly every five soldiers erect a nice hut for them for shelter, and everything done in such orderly manner that no well-disciplined army can surpass. The privates build their huts in a circle, and the tents or huts of their officers are erected within the area. There is a remarkable and most wise custom among the Royal troops, which is, wherever the King encamps the soldiery always burn every vestige of their huts when they leave a place even if they march for a mile or two. As soon as we arrived he sent me a kind message, with a brace of partridges which some of his troops caught while they were marching. He afterwards sent me an antelope, caught in the same way.

"31*st*.—The King started from Sakala this morning at 8 o'clock, and we followed about a quarter of an hour afterwards. We soon overtook the army, and had great difficulty in making our way through the overwhelming masses. When we came to cross the streams there was a dead stop, and sometimes we would have to wait a quarter of an hour before we could move on again. The most surprising thing is, that with all the great rush no accidents are heard of, and very few sick are seen in the great force. At 12·40 P.M. we reached Beefata, in the district of Metebo, where we found the Court had taken to quarters, and our red tent pitched within 50 yards of the King's. His tents were pitched to-day on a high hill on the top of a mountain, wherefrom parts of the districts of Metebo and Damot were visible. These two unhappy parts of Abyssinia are under the King's wrath for having proved rebellious; consequently he has determined to destroy them and leave them a waste, as a lesson to other discontented people.

"*February* 1. His Majesty sent me word very early this morning that he wished to change his encamping ground for the sake of the comfort of his troops, as the spot on which they remained last night was not found pleasant, and that he had purposed to travel two or three miles further with us on our way to the lake. He also expressed a wish that as we found it uncomfortable yesterday travelling behind him, we should ride in his company to-day, and so rid us of the turmoil of the troops. At 7 o'clock His Majesty started; we joined him a few yards from my tent. He received us most graciously, and asked us to mount our mules and follow him. He rides most gracefully; his mule walks at the rate of four miles an hour. Of course all his troops on foot or mounted have to follow at the same pace, and it is a most pretty as well as grand sight to see his mighty force following in rapid order for nearly a mile around, and if His Majesty stops or turns to the right or left, the whole mass comes to a stand still without confusion or disorder, until he begins to go on again, and the whole army follows as if propelled by a machine. Those who rode with His Majesty were Ras Engada, Blanc, Prideaux, Samuel, pages, the King's armsbearers, and myself. We travelled until 8·25 A.M., when His Majesty ordered the halt, and directed our tents should be pitched near his. He even showed Samuel, our introducer, where we were to encamp. Soon after we encamped, His Majesty went out with all the soldiery to plunder and destroy the villages which had been deserted by their inhabitants. The Emperor is exceedingly kind and hospitable to us; he sends us every day rations from his kitchen.

"2*nd*.—We left this morning soon after sunrise, and about 1,000 yards from our starting ground we came to the Reim Allai, the source of the Blue Nile. His Majesty crossed the Reim on foot and made us ride, but as it was difficult for my mule to carry me up the steep bank safely, he advised me to dismount, and while I was trying to climb up he condescendingly caught hold of me by the arm and pulled me up, saying in Arabic, 'Asham la takaaf,' *i.e.*, 'Be of good cheer; don't be afraid.' His Majesty stood there on the bank until he saw a good path for his army to pass by. From the Reim we travelled on until we reached Dunka at 9·10 A.M., where we halted. We had a tremendous shower of rain this afternoon. The lightning and thunder were frightful.

"3*rd*.—We left again this morning in company with His Majesty at 7·45. He turned his steps after we started towards Agau Medur, the last district we had to pass before we reached the King. His Majesty conversed with me this morning on various topics; the American war, the Ashantee war, the barbarity of the King of Dahomey, and the Government of Madagascar. He also told me why he did not answer me quickly—'because since the death of Plowden and Bell all the English and French who visited my country proved insincere, ill-mannered, ill-behaved, and ill-tempered. I said to myself I must not

see this English Agent before I find out that he is of different temperament to those who created a breach between me and your Queen, my friend. Your patience in waiting so long for an answer quite convinced me of your worth, &c.; and now as you have happily established the renewal of friendship between my country and England, I wish you to carry to your Queen, my friend, and to her Council, my anxiety to cultivate the friendship of England, which I have been longing for ever since I ascended the throne of Abyssinia.' We reached Fagata at 11·15 A.M. We had to pass to-day through the well-cultivated and peaceful country Agau Medur, and it was most cheering to see how well His Majesty protected the crops of his faithful subjects by ordering different parties under officers to guard the corn-fields and villages against the ravages of the soldiery.

"*4th.*—The King sent for me this morning to have some conversation. I took Blanc and Prideaux with me to the Royal presence about 9 o'clock. His Majesty was standing out in the open air quite unattended. After the usual compliments, the King invited us to sit down on a carpet in the sun, and he sat on a similar one opposite. He spoke again about the ill behaviour of the prisoners, and related to me all his doings from the time of his childhood. He said that he had placed implicit confidence in me, and considered us all three like his brothers. He asked me again to assure Her Majesty and her Council of his friendly sentiments and love towards the British nation, and hoped that in future he would prove himself worthy of their friendship and good will. He said that he had done his best to cultivate the friendship of the Queen, and had gone so far as to order a number of curious articles to be made to send to her, which though worthless as to their intrinsic value, yet they would show Her Majesty the workmanship and the costume of his country, but that Cameron had spoilt the whole 'hommu.' He added, let the past be forgotten, and now I wish to make you a present of some Abyssinian curiosities of saddles, shields, &c., made of gold, which I hope you will accept as a token of our friendship, though they will be a mean gift from me to you. He said further that he intended to send us early the following morning to Korata, and he left it to me to stay until the released prisoners reached either Korata or Debra Tabor. Other conversation passed between us which I shall leave for the future. After remaining about one hour and a-half with His Majesty, we were dismissed. Soon after returning to our tent, he sent me a most polite Amharic note (which he requested me to translate into English), wherein he informed me that he had sent guns and pistols to present to any one I liked, and had ordered 5,000 crowns to be given me to spend in any manner I liked, 'excepting in a way unpleasant to the Lord our God.'

"These gifts I was obliged to accept, as I was told it would displease the King if I did not. His Majesty sent the muskets and pistols because he had heard that I wished to present the Chiefs of our escort, who had brought us from Teluga, with pistols which had been carried by some of our servants; and as he had learnt that I had brought no spare ones, he wished me to take whatever ones I required to give to his people from his own Treasury. I declined respectfully the other day to receive what he wanted me to help myself with, but to-day he kindly sent the above-mentioned arms and the 5,000 dollars.

"The next day we left for this place, Korata, and crossed the south-western side of the lake from Wandigay, sleeping one night on the Island of Dask. The Emperor afterwards came to Zagay, on the south-western side of the lake, and not more than 10 miles hence by water. Ever since he came to Zagay he has written to me almost every other day. He has sent me two very pretty lion cubs, which I intend to take with me to England.

"As the Emperor wished after we came here on the 14th ultimo (February) that we should remain at this place for the prisoners, he sent to Debra Tabor, and got all the European artizans to come here with their families to keep us company; so we are now here a very large party, but the place is not reckoned very healthy. Although Cameron and his companions were ordered to be released on the 29th January, the unfortunate fellows were not rid of their fetters before the 24th ultimo (February), owing to the uncertainty of travelling in this country. They all arrived safely at this place on the 12th instant [March], and, excepting Cameron, who is a little weak, are all in perfect health. Mr. Stern has become quite grey in the head, but his beard is very little changed. I have now fifteen persons who have been made over to me by the Emperor, besides three children. The prisoners who were in chains at Magdala are four English (one the wife of Mr. Rosenthal), two Germans, two Frenchmen, and one Italian, and the others who were detained at Gaffat, near Debra Tabor, are six Germans (one the wife of Mr. Flad and three children of theirs). I am bound to take care of all these individuals until I see them safe in Aden, or in Egypt, if we go viâ Khartoom. This is not a little charge, considering there are very troublesome men among the number. They have all no end of servants; Cameron alone has fourteen. The Emperor does not allow me to make any of his Court people presents who have been kind and civil. He says, 'Keep your money for other of my people who

render you service, my friend, but if you wish to make any presents to those of my household, let me know the sum, and I will pay it them on your part.' He has, however, permitted me to invest those of his household with silk garments, which I have done. He had given a general order that when any of his Court presented himself before me, he should pay the homage required to the Representative of his friend the Queen of England, which is, that the man should kneel and touch the ground with his forehead before me. One man received a severe lecture for not doing so properly.

"On arriving here by water, nearly sixty priests came out on the beach dressed in their canonicals, with all the Abyssinian Church symbols with them. They welcomed me by chanting psalms and praying for me. These dignitaries of the Abyssinian Church did this by order of the Emperor, that they should receive me with the same honours they would award to him. When he heard the other day that we were once or twice badly off for milk, he ordered fifty milch cows to be brought to us to supply milk and butter. The reason why I have written to you about all these matters, is to show how kind and considerate His Majesty has been since we came to this country. Every one, European or Abyssinian, admits that no Sovereign in the world would have been more attentive or gracious to a Representative of a foreign Government. Every one is wondering at the time the Abyssinian difficulty has taken.

"21*st March*.—The Emperor has sent me 5,000 dollars more, which, of course, I could not refuse. Dr. Beke's letter has reached, and His Majesty sent it to me with the petitions from the relatives of Cameron, Stern, Rosenthal, and Kerans. The latter has touched the Royal heart. His Majesty in writing to me about them says :—'I have already released the prisoners for the sake of your Queen, my friend.' I believe the Emperor intends to consult me before he answers Dr. Beke. The Emperor has invited me to his Court to have some talk, and I trust he will soon give us leave to depart; but in any case we shall not be able to leave before the Abyssinian Easter, which falls on the 8th proximo (April). My meeting with the Emperor was appointed for to-day, but in consequence of some emergent business which he had near Godjam, he has postponed my visit for a few days. His Majesty wished to see the released prisoners for the purpose of asking them before me whether he was not right in what he did to them, in consequence of their misbehaviour. As I was afraid lest their presence should irritate His Majesty, I begged him to dispense with it; but if he liked he might send the charges to me to read to them; in which suggestion he readily acquiesced.

"On the 13th His Majesty sent the charges, and requested I should hold a Court for him in my tent, and have them read before all the European artizans of Gaffat, and a number of Abyssinian officers whom His Majesty ordered to attend. He sent his chief Amharic scribe to read the charges. All the released prisoners confessed they had done wrong, and begged His Majesty to forgive them as a fellow Christian. The Emperor had also ordered that copies of the translation of Her Majesty's letter, and his answer thereto, which he sent with the Royal scribe should be read publicly, and you may well fancy how surprised I was when I heard his letter read, as I thought he wished it to be kept secret. As it has now been made public, I do not think I should be wrong in telling you what it contains. The pith of it is an humble apology; and the following two passages in it will show you in what a spirit it has been written. He says :—

"'In my humble position I am not worthy to address your Majesty; but Illustrious Princes and the deep ocean can hear anything. I being an ignorant Ethiopian hope that your Majesty will overlook my shortcomings, and pardon my offences.'

"And ends thus :—

"'Counsel me, but do not blame me, O Queen! whose Majesty God has glorified, and to whom he has given abundance of wisdom.'

"The presents are not yet finished, but are expected to be got ready by the end of this month. His Majesty wrote to ask me the other day to act as Judge between him and the released prisoners; 'If I have done them wrong, let me know, and I will remunerate them; but if you find them in fault, I will return them my love.'

"I am not quite certain which road we shall take when we leave Abyssinia. I am recommended, on account of the large party, to go to Suakin, instead of Massowah from Kassala, as both Barka and the valley of the Nile are thought to be excessively hot at this time of year. I shall write and let you know when the time of our departure is fixed, and of the route I intend to take."

The above affords a full account of all that occurred; and I think very great credit is due to Mr. Rassam for the successful manner in which he carried out the difficult and delicate task entrusted to him, especially for the tact he displayed in averting the public judgment before the Emperor, and so avoiding the risk of any fresh irritation which might have been caused by the released captives being brought again face to face with His Majesty.

From a later letter from Mr. Rassam to M. Munzinger, dated the 9th of April, it appears that the packet dispatched from Korata on the 23rd of March was mistakenly stopped at Waghara by the Emperor's people; directly the Emperor heard this, he ordered that the messengers should at once be released, but they, instead of proceeding on to Massowah, returned to Korata.

Fresh messengers were then dispatched on the 9th, and reached Massowah on the 30th. Nothing particular had occurred between the 23rd March and 9th April. Mr. Rassam repeats, on the latter date, that, with the exception of Captain Cameron, who is somewhat weak, all the released prisoners are in perfect health, and longing to leave the country. He hoped that would be at the end of the month.

Further intelligence brought by an Abyssinian, who had come down direct to Massowah, and arrived on the 10th instant, was to the effect that, a few days after the dispatch of Mr. Rassam's messengers on the 9th, that gentleman had received a request from the Emperor to cross the lake, to take leave, but to send the ex-captives round by land to Gorgora, at the head of the lake, where Mr. Rassam would afterwards rejoin them, and all proceed to Matemma. That Mr. Rassam immediately left by water, accompanied by Dr. Blanc and Lieutenant Prideaux, while the others started by land.

I found Dr. Beke at Massowah; it appeared to me that his remaining there was very unadvisable. I therefore recommended him to take the opportunity of my going to Suez to return there. He accepted the offer.

At Massowah I personally became acquainted with M. Munzinger, who has had charge of the British Consulate since October last. I found him to be, as I expected from his letters to me, a most intelligent person, having very extensive information regarding Abyssinia, and a very clear mode of conveying it. I would beg to commend him especially to your Lordship's notice for the care and attention he has displayed since acting under me, and for the well-arranged means he has applied for the purpose of keeping up communication with Mr. Rassam's camp.

Without the aid of his local knowledge and influence, this would have been a matter of very great difficulty, if not of impossibility.

When Mr. Rassam has got fairly out of the country, M. Munzinger is anxious to proceed for three or four months to Egypt, on important business, if his absence from Massowah could be allowed.

By that time, I conclude, final arrangements regarding Abyssinia will have been completed by Her Majesty's Government, and there will be no objection to his leaving, but I told him your Lordship's instructions on the subject would be communicated before then.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 594.

Mr. Purday to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received June* 11.)*

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, June* 7, 1866.

I AM requested by Mrs. Stern to forward you a copy of a letter she has just received from her husband, the Rev. H. A. Stern, thanking your Lordship for the communication on the subject of the Abyssinian captives which your Lordship has kindly, from time to time favoured us with.

I am, &c.
(Signed) C. H. PURDAY.

Inclosure in No. 594.

*The Rev. H. A. Stern to Mrs. Stern.**

My dear Wife, *Korata, March* 22, 1866.

AT length God, in His infinite mercy, has heard the prayers which have ascended to His Throne of Grace, in our behalf, and released us from prison and chains.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Our manacles were removed on February 24th, and on the 25th, we quitted the rocky heights on which we had been confined for sixteen interminable months. Two days we remained encamped at the foot of the Amba to regain some strength, as several of us (myself among the number,) could scarcely stand upright, much less ride any considerable distance. Freedom, change of air, and the luxury of unshackled hands and feet, however, effected a wonderful alteration in our exhausted and enervated frames. On the 7th instant we reached Gaffat, where Mr. Flad and our former fellow-prisoners gave us a most cordial reception. We remained one night with those friends, and then in company started for Korata, the temporary home of Mr. Rassam, and the vicinity of the Royal camp. From the kindness and attention we experienced, as we advanced on our journey, hope, so long deadened in our hearts, began to revive, and visions of liberty, to which, for more than two years, we had been strangers, again brightened our future. Our enterprizing, excellent friend, Mr. Rassam, received us with that cautious coldness which our mutual position seemed to render indispensable. Messengers were dispatched the same night to announce our arrival to his Majesty; and on the morning of the 15th instant a complete reconciliation was affected before Mr. Rassam and the Royal Delegates, between the King and his white prisoners.

We are now waiting with yearning impatience the permission to leave Abyssinia; a question which is still subject to the variable mood of His Majesty.

A letter from Dr. Beke, together with a petition from you and the other relatives of the prisoners, arrived here on the 16th instant.

The King forwarded the English copies to Mr. Rassam, with the laconic remark, "I have already, for the sake of the Queen of England, liberated the captives."

I should like to have written a long letter, but Mr. Rassam restricted me to a short note, and I must, therefore, impose an unwilling restraint on my unchained hand.

Kiss the dear children for me; and that our Heavenly father may, ere long, reunite us, is the continual prayer of your affectionate, but sincerely tried husband.

(Signed) HENRY A. STERN.

No. 596.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 4.)

(Extract.) *Alexandria, June 24, 1866.*

A STRANGE report, dated Matemma, 25th of April, has reached me viâ Khartoum. It is said that the King had gone to Guarda, on Lake Tsana, where he had promised Mr. Rassam and his companions that he would meet them before they left; that all were invited to a grand dinner, but that Captain Cameron refused to attend; and that, whilst the others were gone, he mounted his horse, and attempted to escape, but that he was pursued and captured. The King, it is said, was furious at this, and immediately imprisoned Rassam and all the captives.

No. 597.

*Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 4.)**

My Lord, *Alexandria, June 24, 1866.*

I HAD the honour to forward to your Lordship, by telegraph, the summary of intelligence that has reached me this day, on the subject of the Abyssinian captives.

This intelligence was contained in a letter addressed to the Egyptian Trading Company, by their agent at Khartoum, who had received the information from their correspondent at Matemma, and, although it is almost incredible that Captain Cameron could have acted in the reckless and inconsiderate manner reported, I cannot help fearing that there must be at least some foundation for the rumour.† The last letters received from Mr. Rassam were dated the 9th April,‡ at which time he hoped to be able

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† That Captain Cameron had attempted to escape. The report, however, was subsequently stated by Colonel Stanton to have been unfounded (No. 606.)

‡ See No. 693.

to take leave of the King in a few days, and, unless some untoward event had happened, later intelligence should have been received from him ere this.

I propose making immediate application to the Egyptian Government, to cause instant inquiries to be made, through the Governor-General of the Soudan, into the matter, as it appears to me to be of so urgent a nature that no time should be lost in obtaining all possible particulars on the subject; and this is, I believe, the quickest and surest method of ascertaining whether there is any truth in the report forwarded from Khartoum.

I have, &.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 598.

Captain Desborough to the Earl of Clarendon.—(*Received July* 4.)

My Lord, *Clevedon House, Castle Hill, Reading, July* 3, 1866.

HAVING heard that more recent accounts than those published in the newspapers have been received from Mr. Rassam, on behalf of the relations of Consul Cameron, I entreat your Lordship will be so kind as to furnish us with the information, whatever it may be.

I trust your Lordship will kindly pardon the trouble I am giving, in consideration of the great anxiety we all feel upon our unhappy relative's account.

I am, &c.
(Signed) L. DESBOROUGH.

No. 599.

Mr. Murray to Captain Desborough.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 4, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 3rd instant,* and to inform you that a telegram has been received from Colonel Stanton, dated Alexandria, the 29th ultimo, stating that Mr. Flad had arrived at that town, and was on the point of embarking in the French steamer for this country, being the bearer of despatches.

The Europeans had not left Abyssinia, but were well treated; the object of the King being, as is stated, to procure an assurance of good disposition towards him before the Europeans departed.

Mr. Flad, on his arrival, will doubtless be able to explain how matters stand.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 600.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 4, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to inform you that a telegram has been received from Colonel Stanton, dated Alexandria, the 29th ultimo, stating that Mr. Flad had arrived at that town, and was on the point of embarking in the French steamer for this country, being the bearer of despatches.

The Europeans had not left Abyssinia, but were well treated; the object of the King being, as is stated, to procure an assurance of good disposition towards him before the Europeans departed.

Mr. Flad, on his arrival, will doubtless be able to explain how matters stand.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* No. 598.

No. 601.

Mrs. Stern to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 5.)

My Lord, 73, *Sussex Road, Holloway, July* 4, 1866.

I TRUST your Lordship will pardon the liberty I take in addressing you, and in requesting your Lordship kindly to inform me whether any fresh intelligence has been received from, or of, the Abyssinian captives.

The intense and increasing anxiety I feel on my husband's account will, I trust, be a sufficient plea for my thus intruding myself upon your Lordship's notice.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CHARLOTTE E. STERN.

No. 602.

Mr. Murray to Mrs. Stern.

Madam, *Foreign Office, July* 5, 1866.

I AM directed by the Earl of Clarendon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, and to inform you that a telegram has been received from Colonel Stanton, dated Alexandria, the 29th ultimo, stating that Mr. Flad had arrived at that town, and was on the point of embarking in the French steamer for this country, being the bearer of despatches.

The Europeans had not left Abyssinia, but were well treated; the object of the King being, as is stated, to procure an assurance of good disposition towards him before the Europeans departed.

Mr. Flad, on his arrival, will doubtless be able to explain how matters stand.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 603.

*Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 7.)**

My Lord, *Alexandria, June* 26, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch that has just reached me, under flying seal, from the Assistant Political Resident at Aden,† forwarding the copy of a letter from M. Munzinger, dated Massowah, 1st June.

The intelligence contained in this letter is not satisfactory, though it does not make any mention of the circumstance reported in my despatch of the 24th instant‡ to your Lordship; but it appears evident that the King of Abyssinia is not inclined to allow Mr. Rassam and his companions to leave the country so soon as was expected.

On Mr. Flad's arrival in Egypt, I shall probably be enabled to ascertain something more positive as to the position of affairs in Abyssinia at the date of his departure, and trust to find that the report forwarded to Matemma is unfounded.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 604. ‡ No. 597

No. 604.

*Captain Goodfellow to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 7.)**

My Lord, *Aden, June* 17, 1866.

I DO myself the honour to forward for your Lordship's information copy of a communication received by me yesterday from Massowah from M. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate at that place, dated the 1st instant. The intelligence received, which was brought by native boat, is anything but satisfactory, and M. Munzinger's report is vague. Mr. Flad is the bearer of other letters which M. Munzinger has not forwarded; one of the members of the mission in a private note to me dated 21st April, in which no reference is made to the present position, except that he wishes Mr. Flad to be given some money on his account for purchases in England, mentions that he has himself addressed one to the Political Resident, and there must be others from Mr. Rassam for this place. I have however only received the two above referred to.

2. Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" left this for Massowah on the 11th instant, and would have arrived there on or about the 13th, so that in the event of the officer commanding the "Victoria" seeing a necessity for his speedy departure for Suez to convey Mr. Flad thither, she might be expected to reach that place about the 19th instant, in which case the intelligence herein reported would have already reached your Lordship through Mr. Flad.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

Inclosure in No. 604.

*M. Munzinger to Captain Goodfellow.**

Sir, *Massowah, June* 1, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Mr. Flad arrived here yesterday. He left King Theodorus' camp at Zeghe on the lake on the 21st of April, and he proceeded by Matemma and Kassala. He left Mr. Rassam and all his companions (including the released prisoners) in perfect health in the King's camp. The promise Theodorus gave to Mr. Rassam to send him to his country at once has not been fulfilled. It seems the King wishes to prolong the negotiations. He asked Mr. Rassam to send Mr. Flad with letters to the Government and to stay with him till Mr. Flad will return.

As Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether promised me to send the "Victoria" in the beginning of June, Mr. Flad will do better to wait here for her. In case the "Victoria" has not left Aden when this will reach you, I beg to send her hither as soon as possible and to furnish her with coals enough to bring Mr. Flad directly to Suez, if you will find it convenient. I beg you to inform Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether of the contents of this letter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MUNZINGER.

No. 605.

*Captain Goodfellow to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 9.)**

My Lord, *Aden, June* 21, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report for your Lordship's information in continuation of my despatch of the 17th instant,† that in consequence of the strong head winds prevailing in the Red Sea at this season, and the slow speed of the "Victoria," in addition to the unsatisfactory state of her machinery, her Commander deemed it more advisable to return to Aden with Mr. Flad, in place of at once proceeding with him on to Suez, more especially as he was firmly convinced that by so doing he would thereby hasten Mr. Flad's arrival in England. The "Victoria" arrived here at 5 p.m. to-day, and after a consultation with Mr. Flad, I considered it most prudent to send him on to Suez with a letter of introduction to Colonel Stanton, Consul-General in Egypt, at once by the French mail steamer which was signalled and arrived in harbour within an hour or so after the "Victoria" came to anchor. The letters to your Lordship's address that

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 604.

Mr. Flad is the bearer of, will explain the present position of Mr. Rassam and his companions; and Mr. Flad will communicate to your Lordship what has actually happened between the King and Mr. Rassam to cause the latter's detention: it is needless to add that Mr. Rassam has been unable to write as fully as he would have wished, the letter with Mr. Flad having been almost dictated by the Emperor. As the French steamer is to leave so soon, I am precluded from recording clearly, for your Lordship's information, the intelligence that Mr. Flad is in possession of; that gentleman has however made a written statement of the facts as they occurred, which he will have the honour of handing to your Lordship on arrival in London. Mr. Flad is entirely without means, and has not a change of clothes; I have consequently taken upon myself to supply him with clothing for the present, and have given him 50*l.* for current expenses and to cover certain sums that he has been forced to disburse on his downward journey, and I have further informed him he need be in no fear of not receiving ample remuneration for the services he is rendering. I trust that my proceedings will meet with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 606.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 9.)

(Extract.) *Alexandria, June 29, 1866.*

THE report of Captain Cameron's attempt to escape, sent on the 25th instant, is unfounded.

No. 607.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 9.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, June 29, 1866.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that Mr. Flad, the bearer of despatches from Mr. Rassam, has just arrived at Alexandria, and handed me his account of the state of affairs in Abyssinia together with the accompanying despatch from the Assistant Political Agent at Aden addressed to your Lordship under flying seal.

Mr. Flad will himself deliver to your Lordship the documents with which Mr. Rassam has charged him, as well as his own written statement of the events that immediately proceeded his departure from Abyssinia.

Mr. Flad's statement is most clear and concise, and it is with deep regret that I have to report to your Lordship that Mr. Rassam, together with his party and the European captives, are detained by the King of Abyssinia and unable to leave the country, and will, I fear, be detained until the return of Mr. Flad with a reply to the letter of the King to Her Majesty.

It is difficult to account for the sudden change in the demeanour of the King to Mr. Rassam and to the captives who had been previously released, but His Majesty appears to have entertained suspicions that Her Majesty's Government would take measures to punish him for his behaviour towards the British subjects who have been imprisoned in his country; and Mr. Flad believes that the suspicions may have been excited by one of the late captives, M. Bardel, who appears to have succeeded in influencing His Majesty, and to have employed his influence to the detriment of the captives and of Mr. Rassam's mission.

The position of Mr. Rassam and his companions is now most delicate; they appear to be treated with a certain amount of consideration, but are nevertheless to all intents and purposes State prisoners, and any delay in complying with the King's demands may cause them to be subjected to similar indignities, and even cruelties, to those that have been inflicted on the other unfortunate captives.

Your Lordship will also perceive from Mr. Flad's statement that he is himself of opinion that the King had all along intended to detain Mr. Rassam, and that the actual position of affairs has not been brought about by any want of tact or caution on Mr. Rassam's part; in fact, he gives the greatest credit to that gentleman for his conduct in the very trying position in which he has been placed.

I beg also to report to your Lordship that Mr. Flad having requested me to furnish him with funds to meet his expenses, I have given him the sum of 50*l.* for this purpose

from the Post-office monies in my hands, and have the honour to request your Lordship's sanction to charge this amount in my account current with Her Majesty's Treasury.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 608.

*Mr. Rassam to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 10.)**

My Lord, *Emperor's Court at Zegay, April* 18, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship an Amharic letter with an English translation, from the Emperor of Abyssinia, addressed to the distressed families of Consul Cameron and other European prisoners, in answer to a petition they had forwarded to him through Dr. Beke, and His Majesty will feel obliged by your having it forwarded to the respective parties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure in No. 608.*

King Theodore to the Relatives of the Prisoners.

(Translation.)

IN the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

From the King of Kings, Theodorus, to the distressed [relatives of the prisoners].

How are you? Thanks be to God, I am well. The petition which you have sent has reached me. I have felt the grief which has distressed you. For the sake of my friend, Victoria, the Queen of England, I have released the prisoners at Magdala, and delivered them into the hands of Mr. Hormuzd Rassam. May this news give you gladness.

Dated at Zegay, Anno Mundi 7358, and Anno Domini 1858, in the year of Saint Mark, and the 10th day of the Month Mazia (corresponding to the 17th April, 1866).

No. 609.

*Mr. Rassam to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 10.)**

My Lord, *Emperor's Court at Zegay, April* 18, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that my companions, Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux and I reached the Court of the Emperor of Abyssinia, on the 28th of January, and His Majesty gave us a most magnificent reception, and treated us with great kindness and civility.

He received Her Majesty's letter graciously; in answer to which he wrote a very friendly and courteous reply.

I had the first interview with His Majesty on the very afternoon of my arrival at his Court, when he related to me all his grievances with regard to Consul Cameron, and the other European prisoners. Early the next morning he ordered the release of all the prisoners, a nominal list of whom is herewith inclosed for your Lordship's information. All the released prisoners have been made over to me by His Majesty, and are now with me, enjoying good health.

All the prisoners presented themselves before the Emperor on the 16th instant, and after the charges were read to them, they all confessed that they were wrong in what they had written and spoken against His Majesty. The Emperor then forgave them for all that they had done, and said that he would be as friendly towards them henceforth as he is towards myself and my companions.

His Majesty has been good enough to present me with 10,000 dollars for my expenditure, and has in every respect been very kind and hospitable. The other day he did me the honour of coming in person to see me in my tent, and said that he held me dear on account of my being the servant of his friend the British Queen. He has also presented me with a royal saddle, shield, sword, spear and armlet, and has given

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

each of my companions a shield, spear and armlet, in addition to five mules. He is about to create an order, with which he intends to invest us.

His Majesty has had for some years a desire to procure some scientific men from England, and yesterday he spoke to me about obtaining for him two or three men who could teach his people how to make cannons, muskets and shot, and how to melt iron; also an instructor of artillery. He said he wished these persons to come here with their instruments and everything necessary for their work, and after they had taught his people they should be allowed to return.

His Majesty would be much obliged to Her Majesty's Government if his request could be complied with, and from his second letter to the Queen, which I inclose herewith, your Lordship will perceive that we are all detained in this country for the present, for friendship's sake.

I should be obliged if Her Majesty's Government could send me a 100,000 percussion caps of different sizes, a few double barrelled rifles and pistols, some gunpowder, a boat, if practicable, for the use of His Majesty on the Lake, and any other thing which Mr. Flad, who is the bearer of this letter may suggest.

If Her Majesty's Government are able to send the persons required, it is necessary that they should be informed that they will be required to remain in the service of the Emperor at least one year, and that no European articles are obtainable here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 609.

List of the released Prisoners.*

Names.	Occupation.	Country.	County, &c.	Inhabitant of
C. D. Cameron ..	Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Massowah.			
L. Kerans ..	Late Secretary of Consul Cameron ..	Ireland ..	Galway ..	Southpark, Ahaseragh.
R. McKelvey ..	Late servant of Consul Cameron ..	Ireland ..	Down ..	Downpatrick.
J. Mackerer ..	Servant of Consul Cameron ..	France ..	Department of Haut Rhine	Vhiran-val.
D. Pietro	Late servant of Consul Cameron ..	Italy	Turin	Taveia.
A. Bardel ..	Painter, and late teacher of languages ..	France ..	Department Meuse	Sampigny.
Rev. H. A. Stern ..	Missionary	Cur-Hessen ..	..	London.
H. Rosenthal ..	Missionary	Mecklenburg ..	Furstenberg ..	London.
Mrs. E. Rosenthal ..	..	England ..	London ..	London.
Mr. T. M. Flad ..	Missionary	Wurtemburg ..	Reutlingen ..	Undingen.
Mrs. P. Flad ..	..	Rhenish Prussia ..	Treves ..	Saarbeucken.
A. Flad, Fr. Flad, P. Flad } children ..	..	..	..	..
W. Staiger ..	Missionary	Grand Duchy of Baden	Lahr	Langenwinkel.
F. Brandeis ..	Missionary	Ditto	Wiesloch ..	Baierthal.
K. Schiller ..	Natural history collectors ..	Prussia ..	Posen ..	Posen.
T. Essler		Hungary ..	Odenburg ..	Neuthal.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

Korata, April 4, 1866.

Inclosure 2 in No. 609.

King Theodore to Her Majesty the Queen, January 29, 1866.*

(Translation.)

IN the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God. Amen.

From the Servant of our Lord, and His created Being, the son of David, the son of Solomon, the King of Kings (of Ethiopia), Theodorus,

To Her whom God has exalted above all sovereigns and glorified above all princes and peoples, and made the Defender of the Christian Faith and the succour of the

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

poor and oppressed, Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Had the illustrious Hormuzd Rassam, whom your Majesty has mentioned to us in your letter, not been sent to us about the matter of Cameron and others, but the lowest of your servants, he would have been received graciously by us. We now send, with Hormuzd Rassam, Cameron and all the other Europeans about whom your Majesty has written.. Your Majesty can learn from those who fear the Lord the ill-treatment and abuse which we have received at the hands of the above-mentioned Europeans and the Copt, who called himself Metropolitan, the Aboona Salama.

In my humble position I am not worthy to address your Majesty, but illustrious Princes and the deep ocean can bear everything. I, being an ignorant Ethiopian, hope that your Majesty will overlook my shortcomings and pardon my faults. The people whom we have imprisoned for their reviling and defaming us, did so because the Gallas had proved victorious over the Royal children of Israel, and had humbled them; but God has empowered me, the son of one of the humble women of Israel, to regain that which had been lost by my forefathers.

Doubtless your Majesty has learnt how ignorant and blind the people of Ethiopia are; therefore I beg of your Majesty not to take amiss the mistakes I may make in my correspondence with you. Counsel me, but do not blame me, O Queen! whose Majesty God has glorified, and to whom he has given abundance of wisdom.

Dated the 22nd day of Jan, 1858 (corresponding to 29th January, 1866).

Inclosure 3 in No. 609.

King Theodore to Her Majesty the Queen, April 17, 1866.*

(Translation.)

IN the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

From God's Slave and His created Being, the son of David, the son of Solomon, the King of Kings, Theodorus,

To her whom God has exalted above all people, the Defender of the Christian Faith, the Protector of the poor and oppressed, the Queen of England, Victoria.

Had not your servant Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, whom you said that you had sent in the affair of Mr. Cameron, come, but the lowest of your slaves, I would have welcomed him.

By the power of God, I have released Mr. Cameron, and made him over to your servant Mr. Rassam, and by the power of God, I have also released the other prisoners and all other Europeans who might wish to leave the country, and made them over to him, and I have kept your servant, Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, for the sake of consulting together upon the extension of our friendship. We, the people of Ethiopia, are blind, and we beg of your Majesty that you should give light to our eyes, and so may you receive light in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Dated at Zegay, Anno Mundi 7358; and Anno Domini 1858, in the year of St. Mark, and the 10th day of the month Mazia (corresponding to the 17th of April, 1866).

No. 610.

Mr. Flad to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 10, 1866.)*

My Lord,

I DEEPLY regret that I have to report, for your Lordship's information, the melancholy events which Mr. Rassam and his companions, together with the released prisoners, had to experience, just on the day appointed for their departure from Abyssinia.

It was the 13th of April, 1866, which day was appointed by His Majesty Theodorus that the released prisoners should leave Korata, and proceed from there by Foggera, Dembea, Tsheelga, to Matemma.

Mr. Rassam, with his companions, had left us early in the morning, in order to take leave of His Majesty Theodorus. The Royal camp was at Zegie, on the south-west shore of the Lake Tsana.

The European artizans of His Majesty, and the agents of his Lordship Bishop

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Gobat, at Jerusalem, proceeded, according to the order of the King, with Mr. Rassam to the Royal Camp.

As soon as Mr. Rassam had arrived on the other side of the lake, as usual when he went to see His Majesty, the mules of the King were waiting for him to take the three gentlemen up to the house of the King.

As soon as they had dismounted from the mules, and entered the hedge, one of the King's Rases (minister) came, informing Mr. Rassam that he had received orders from the King to make him, Mr. Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc prisoners.

Immediately a soldier took hold of Mr. Rassam; others took the swords of Mr. Prideaux and Dr. Blanc; and some others took hold of the two gentlemen. Mr. Prideaux not yet aware of what was going on, refused to give his sword, on which occasion a soldier gave him some boxings. Informed by Mr. Rassam that they were prisoners, Mr. Prideaux condescended. After this a carpet was brought, and the gentlemen were ordered to take a seat. The King was inside in his house, and the gentlemen had to sit outside in the sun, and were watched by the soldiers.

The first Ras (minister) was sent by the King to ask Mr. Rassam: "Where are the prisoners?"—*A.* "They have left Korata to go to Tshelga."

Q. "Why did you not bring them here?"—*A.* "Your Majesty gave me permission to send them by the other side of the lake to Tshelga, where I should have met them to take them to their country."

Q. "You had no right to send them without my permission?"—*A.* "Your Majesty had graciously released them, and given them over to me, for the friendship sake of my Queen, and, by Ledj Abeedan, I have asked your Majesty whether I may send them around the lake or not, and your Majesty gave me, by Ledj Abeedan, your servant full liberty to do what I think best."

King: "I wished you to reconcile me with them. I intended also to give those who have no mule, a mule, and, to those who have no money, some money for the road."—*A.* "The reconciliation which took place in the month of March I thought was sufficient. The released prisoners asked your Majesty to forgive them for the Redeemer's sake, and I myself asked your Majesty to forgive them; according to which, your Majesty, in your letter dated (*) March, says, that for God's sake, and for the friendship's sake of the Queen of England, you forgave them, and that I shall take them out of your country."

Some unimportant questions were put to Mr. Rassam, after which the three gentlemen were brought to a tent and watched by soldiers.

I must here make the remark, that the Government could not have intrusted a man better fit for the mission of Mr. Rassam than himself. In all his business with the King he was calm, prudent, cautious, and sincere. Not only the Abyssinians but even the Europeans did wonder at him. I have also to observe that if even Mr. Rassam would have taken the released prisoners with him to the King the same thing would have happened. Neither Mr. Rassam nor the released prisoners would have been permitted to leave Abyssinia. A month before we had received the King's order to start it was reported by the natives that the King intended to keep Mr. Rassam and the released prisoners in order to get a "kasa" (ransom), satisfaction, from the Queen of England."

Once when he consulted his European artisans whether he shall send Mr. Rassam and the released prisoners, or whether he shall keep them, and those gentlemen advised, yea, even begged him, to send Mr. Rassam and the released prisoners to their country and to make friendship with England, he replied, "But if they are gone what have I?—An empty hand! I wish to have something in my hands [that means hostages]: but as your advice is to send them, I will follow your advice. They may go."

The prison where we were put in was built more than a fortnight ago, and at the same time it was said by the natives, who had heard what the King was going to do, that if the prisoners are going with Mr. Rassam to the King, they will not be allowed to see him; but they will be brought as soon as they land to that hedge, which afterwards became our prison."

From this we see that the King had planned it long ago, not only to keep Mr. Rassam, but to frighten him, that he might consent to the King's proposal made in March to Mr. Rassam, namely, that he shall remain in Abyssinia and send a man with letters to his Queen, that her Majesty shall send skilful men, artists, &c., to Abyssinia, who would open the King's eyes, because, said he, "I am blind, and I wish you to open my eyes." Mr. Rassam will have given in his reports to your Lordship the details of that negotiation.

* Mr. Rassam gave the date, but I forgot it.

After the three gentlemen had been put in a tent their property was brought before the King, where it was by himself examined, counted, and registered. The money, silver vessels and ornaments, the guns, pistols, powder, &c., were taken by the King. The other effects and the provisions were, after they had passed their examination, restored to the gentlemen.

It is the custom in Abyssinia that, if a person is imprisoned, his property is taken by the Government. Sometimes it is restored, sometimes not.

The servants who were with Mr. Rassam received also a guard; but they were allowed to serve their masters. Those of his servants who have been at Korata and those who were with us here have been put in chains.

The 14th and 15th April passed over quiet.

Now I must proceed to our own, the released prisoners' sad history. On the 13th of April, at nine o'clock, we left Korata with a servant of the King, which was given to us as an escort, not anticipating that some hours after we would be made prisoners again. Before we left, all our mules were counted by some of the Kings officers. After two hours' ride we were brought by our guide to a village. A few hours after our arrival, we were called in a house, to hear a letter from the King. As soon as we had entered the house, the door was watched by two armed soldiers, and we ourselves were surrounded by about 20 soldiers, who had been hidden in the house. Dejaj Tadla, who was sitting on an alga arose then and said:—I have received orders from the King to make you prisoners, but do not be afraid. As soon as he had pronounced these words, each of us was taken and kept by a soldier. A letter of the King was read to us; its contents were as follows:—"In the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, one God. May this letter reach Dejaj Tadla. By the power of God, I the King of Kings Theodorus am well. We have been angry with our friends and with those Europeans, who say we go to our country, and we are not yet reconciled. Until we consult what we are going to do, take hold of them; but do not make them uncomfortable, or afraid, and do not hurt them." As soon as the letter was read, we were ordered to sit down, and to give up our pocket knives. After we were searched, Dejaj Tadla left the house with some governors and soldiers. They proceeded to the tents of Mrs. Flad and Mrs. Rosenthal, gave a guard to them, and took hold of our servants, property, and animals. Boxes were opened, the money was counted and taken, and everything given to the charge of the soldiers. The ladies, the children and the servants were weeping and crying, and even we ourselves felt very wretched, seeing us again surrounded by all these black barbarians, who rejoiced in our misery. In the evening iron chains were brought, and we were two and two chained together. For each of us a man servant and a maid servant, for whom he had to make himself responsible, were released, and allowed to provide some food for us. During the night we were watched. The next morning [April 14] we were brought back to Korata. We were allowed to ride on our mules. Arrived at the market-place, we had to sit there for about five hours being watched and surrounded by a great many Abyssinians. The greater part pitied us; other had their delight to mock at us, whether we were monkeys or men. In the evening we were brought in two different houses. The ladies and children together with us. We had no bed and nothing to eat, everything was taken from us. It was something heart-tearing to hear the poor little children weeping and crying, one asking for a bit of bread, another for milk, and another for his supper and his bed. If the wives of the European artisans, who on providence happened to be at Korata, would not have sent us some food and some milk for the children, and a covering for the ladies and children at night, our position would have been terrible. We, the chained, had just to lie down on the floor of the house. To the ladies and children two algas were allowed. The fearful night had past. Two hours before sunrise, we were ordered by our guard to get up and to proceed down to the shore of the Lake. "From whence we were in the boats of bulrushes, and by the people terrible from their beginning hitherto" (Isa. xviii, 2); taken to the other side of the Lake, to the royal camp. Our servants were kept prisoners at Korata.

Arrived on the other side, the King sent three mules, one for Captain Cameron, and two for the ladies and the children. An hour's walk brought us to our prison. Immediately after we had arrived, the King sent us a dinner, consisting in 11 cows, 11 baskets of bread, 11 jars of hydromel, 5 jars of butter, and 3 jars of pepper. He also kindly sent a tent for the ladies. Mr. Rassam had the kindness to send us one of his tents and 6 cowhides, else we would have been obliged to sleep on the bare ground.

In the evening some of our luggage, after it had been examined, was sent to us by His Majesty. Mrs. Flad was very glad to find some dresses for the little ones, and

some preserved milk in one of the boxes. We partook of some debs (roasted meat), which a soldier had the kindness to prepare for us.

On the 16th in the morning we were brought before His Majesty. For Captain Cameron he had sent a mule. When we arrived the whole Court was assembled, Mr. Rassam with his companions were sitting on a carpet in front of His Majesty. Immediately order was given to release Captain Cameron from his chain. To the soldiers who had to open the iron-chain of Captain Cameron, the King said ironically, "Take care, do not touch him; he has the syphilis." As soon as the chain was taken off, Captain Cameron was ordered to take a seat on the carpet, where Mr. Rassam with his companions were sitting. After Captain Cameron, M. Bardel, a Frenchman, was released and ordered to sit down next Captain Cameron.

Now the King said to Mr. Rassam, ask the prisoners:—Why did you wish to leave my country, before you took leave of me, and before we were reconciled?—*A.* Your Majesty had graciously given us over to the English Ambassador, Mr. Rassam, and we had to do what Mr. Rassam ordered us to do.

King. Would it not have been right for you to ask Mr. Rassam to bring you hither and to reconcile you with me?—*A.* Yes.

King. You made the mistake, Mr. Rassam, because I told you to reconcile me with them. Why have you omitted to do so?—*A.* Your Majesty, a reconciliation took place in March, as soon as the prisoners had arrived at my camp, and I was fully convinced that such a reconciliation would be satisfactory.

King. But on the day when I sent to you that you might get ready for the road, did I not tell you that if you came you should bring the released prisoners with you, because I wished to give to those who had no mule, a mule; and to those who have no money, some money for the road: according to which you gave me the answer that you have bought mules for them, and that you have money enough to take them to their country?—*A.* Yes; but I did this only to spare your Majesty to be troubled with them.

King. Now you see for your sake they are again in chains. From the day you said you wished to send them by another road I got suspicious, and thought that you wished to do so in order that you may say in your country you have released them by your prudence or by your power. Who are you? Are you a king? Are you not only but the servant of the Queen of England? But now, ask those whether they have abused me or not?—*A.* Yes.

King. Captain Cameron I had imprisoned because he went to Kassala, to my enemies the Turks, and I had given him a letter for the Queen, and he came back without bringing me an answer. Messrs. Flad, Stern, Rosenthal, Makerer, and Kerans, I had chained because they have abused me; and the rest of them I had imprisoned because I found them together with the others. They have done nothing. I even don't know them.

King (*to Mr. Rassam*). Ask Mr. Stern what for did he abuse me?—*A.* Your Majesty, in a bad hour St. Peter betrayed his Master, and I wrote something against your Majesty; but as Peter when he repented received Christ's forgiveness, so I repent, and ask your Majesty to forgive me for Christ's sake.

King. Did you write it from yourself, or did the Aboona ask you to write it?—*Mr. Stern.* What I have written, partly I heard it from the Aboona, and partly from his servants; but he never asked me to write it down.

After this Mr. Rosenthal was asked, Have you abused me?—*A.* Yes.

King. Have you called me a wild King, because I have killed that man at Gondar?—*A.* Yes.

King. Well, that man was a murderer. Have you not the law in your country that a murderer shall be put to death?—*A.* Yes; but at that time I was not acquainted with his guilt.

Mr. Rassam, Mr. Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc were now ordered by the King to arise, and to hear a letter. In the letter the King said, that he proved before them that the prisoners were guilty. "I," said he, "will stand to my former friendship, but I require a 'kasa' (ransom, satisfaction); and I require it from you, Mr. Rassam, because you are the Balderaba given to me by the Queen of England. She says in her letter, everything I wish Mr. Rassam will do for you.* What my kasa is I will tell you afterwards. I don't want gold nor silver; I want people who will open my eyes, because I am blind. . . Now let me prove to you that though my mother was poor, she was a daughter of the ancient Kings of Ethiopia."

About fifteen witnesses he called out of his Court, who witnessed that his mother

* There was one sentence in Her Majesty's letter which was just contrary to its meaning translated.—T. M. F.

was from the line of the ancient Kings, and that he, the King, had from his mother's side, in more than ten different provinces of his Empire, "galt," that is territory, granted by Government for continual possession. After this, Mr. Rassam and companions were ordered to their tents. Mr. Rassam, before leaving, asked the King again to pardon us, which was refused. The King said, "For to-day I have released Captain Cameron. If I only obtain your friendship, to-morrow I will do everything you wish me to do." After Mr. Rassam had left, we were taken back to our prison.

In the morning, on the 17th, we were called into the tent of Mr. Rassam. Soon after our arrival there, the King sent a message to Mr. Rassam that our chains should be opened. After about an hour, which we spent in the tent of Mr. Rassam, the three English gentlemen received from His Majesty an invitation to an audience. We, the released prisoners, were also ordered to appear. As soon as we (the prisoners) had approached near His Majesty and received his salutation, we fell down to the ground, asking His Majesty to forgive and to pardon us. We were ordered to get up, and to come nearer. We had the honour to take a seat on a carpet. The King brought forth the petition of the relations of the English prisoners, which had been sent from Massowah by Dr. Beke. Captain Cameron was asked to read it. After that the King said, "It is the devil who made me angry with you, and who tempted me to destroy the friendly feelings existing since the late Mr. Plowden, between myself and England. From my childhood I like the Europeans, especially the English; and God knows that, from morning till evening, I had no other desire than to get in alliance with the English nation. It is true that, by the power of God, I will fight the Turks; but there never arose a thought in my mind to fight with the English. What I wish is, that they shall love me and be my friends. Mr. Stern," said he, "you are quite innocent; it is not you who abused me, it is that Copt, who calls himself a monk and a bishop. He made me angry with you, and he abused me. And Mr. Flad, God knows I never had any bad feelings against him. He never committed anything which could make me angry with him. And Mr. Rassam you are the best man I ever saw in my life, and you did nothing which could make me angry with you. The other day it is true my suspicion arose, but it was the devil; and now we will make peace, forgetting everything past, and by actions of love we will renew our friendship. Now, I pray you all forgive me." The King immediately fell down to the ground before us. We asked that His Majesty might arise and forgive us, but he refused; so we said, according to the custom of the country, "For God's sake, we forgive you." And immediately we kneeled down before him, begging him to forgive us, on which he answered, "For God's sake I forgive you." After this ceremony we had to sit down. Then the King said that each of us should write a letter to his relations, and give them the news that His Majesty, by the power of God, and for the friendship's sake of the Queen of England, had pardoned and released us, and that we hope to see and meet them soon. After this we were dismissed.

The King now told Mr. Rassam that he wishes him to stay with him, until the Queen of England will send him a "kasa," existing in artists, machines, and tools, &c., for which purpose he shall now write letters, and send one of the Europeans, who will come back and bring the "kasa."

I must make the remark, for your Lordship's information, that the letter Mr. Rassam sends by me was dictated to him by His Majesty, and that after he had written it, he had to read it to Aito Samuel, Kantiba Haloo, and to the European artists. Mr. Rassam also asked me to inform your Lordship of the difficult position he was in when he had to write; yea, that he was obliged to write in that strange way his letter.

In the afternoon, Mr. Rassam was asked by His Majesty, whom he wished to send to England. Mr. Rassam replied, "any one to whom your Majesty gives confidence," on which the King replied, "Mr. Flad shall go; I trust him."* The next morning the King sent for me, informing me, that he wished me to take his and Mr. Rassam's letter to England; I replied, "Your Majesty, I am not the man fit for such a mission. I would feel very much obliged to your Majesty, if you would send any one else." King: "No, you are the man we want, and you must understand, that you are not my messenger, but Mr. Rassam's. But you must use all your influence to bring me the workmen."

Up to this date the money of Mr. Rassam was in the hands of the King. He gave

* As I was informed by the European artists, the King had chosen me, not because he trusts me, but he said to them: "To an European, his heart is his wife, and his eyes are his children. Mr. Flad has a wife and three children, which I will keep here, and then I am certain that he will return and bring me an answer."

me 1,000 dollars to bring them, together with Aito Samuel, to Mr. Rassam, and I had to tell Mr. Rassam that His Majesty will send him by-and-by the rest of the money he took from him (6,800 dollars). On the same day, the 18th, the swords were given back to Mr. Prideaux and Dr. Blanc. The King made the following excuse: "I took your swords from you, because I was afraid you might hurt yourself." On the same day Mr. Rassam and companions received the presents which the King had ordered to be made for them, mules, saddles, shields, &c.

On the 21st, the day when I left, early in the morning His Majesty paid a visit to Mr. Rassam. At 11 o'clock, His Majesty came the second time to the tent of Mr. Rassam, and had covered with carpets, by his first minister, the floor of the three tents the English gentlemen occupied. In returning, he took Mr. Rassam by his right hand, and walking along he flattered him that he was his brother, &c. When they reached the door of the hedge, in which Mr. Rassam's and our tents were, the King sent off the soldiers, who hitherto had watched us day and night, saying, "Get off, you are not my people, it is not necessary that you watch my friends, and my brother, Mr. Rassam." None of us was allowed to go outside before the guard had been taken away. The evening previous, Mr. Rassam and companions wished to take a ride. They had to ask for permission, and a guard was going with them. At mid-day on the 21st, the guns, pistols, shields, spears, powder, silver ornaments, &c. were sent back to Mr. Rassam.* Silver-spoons, &c., were not restored. Also the money which was taken from the prisoners, though promised to be restored, was not given back to them before I left. I left the camp at four o'clock, after a heart-turning leave of my dear wife and children, and all my other friends, whom I had to leave in the hands of the savage Theodore, the cruel, inhuman, and sly despot.

From Segie I proceeded by Tshelga, Matemma, Kedaref, Kassala, Bogos to Massowah, at which place I arrived after a dangerous and fatiguing journey on the 31st of May.

Begging your Lordship to make no public use of the above report, and, as I am by birth a German and not well acquainted with the English language, to pardon any mistake I made, I am, &c.

(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

No. 611.

Mr. Flad to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 10, 1866.)†

My Lord,

I HAVE further to bring to your Lordship's information that all the struggles by King Theodore, the misery and imprisonment of the English Consul, Captain Cameron, and all those who were under his protection, arose partly from the imprudent transaction of the Consul's business, and partly from the negligence of the Foreign Office, as also the conduct of some Europeans, which caused the King's suspicion and distrust against the English nation.

What I write now I don't write it to bring accusations against persons; I merely write it down to make your Lordship more acquainted with the motives by which all these collisions between the two Governments were produced.

1. Captain Cameron, when he came the first time to Abyssinia, brought with him M. Bardel, a Frenchman, engaged as Secretary—a man of a very equivocal character—quarrelling with him and separating from him, he made him his constant enemy. And I believe that he is one of those who put the existing suspicion against Mr. Rassam and the English Government into the heart of the King, and who advised him to take hostages from England, else they would revenge themselves, after they have liberated their subjects.

M. Bardel, after having been dismissed by Captain Cameron, entered the King's service. The King sent him with a letter to the Emperor of France. The contents of the letter were similar to that letter of the King which he sent at the same time by Captain Cameron to the Queen of England.

After nine months M. Bardel returned from France with a letter in answer to the letter the King had sent. Though His Majesty was not much pleased with the answer of the Emperor Napoleon, he gave permission to the French Consul, M. Lejean, and his companion, Dr. Lagard, who had been kept for three or four months as prisoners at large, to leave his country. At that time M. Bardel reported in Abyssinia that the

* All this was done by the King that I might take the news to Europe.

† Laid before Parliament, 1867.

English Government will send no answer to the King, because they like much more the Egyptians than him. From where M. Bardel had received this information I don't know. He himself said to me that he heard it at Alexandria from an Englishman who was well acquainted with what is going on in the Foreign Office. I must say the Government, as well as the different newspapers, and societies like that who sent Dr. Beke, acted very imprudently since our capture began. If some of those letters and despatches* would be sent by one of our enemies to King Theodore, they would be enough to provoke his indignation in such a way that he would kill in one day, not only those who have English blood in their veins, but every one who is from the European race. Until the Government has succeeded in procuring the release of the prisoners, it should be abolished that the newspapers receive any article regarding the Abyssinian captives. This is especially now at present most necessary, because that said M. Bardel is again on very friendly terms with Theodore, and he has his correspondent, Pater Delmonte (Roman priest) at Massowah and Hallai, M. Bardel is a man who would not care much if all our people would be killed in one day.

2. Consul Cameron when he came the first time to Abyssinia, after having been well received by His Majesty, and presented with a golden saddle and a mule, a horse, an ornamented shield, a bitwa, and 1,000 dollars, was entrusted by His Majesty with a letter for the Queen of England. The King wished him, if possible, to go himself to England, and bring him an answer; if not, to stay at Bogos or Massowah, in order that when the answer comes, he shall bring it up to the King. Consul Cameron, against the advice of the King, went by Bogos to Kassala, and as he was sick he came by Matemma up to Genda to get medicine in my house. At Keren, in the Bogos country, he separated from Aito Samuel, the man who was given by the King to him as Balderaba (introducer, escort, &c.) Aito Samuel wrote from Keren a very accusative letter to the King about Captain Cameron.† Having arrived at Gondar, at his first interview with His Majesty, the King was very angry with him. He asked him, What has become of my letter?—*A.* I sent it from Axum by two of my servants to Aden.

King. Where is the answer? Did I not tell you to bring me the answer?—*A.* I hope the answer will be here by January 1864. I left one of my men at Massowah with the order that as soon as the answer arrives he will bring it up. I came only back because I am sick, and I knew that I would find some medicine at Mr. Flad's.

King. What for did you go to my enemies to Kassala?—*A.* Some Arab tribes have stolen cows from Hamazin, and I only went down to Kassala to speak to the Egyptian Government that they must be restored.

King. It was not your business to interfere. Who told you to do so? Neither I myself nor your Queen gave you order to go down to Kassala.

Though the King was at the time angry with Consul Cameron, he still treated him as his friend till the arrival of Mr. Kerans, who brought a letter from the Foreign Office to Consul Cameron, in which the arrival of his despatches and the King's letter to the Foreign Office was acknowledged. But no further remark was made about the King's letter, nor was there given any hope that an answer would be sent. Captain Cameron was obliged to send a copy of his letter to the King, who for months had been anxiously waiting for an answer of Her Majesty the Queen.

Disappointed in his expectations, he listened and believed all the calumniations of the Anti-Anglican Europeans and Abyssinians. Some days after the arrival of that letter Consul Cameron was ordered to leave his house at Gondar, and to take his abode in a tent in the King's camp; that is to say, the Consul was a prisoner. This was in November 1863, four months and a-half after his second arrival in Abyssinia. Being out of good health, he had once asked the King for permission to leave his camp, and to abide in his house at Gondar. It was refused to him. The King said, Let him die, if they only cannot say that I have killed him. Where is the answer to my letter? Why does his Queen (abusing Her Majesty in a most vulgar manner) despise me?

More than five weeks after the Consul had received his letter from the Foreign Office, he asked the King (in a letter) to give him permission to go to his post to

* For example, the despatch of Lord Russell to the Political Agent Consul-General in Egypt, and many other articles; also letters from the prisoners.

† Some Abyssinians also told the King that the English Consul abused and derogated him before the Turks. Whether this accusation was true or not I don't know. At his imprisonment, and at the reconciliation in Mr. Rassam's tent, the charges His Majesty brought against Consul Cameron were:—1st, "You went to my enemies, abused and derogated me." 2nd, "You came back without bringing me an answer."

Massowah. The following day he and all those who were under his protection were put in chains. If Mr. Kerans would have brought a letter for the King, whether good or bad, neither the Consul nor his subjects would have been imprisoned and deprived of all their property. Even Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal would have been released, and, as it was reported by the natives, all of us, together with the Consul, would have been sent out of Abyssinia. But instead of sending an answer to the Emperor, the Government wrote to their Consul to leave immediately the Abyssinian territory, and to proceed to his post to Massowah, from where he shall inform his Government what France is going to do against Abyssinia, and what they are doing on the African shore of the Red Sea. From all this the Emperor was fully convinced that the intention of the English Government is to have nothing to do with him any more. How could it be otherwise expected than that the Emperor would take revenge on the Consul and his subjects.

When we were in prison the King once sent us a message, saying, "The Consul I have imprisoned because his Queen did not send me an answer. Personally, I have nothing against him. Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal I have imprisoned because they have abused me; and the rest (we were ten Europeans) I have imprisoned because I found that you white people are all bad."

The Rev. Mr. Stern was, after having received the King's permission to leave his country, prevented from doing so because the King was informed (by somebody else) that the Bishop Salama, the English Consul, and the Rev. Mr. Stern, had made a complot against him. He was beaten because, when two of his interpreters were beaten before him until they expired, he took up his hand covering his face. Then the King said to his soldiers, "He bites his finger against us; beat him." Until the King was convinced that he gets no answer from the English Government, he treated Mr. Stern, though in prison, very polite. All his property was in Mr. Stern's possession. Either by M. Bardel himself, or by his influence through Aito Samuel, the King heard that Mr. Stern is anxious about some written things regarding him. His papers were examined and translated, and a severer imprisonment followed.

3. Further, Consul Cameron, when on Magdala, gave to Dejaj Mereet (Duke of Hamazin and prisoner on Magdala) a paper of protection (safe-guard) in which he said that in case England will take revenge on Abyssinia, the country and family of Dejaj Mereet shall be treated as friends, because he did all he could to provide for the English prisoners. Captain Cameron took that paper back and burnt it, but a copy of it was, by Mr. Kerans, Secretary of Consul Cameron, put into the hands of the mischievous M. Bardel, who, as it seems to me, made use of it to the disadvantage of Mr. Rassam's mission. There were also some Abyssinians, especially one, a former servant of the late Mr. Barroni at Massowah, who advised the Emperor to keep Mr. Rassam in his country, else the English Government would not only send him no artists, but they may send troops to take revenge.

4. It seems also that Her Majesty the Queen, in her letter to the Emperor Theodore, sent by Mr. Rassam, did not enter into the different questions of the Emperor, made in his letter in 1862.

Also it seems that the English Government gave to the Emperor Theodore, at the time of the late Consul Plowden, some promises which were never realised. From all these and many other things the King sees himself deceived in his expectations from the English Government, and therefore he distrusts us and hates us.

I beg your Lordship to excuse my liberty in making here some additional remarks of my own.

Being fully convinced that the English Government, at this sad news I have to give, will be very much irritated and disappointed, because Mr. Rassam with the released prisoners was at this time expected to be back from Abyssinia, I fear that many voices will be heard: "Send troops and force the Emperor Theodore to send all English subjects out of his dominions."

I make here the humble petition and say: As the Government, since the Abyssinian captive began, experienced great patience, the Government should not lose it, but try to satisfy the claims of the Emperor. This could be accomplished:

1. If the Government would give me a man and the necessary money. I would try to get the people the Emperor wants. Workmen are hitherto treated and paid well by King Theodore. The only thing which is to be feared is, if they wish to go to their country they would not be allowed to do so. Mr. Rassam received from the Emperor in money, presents and other things about 25,000 German crowns. Consul Cameron received in money 1,000 German crowns, and in presents, &c., about 2,000 German crowns or more. 2,000 dollars the Emperor paid for the late Consul Plowden (money

by which Mr. Plowden was released out of the hands of his murderers, the rebel Garred). Except what Consul Plowden had received during his stay in Abyssinia in money (which he borrowed from the Emperor), and what he received in corn, cows, honey, &c. That will make together a sum of some 30,000 German crowns. One part of this money would be sufficient for the purchasing of instruments, &c.

2. If the Government would appoint Mr. Rassam, Consul of Massowah and Abyssinia. From this the King would see that the English Government takes no hostile position towards him and his country.

If England would take a hostile position towards Abyssinia it might be, though is very doubtful, that the Emperor would send out the English subjects at once; but there is much more reason to fear that a fatalist like him would at once, in a most cruel and barbarous manner, slaughter all our people together with his European workmen. There are twenty-six souls, Europeans, connected with Mr. Rassam. The European workmen, with their wives and children, are thirty-five souls. All together sixty-one souls, Europeans, except all the native servants, who would, with their masters, have to share the same fate. In the other way it is to be expected that as soon as hostile troops enter Abyssinia, the Emperor might take our people, and retiring to any distant Galla country, he would torture them (what is worse than to be killed at once), in order to force them to write that the troops shall leave his dominions. Therefore it is most desirable to finish with this man in peace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

No. 612.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 13.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, July* 12, 1866.

THE relatives of the captives in Abyssinia, being exceedingly anxious to know their present position, have requested me to ask your Lordship to oblige them with any information which may have reached your Lordship respecting them, through Mr. Flad, who, we understand, has just arrived with despatches from the Emperor.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 613.

Mr. Flad to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 14.)*

My Lord, 42, *Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, July* 14, 1866.

I HAD hoped ere this to have had the honour of a summons from your Lordship; but not having done so, I feel it necessary to state a circumstance which came to my knowledge while on my journey to this country, and that is that it was strongly reported that Egyptian troops were collecting on the borders, to make a descent upon Bogos, a district belonging to the King of Abyssinia; and I very much fear if this is done, that it will not only be detrimental to the captives and Mr. Rassam, but that the King may be induced to re-imprison them on that account. And that His Majesty (who has an exceedingly suspicious mind) may think that the British Government might prevent such an occurrence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

No. 614.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 14, 1866.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant,† and to state to you in reply that Mr. Flad has arrived, but has only brought intelligence to the effect of that which you already know, namely, that Mr. Rassam and

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 612.

his companions are not likely to leave Abyssinia until Mr. Flad returns thither with an answer to a letter which King Theodore has written to the Queen.

I am, &c.,
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 615.

*Lord Stanley to Captain Goodfellow.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1866.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 21st ultimo† reporting the steps which you took to expedite the journey to this country from Abyssinia of the Rev. Mr. Flad, and I approve your proceedings in this respect.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 616.

Extracts of Private Letters received from Mr. Rassam and others.—(Received July 17.)*

Zeghe, April 18, 1866.

A FEW days ago I wrote to you a long letter, and told you how well I was received by the Emperor of Abyssinia. We are all now staying at his Court as his guest, and not a day passes without his showing us marked civility and attention. On the 16th instant all the released prisoners were brought before him, and after some charges were read before the Ministers of State and Nobles to different prisoners, they all confessed their faults and begged His Majesty's forgiveness. The Emperor very graciously pardoned them, and said that henceforth he would love them and show them the regard which he has shown me and my companions. We all had another meeting with His Majesty yesterday, and nothing could exceed his courteous and polite behaviour on that occasion. He told me that he wished to see more of me in order that I might benefit him with my friendly advice. From my letter to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, you will perceive that he wishes to have some artisans and instructors of artillery, and I send in conjunction with him, Mr. Flad, one of the released prisoners, to carry the letter to England and bring back an answer. Mr. Flad is a very good man, and our choice could not have been better. Thank God we are all well, and I have no doubt that through your prayers, and those of our other friends, we shall meet ere long in health and good spirits. Kind regards to all friends.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

P.S.—If you are sending the medicines which Blanc has asked for, I shall feel greatly obliged by your forwarding me, as soon as possible, the articles noted in the inclosed lists.

H. R.

Lake Tsana, April 16, 1866.

Mr. Rassam will have imparted to you the good news of our deliverance from imprisonment, and of our having been formally reconciled with His Majesty the King Theodorus since our arrival here.

(Signed) C. D. CAMERON.

Zeghe, April 18, 1866.

His Imperial Majesty has just given us some very handsome presents, and continues to treat us with the kindness he showed us since our arrival in the country. A few days ago I sent you an account of the handsome hospitality and reception we had met at his hands. The Emperor desires, for the sake of friendship, that we should stay a few months longer in his country; if it was not for our families at home nothing could be more agreable to us, and even with this circumstance we feel very happy if our remaining in this country can in any way strengthen the friendship between the two nations. We are all, thank God, in good health, and for the present all enjoying the hospitality of the King's camp. [Here follows a long list of medicines.]

(Signed) H. BLANC.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 605.

No. 617.

*Mr. Flad to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 17.)**

My Lord, 42, *Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, July* 17, 1866.

IN the interview which I had the honour of having with your Lordship yesterday, I ventured to suggest the urgent necessity of my having an interview with Her Majesty, in order that on my return to Abyssinia, I might be enabled to assure the King that Her Majesty had been graciously pleased to grant me an audience.

The reason for my being desirous of obtaining such audience is my conviction, that on my return to Abyssinia the first question that will be asked by the King is whether I had seen Her Majesty, and I fear that a negative answer would greatly endanger the success of my mission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD

Inclosure in No. 617.

*King Theodore to Mr. Flad.**

IN the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God, Theodorus, King of Kings, of Ethiopia, who is a creature and a servant, the son of David and Solomon:—

I send Mr. Flad to Europe, because I am in want of skilful artists. All those workmen who would like to come to my country, rejoicing in their coming, I shall receive them with great honour, and give them good pay for their services. If they wish to remain in my country, I shall make their abode most happy [pleasant]. But, if they, after having teached my people their arts for some years, wish to return to their country, I shall, through the power of God, give them a splendid pay, and with great honour I shall send them back to their country.

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*Men and Material required by King Theodore from England and Her Majesty's Government.**

1. Two gunsmiths.
2. An artillery officer.
3. An iron founder, who is able to erect a foundry and furnace; all to be furnished with necessary tools and instruments.
4. One or two boat-builders.
5. A cart and wheel-wright.

His Majesty would also be pleased if Her Majesty's Government were to send him the following articles:—

1. A small blast steam-engine for foundry.
2. A turning bench, with necessary tools.
3. A distilling machine.
4. Machinery for the manufacturing of gun-caps, with necessary copperplate, &c.
5. A good telescope.
6. A gunpowder mill, with rollers.
7. A good supply of gunpowder and gun-caps.
8. Some handsome large square carpets, silks, tumblers, and goblets.
9. Some double-barrel guns and pistols.
10. Two good regimental swords.
11. Some European curiosities.

No. 618.

*Mr. Flad to King Theodore.**

London, July 18, 1866.

IN the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God.

May this letter, which is sent by Martin Flad, reach the King of Kings, Theodorus. May the Redeemer of the world give your Majesty health and prosperity. Amen.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

On the 10th of July I have, by the power and grace of God, arrived in good health at this place. Your Majesty's letter, as well as I myself, had by Her Majesty the Queen Victoria a kind and friendly reception.

Her Majesty's Governors take every day great trouble to find the artizans your Majesty wants.

I have received the promise to get my leave after a fortnight. If God Almighty keeps me in health, I shall arrive at Massowah at the end of September.

I beg your Majesty to send me word to Massowah whether I may come up to your Majesty by Tigré, or whether I have to take the road by Matemma.

There is a great war in Germany. The King of Prussia united with the King of Italy are fighting the Emperor of Austria. In a great battle which was fought at Sadowa, the Emperor of Austria had a great loss, and was forced to retire.

May God, our Heavenly Father, protect your Majesty.

(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

No. 619.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 18.)*

My Lord, *London, July* 18, 1866.

AS it is of vital importance to the safety of the Mission now in Abyssinia under Mr. Rassam, as well as to those who were, till lately, in captivity there, that there should not be the slightest appearance of any forcible measures being taken against the Emperor Theodorus, I have the honour to bring to your Lordship's notice, that I have heard from more than one quarter that it is contemplated by the Egyptian Government to advance troops to the frontier of Abyssinia for the purpose of settling old boundary disputes, and for further operations as opportunity offered. Mr. Flad informs me that, on his way home from the Court of King Theodorus, he heard the report from good authority. During the last few days, I have been told by a distinguished officer of the Bombay army, Colonel Sir H. Green, who has lately returned from a tour through the French possessions in Algeria, that, just before leaving Algiers, he saw a train of light guns, suitable for mountain warfare, ready for embarkation. These, he was told, had been prepared for the purpose of being sent to Alexandria for the use of the Egyptian Government in its projected operations against Abyssinia; it was also said that French officers would accompany the artillery to assist, and do duty with, the Egyptian forces. This was freely spoken of, and, as regards the guns, is not an improbable circumstance, as they could be sent by vessel along the coast, and landed at Alexandria, without attracting any particular notice. Taking the above into consideration, I cannot help thinking that an early movement against Abyssinia is contemplated by His Highness the Viceroy. I would, therefore, most respectfully suggest, and earnestly urge, that measures may be taken to prevent a step which would prove so certainly fatal to every European now in Abyssinia. King Theodore being of a most suspicious nature would at once conclude that the Egyptian move was in accord with the views of Her Majesty's Government, and that it was intended to punish him for his late conduct to Consul Cameron. It would be all the more dangerous at the present time when Mr. Flad is in this country deputed by the King to Her Majesty the Queen. It would appear to the King as a direct rejection of his advances and a breach of good faith with him; the immediate incarceration, if not death, of Mr. Rassam, Captain Cameron, and all the others would follow inevitably.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 620.

Lord Stanley to Earl Cowley.

My Lord, *Foreign Office, July* 18, 1866.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith an extract of a letter from Colonel Merewether of the Indian Service,† and holding the office of Resident at Aden, but now on leave in this country, respecting a rumour that has reached him of artillery and military officers

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 619.

being about to be sent from Algiers to Alexandria for the service of the Viceroy of Egypt, in an expedition that he contemplates against Abyssinia; and I have to instruct you to ascertain, if possible, if there is any foundation for this rumour.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 621.

*Mr. Hammond to Colonel Stanton.**

Foreign Office, July 19, 1866.

Sir,

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you herewith a copy of a letter from Colonel Merewether,† relative to a rumour that the Viceroy of Egypt contemplates hostilities against Abyssinia; and calling attention to the danger in which the European captives in that country would be involved if such intentions were carried out.

I have already desired you to make inquiry into this matter; and Colonel Merewether's letter will show you upon what information my telegram was founded.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMON

No. 622.

Mr. Mc Dowall to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 19.)

My Lord, *7, Strada Irlandese, La Valletta, Ma*

I CRAVE pardon for addressing you, but having a favour to ask and a pro to make, was unable to gain your attention in a more regular way.

I must inflict a short biography of my late uncle, Mr. Bell, who, eighteen year Abyssinia, possessed the most unbounded influence over the Emperor, and whilst liv always protected British interests. Theodore intended sending him on a mission to Courts of St. James and the Tuileries, but his death, in action in 1860, was about beginning of the difficulties now existing. I am aware it is scarcely *en règle* to forward private claims to influence Government negotiations, but with a semi-barba monarch like Theodore, I presume my uncle's nephew would be well received; he Emperor) sent my late uncle's arms and decorations though Captain Playfair of A to our late Governor, Sir J. G. Le Marchant, from whom my mother received then

I therefore would offer myself as a Political Agent to arrange the affair of pris subject to such instructions as your Lordship would give, and should your Lor condescend graciously to look favourably upon my offer, would hold myself in read to proceed to the Abyssinian Court.

Apologising for my diffuseness and intrusion on your valued time, I am, &c.
(Signed) JOHN M. Mc DOWAL

No. 623.

Colonel Stanton to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received July 20.)*

My Lord, *Alexandria, July* 10. 1866.

I BEG leave to forward to your Lordship the accompanying translation of a lette that has lately reached me from Keren, in the country of Bogos, near the Abyssinian frontier.

The writer, as far as I am able to ascertain, is not a person in whom much confidence can be placed, and I am informed formerly belonged to the Roman Catholic Mission at Massowah, but was dismissed for misconduct; and I have thought it better to take no notice of his communication until I receive your Lordship's instructions on the subject.

The country of Bogos appears to be disputed territory, but can hardly be considered as situated within the Abyssinian frontier, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 619.

the Egyptian Government considers its territory to extend to the frontier of Abyssinia, and resents the idea of the formation of an independent state within its boundaries, as appears to be the purport of the writer of the letter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 623.

*M. Stella to Colonel Stanton.**

(Translation.)

Sir, *Keren, May* 28, 1866.

IN the year 1854, when I was at Bogos, the Egyptian troops of Taka, residing at Kassala, attacked the country of Bogos, robbed and made slaves of everybody they could lay their hands upon. At that time, Mr. Plowden, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul in Abyssinia, was at Massowah, and as he favoured me with his friendship, I took the liberty of submitting this case to him, and asked him to do his utmost to liberate the prisoners taken.

Mr. Plowden wrote to Her Britannic Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt on the subject, who took such measures as to get the prisoners returned, and from that time up to now I remained here taking care of the tribe of Bogos. Mr. Cameron, British Consul at Massowah, two years and a half ago visited this country, and promised them British protection, and I remained here waiting for such. After Mr. Cameron's departure to Abyssinia, the Egyptian subjects from Kassala, Baria, Beni Amer, and others, attacked this country twice, robbed Bogos of more than 2,000 cows, took about 200 persons prisoners, and killed fifty men, amongst whom were two of my servants.

When the things reached this stage, the people of Bogos asked me to write to your Excellency, begging of you to protect them from the attacks of these Egyptian subjects, and to force the latter to give up the prisoners, to pay the cost of the cows taken by them, and to make them look upon this country as upon a British possession, hoping that the great British Power will continue to protect them and force the Egyptian subjects to deliver up the goods and persons taken from them.

I beg to excuse my writing to you direct; if I may be useful to you in any way, command me, and you shall be obeyed.

I shall consider myself fortunate if you grant me British protection.

Mr. Flad will give you any information you may require about me.

I am, &c.
(Signed) G. STELLA.

No. 624.

Earl Cowley to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 21.)*

My Lord, *Paris, July* 20, 1866.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 18th instant,† I have made inquiries through Colonel Claremont, at the War Department, and I have myself questioned M. Drouyn de Lhuys respecting the reports which have reached Her Majesty's Government, of artillery and military officers being about to be sent from Algiers to Alexandria for the service of the Viceroy of Egypt, in an expedition which he contemplates against Abyssinia.

Both the Minister of War and M. Drouyn de Lhuys deny all knowledge of such an expedition being in contemplation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 625.

*Mr. Murray to Colonel Stanton.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 21, 1866.

WITH reference to Mr. Hammond's despatch of the 19th instant,‡ I am directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 620. ‡ No. 621.

at Paris, from which you will perceive that the French Government assert that they have no knowledge of the reported intention of the Viceroy of Egypt to commence hostilities against Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 626.

*Mr. Murray to Mr. Mc Dowall.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 24, 1866.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, without date,† offering your services in order to obtain the release of the Europeans detained in Abyssinia; and I am desired by his Lordship to thank you for this offer, of which, however, Her Majesty's Government have no occasion to avail themselves.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 627.

Mr. Murray to Captain Goodfellow.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 26, 1866.

I SEND you, at the request of the Rev. Mr. Flad, the accompanying letter which he has addressed to you, together with the letter to King Theodore,‡ to which he refers, and two other letters, one to M. Munzinger, at Massowah, and the other to Mr. Rassam.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 628.

*Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 7.)**

My Lord, *Alexandria, July* 23, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report that I have taken the earliest occasion of mentioning to his Excellency Raghib Pasha the rumours that have reached your Lordship as to the hostile intentions of this Government against Abyssinia,§ and requested his Excellency to inform me what foundation there might be for these rumours. Raghib Pasha assured me immediately that the Egyptian Government had not the smallest intention of making any hostile demonstration against that country; and I have every reason to believe his Excellency's assertion, as, from inquiries I have made in other quarters, I cannot ascertain that any steps whatever have been taken that would give the slightest foundation for the rumours in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 629.

*Consul Cameron to Mr. Hammond.—(Received August 9.)**

Dear Sir, *Zegay, Abyssinia, May* 24, 1866.

MY letter to you from Korata‖ was written under circumstances in which it was difficult to express myself plainly, and my last letters to England, forwarded by Mr. Flad, are so much waste-paper. It would not have been honest to that gentleman to trust him with papers which, if he had been arrested on the road, might have brought him into trouble. I think it, however, desirable to inform you on this occasion, as a long time may elapse before I have a chance of writing to you again, of the real

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.
† No. 622.
‡ No. 618.
§ See No. 624.
‖ No. 592.

state of affairs as regards myself and the other Europeans detained here. At the time that I wrote from Korata, I was under the impression that everything was settled. It turned out, however, afterwards that there was a passage in the King's letter conveying to us his pardon, in which he wished for pledges of friendship. This meant, in fact, artisans who were to take our place; and it was not His Majesty's intention to let us go until he obtained these. In an interview which the King had with his German workmen, he said as much openly. "If I let them go," said he, "what shall I have in hand?" He is afraid, I believe, of reprisals; and ignorant as he is of European usages, wishes to have hostages in his hands, so as to prevent any aggressive movements on your part; even an aggressive movement on the part of Turkey would, I believe, be paid for by us, unless our friend was detained by fear. The King, however, dissembled his real views, and left it to Mr. Rassam's opinion to decide whether we should be sent out of the country or not. The latter was only too glad of the opening, fearful as he was that the sight of the missionaries, especially Mr. Stern, might excite the King to some act of violence; and it was arranged that we should leave for Matemma, and Mr. Rassam and his party should go to the King first for a parting interview, and then join us half-way to Matemma. We accordingly started, each party in his own direction. Myself and the Magdala prisoners were arrested after being allowed to go one stage, chained, and stripped of all our money and other property, while Mr. Rassam, Lieutenant Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc were seized on their arrival at the royal camp, their uniforms torn open, their persons searched for arms, and their swords taken away. They were then put in a tent and guarded close prisoners for three days. We were brought over to where they were; the accusations against the missionaries were then gone over. They had abused His Majesty's person and criticised his Government. The charges against myself were confined to my having come back without an answer to His Majesty's letter, and obeyed the orders sent to me from the Foreign Office, acknowledging the receipt of the King's letter, and ordering me to return to my post immediately. After the King had finished with us, Mr. Rassam and his party were ordered to rise (the explanation took place in the open air, and before thousands of natives), and Mr. Rassam was very sharply spoken to for having wished to get us out of the country. My chains had been opened immediately on my reaching the presence of the King, and I was ordered to place myself with Mr. Rassam and the officers with him, and His Majesty's questions were put to me after I was free from chains. The others were very roughly cross-examined, and left in chains until the following day. Mr. Rassam's property had been taken away on his being made prisoner; but now, everything is friendly, and our money and other things are gradually being returned. You will have seen Mr. Flad by this time, and must understand the drift of His Majesty's late conduct. All I hope is that Government will be firm, and let him know the truth. It should not be disguised from him that his course of proceeding is not one which the British Government approves; and if presents and a courteous letter are sent, they should be accompanied by a strong remonstrance, and a demonstration on the Abyssinian frontier. It would not be a bad thing if a strong-minded man, with courage and firmness to face consequences, were sent with the next letter. The best thing would have been to have sent a letter long ago, but not by an officer of rank; the next best thing would have been to have allowed Mr. Palgrave to come with plain and straightforward instructions. Now that we are all in the difficulty together, I believe the best plan will be what I have indicated. I don't believe that mere presents will ever get Mr. Rassam and his people out. They are looked on as valuable capital; and the King will work his new mine as far as he can. I will write again when I have an opportunity; but none will occur for some months. We are all tolerably well, that is, always ailing; but no acute disease.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 630.

*Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 9.)**

My Lord, *Alexandria, July* 31, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the inclosed despatch from the Assistant Political Resident at Aden, dated the 20th instant,† forwarding letters from

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 632.

say nothing; but I would suggest that Her Majesty's Government send to Massowah at once 200 or 300 percussion muskets of the old pattern not now in use, with a quantity of caps to match, for his soldiers, and one handsome piece for his own use, with 50 lbs. of good powder, and some thousand caps, as an earnest of our intentions.

He is a man worth supporting, in my opinion, and his character, though jealous, affords the only chance of dealing peacefully with Abyssinia.

The arms, if sent, should be addressed to the King of Abyssinia, and care must be taken that no delay be caused by the Turkish authorities at Massowah, when the proper moment shall arrive for me to present them.

If any accident happens to the King, the gifts can be sold and the money replaced.

I make this suggestion, inasmuch as the King will value this mark of consideration the more coming at a moment of difficulty, and will regard it as a sign of true and disinterested friendship; nevertheless it must remain for your Lordship's consideration, whether there is sufficient reason for the step. The King knows nothing of my intention to propose it.

Inclosure in No. 284.

King Theodore to Her Majesty the Queen.

(Translation.)

THIS letter from Theodorus, King of Kings, of Ethiopia, is sent to the Queen of England, Victoria; may your health be preserved and well as mine is; praise be to God.

I have received and entertained Mr. Plowden, as your ambassador, in a spirit of friendship and goodwill.

I have not sent him to you till now, owing to my constant campaigns and embarrassments.

You and I are both the children of Christ, in whose name also I seek your friendship.

Now, therefore, if shortly by His power I am successful and fortunate, I shall send to you Mr. Plowden, accompanied by other ambassadors of dignity, with the news of my fortunes and success, that so our pleasure therein may be mutual.

No. 285.

The Earl of Malmesbury to Consul Plowden.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 8, 1858.

IN answer to your despatch of the 25th of November last,* which was received at this office on the 2nd instant, I have to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Government would be glad to do anything to testify their good-will towards the King of Abyssinia, and that they are disposed to carry into effect your recommendation as to the Present to be sent to His Majesty. But Her Majesty's Government wish to be informed in what manner you propose that the Present in question should be sent on from Massowah, in order to ensure its safe delivery.

I am, &c.

(Signed) MALMESBURY.

No. 286.

Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received August 9.)

My Lord, *Toramba, June* 5, 1858.

CIRCUMSTANCES have still prevented the King from putting into execution his projected campaign against Dejaj Negoosee in Tigré, but in the meanwhile he has not been idle.

He has made many and successful expeditions against those enemies in the South, and amongst the Gallas who are in league to uphold Dejajmatch Negoosee as their last hope of evading the vigorous sway of the King, he has made a severe example of several rebel chiefs who fell into his power, and, whilst keeping in check the Gallas, has driven Negoosee's force across the Takazze; he has also entirely repossessed himself of the important kingdom of Lasta, whose chief had rebelled and joined the enemy.

* No. 284.

In the meantime Dejajmatch Kasai, the lieutenant of the King in Tigré, has gained a decisive success over a considerable body of Negoosee's troops sent against him, and we are now looking forward with some certainty to a decisive movement against that chief which I have no doubt will be completely successful.

I remain still, the rather that the King always talks with increasing pleasure and eagerness of his intended Embassy to England, and has even several times spoken of sending his only son.

It is evident that our future relations depend upon the life and fortunes of one man, and are therefore precarious, but this is natural in a kingdom so disorganized, and, during so fierce a struggle for supremacy; but, unless I receive orders to the contrary, I must still consider it my duty to remain at all hazards, at any rate till the end of the rainy season in November.

I might stay at Massowah to await the issue, and, if nothing decisive be done, I propose to go there by the Sennaar frontier in November next; till then I strive to increase the King's friendly dispositions, that might cool in my absence, and to assist him with my advice.

My messengers are laid wait for in Tigré, and the rains now set in; unless, therefore, the King makes some decisive movement during this month, my correspondence will necessarily be somewhat interrupted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER PLOWDEN.

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end satisfactorily to all parties concerned. We are all still living with the Emperor in his compound, and he maintains us all in a most generous manner. It is believed that His Majesty will soon start in a near expedition, and he intends to place us during the rainy season in some safe place with his European artisans. We have only had a few showers as yet, but I am told that the heavy rains will set in regularly soon after the beginning of next month. I am glad to say that we are all well, and, considering the extensive marshes all around us, it is wonderful that there is so little sickness in the Royal camp. His Majesty sent to ask me the other day (long after Mr. Flad left) to write to the Bombay Government for artisans who knew how to cast cannons, and also for instruments for making the same. I told him that Bombay, being a dependency of England, the authorities had no power to do as he requested without the sanction of the Home Government. He wished to send 10,000 dollars for what he wanted, and said that he would double the sum if required; he then asked me to get him some books upon artillery practice, as he has a great number of European workmen here who have been making small cannons and mortars which were made with rude instruments, and the artillerymen have not been able to fire them properly, that is to say they cannot aim to a nicety, especially in throwing up shells to the proper place. I told him that I should write to Aden for the books, and as I wish to honour His Majesty I hope that you will be able, with the assistance of Colonel Woolcombe, to send up some useful books wherein a man may learn how to fire cannons and mortars, and everything to do with shell practice. If you can also manage to send me about 100 or 200 fuzes of different sizes for shells, they will be very much appreciated. Our Royal friend here will not understand what is best to his interests and thinks that he is not acting in an unfriendly way by keeping us here and writing for things which cannot be supplied, especially the matter of the artisans. If you are able to comply with my request kindly have everything you send up to me packed well in wax cloth and in small parcels in consequence of the rainy season, and the packages may have to be carried on men's shoulders. If you can also find a book wherein there is a description about melting iron and casting shot, and how to make an oven for the same, our friend would be glad to get it; of course he has a number of people who can read English. Kindly also send me about a dozen pieces of shirting or long cloth, and no end of buttons for shirts also; about five or six dozen shirts made of nice calico, but without linen fronts. Everything to do with shirts, either made of silk or calico, are appreciated in this country. I hope you will also remember us in the newspaper line; we have not had any news from Europe ever since we left Massowah, and consequently are all ignorant as to European politics. You cannot confer greater kindness on us than by sending us every scrap of newspaper you can spare from the time we left you in October, only please do not send any containing abusive matter. Blanc is out of medicines. He wrote to you by Mr. Flad for some. Kindly try and send them to Massowah as soon as possible with the things I sent for, in order that M. Munzinger may send them up by the messengers who carry this letter. A messenger reached the Emperor from Dr. Beke yesterday with the report of the latter's detention at Hallai by the Tigré rebels. From my letter to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,* which I send to you herewith for your perusal, you will find what steps His Majesty has taken for his release. The messenger has reported that Dr. Beke had brought a fine gold chain for the Emperor, and a silver one for the shield-bearer, as if the latter ever sit in the presence of his Royal master. He reported also that Dr. Beke had brought a telegraph with him, whereupon he was asked why his master did not communicate with the Emperor by the electric wire. Kindly try and send us 1,000 or 2,000 dollars to Matemma to be consigned to Mr. Eipperle, the missionary of the Jerusalem Mission there, as we may one day find it useful. I must now conclude, as I find I have written all that can be communicated just now. I shall write again in July, or sooner if required.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

P. S. 29*th May*.—The Emperor has replied to Dr. Beke in English, and told him that he ought not to have gone up to Hallai without his leave, especially as he knew that that part of Abyssinia was in a disturbed state. He has informed him that he has written to the Chief in Tigré, ordering them to send him down to Massowah in safety, and directed him to remain there until he would write and acquaint him by what route he was to come up.

H. R.

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*No. 631.

Inclosure 2 in No. 632.

*Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Zegay, May* 26, 1866.

WE heard the other day that Mr. Flad was likely to proceed home, viâ Souakin, in which case, this note may reach you before you have any exact appreciation of our adventures and actual position. On the 13th last month we left, us three, in boats to pay our respects to the King before our departure, and at the same time the Europeans left by road; our point of rendezvous being fixed at a spot near the western extremity of the lakes, where our heavy baggage was to be sent from thence, once united, again we were to proceed to Matemma. At about 1 o'clock we reached Zegay, and landed at a few hundred yards from the Royal enclosure. We were received at the beach with the usual honours, the head of the army, Ras Engedda, and several other officers of His Majesty's household, greeted us in the Emperor's name; mules from the imperial stables conducted us to the King's hall of reception; we alighted near the door, and on approaching saw that the hall was crowded with officers in their gala dresses standing on each side; at the top of the hall the chief officers were standing near the throne, but His Majesty was not present. We had hardly entered, when suddenly we were all three seized by men posted for the purpose, and our swords torn away from us before we knew where we were, my pouch and cap were also thrown on the ground, all the time I was firmly seized by three men. I was perfectly bewildered, and did not know what to make of it. I looked round and saw Rassam, his coat opened and held by three men, and turning round perceived that Prideaux was having his sash wrenched from him, making his eye-glass fly backwards a distance of several yards; the sight was so ridiculous that I could not help grinning at the face the poor fellow was making; the whole occurrence lasted but a few seconds, much less time than it requires to relate. This took place a few yards from the door; we were then on a signal from the head Ras, walked up to the end of the room and made to sit down on a carpet at the foot of the throne, our captors sitting near and behind us. The Ras then with other officers left the place, but shortly afterwards returned with a message from His Majesty to Rassam, "Why did you not bring the prisoners over with you?". Rassam answered, "Because your Majesty allowed them to go by land;" the second message was, "Did you not bring a friendly letter from the Queen, and did I not release the prisoners for her sake? It is true that I consented to the prisoners leaving without begging pardon, but I was ashamed to refuse you as you asked for it;" third message, "Why did you send letters to Massowah?" fourth message, "Did I ask you to write to the Queen for a man to instruct my people, and did you not say that you would?" A letter containing part of the genealogy of the Viceroy was then read, and other messages were brought, "That the prisoners had been sent for, that our swords had been taken away so that we should not hurt ourselves or others when we heard the bad news; that we must not be afraid, but it was only a cloud on our friendship, and that in a few days everything would be all right again." The assembly was then dismissed. We remained in the durbar guarded by the Rases and our first captors for about an hour, until a tent was pitched for us in the King's compound; we then proceeded to the tent and remained in it guarded by the Rases, and a guard until after the interview of the 16th, when once more again we were comparatively free after the questions had been put to us. The King proceeded to examine our baggage in presence of the Gaffat people, who had been ordered to come with us to the King's camp; arms, ammunition, money, telescopes, paper, and jewels, were taken out, a list of these things being made by some of the Gaffat people by the King's order; afterwards our luggage was sent to us, our servants ordered to attend us as usual, and a present of cows, sheep, bread, &c. sent to us by order of His Majesty. On the 14th our luggage arrived, and having been searched, as the first part of it, and objects of the same nature taken from it, was afterwards sent to us. The Europeans arrived the same day chained two and two, and placed in an enclosure at the extremity of the camp at about a mile from us.

On Monday morning, the 16th, we were called before His Majesty at about 9 o'clock, we found him standing before his durbar, surrounded by his Rases and several hundred officers forming a crescent, the Rases and principal officers being in a line in front of the throne, carpets were spread for us and the Gaffat gentlemen, others were already seated at the right of the throne; after His Majesty had greeted us, he ordered us to be seated on carpets in front of the throne, himself sitting on a small bed placed on the left of the throne; about ten minutes after our arrival, the Europeans

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

were brought in chained two by two; the Emperor sent them a cordial greeting, and at once ordered the chains to be taken off from Captain Cameron and from M. Bardel, and these two were told to come and sit near us. His Majesty then told the prisoners individually what charge he had against them, and asked them for what reason they had abused him; they all acknowledged their error, and prayed for forgiveness. He then ordered his pedigree from the old Emperors of Abyssinia to be proved before us. Numerous witnesses stepped forward to swear to the truth of his Royal lineage. This concluded, we were told to stand before him; he then addressed us, and asked again why we had not brought the prisoners to him, so as to be mutually reconciled; asked us if we were his masters, to go against his will. We were then told to sit down again. He afterwards addressed a few questions to Consul Cameron about his not bringing an answer to the letter, and why he had asked to leave in three days. Consul Cameron answered that he was only acting according to the instructions of his Government, and begged pardon if he had by so doing offended His Majesty. The King then said that he would shortly see us again to settle different matters, and that the Consul was to remain with us. That day a large inclosure was built in the King's compound, and our tents pitched in it early the next morning. On the 17th, we were again called before His Majesty. We found in the durbar room only the Gaffat gentlemen, Ras Engeddah, and a few officers of high rank. His Majesty, after some polite queries, told us to sit down on carpets spread at the left of the throne. The Europeans were then brought in (with the exception of Captain Cameron and M. Bardel, the former being with us), and, bowing to the ground, awaited the King's pleasure to rise, it being, according to the custom of the country, the manner to implore forgiveness. His Majesty immediately told them to rise, and, bowing his head to the ground, begged their pardon, and afterwards ours, for what had taken place between us. We begged him to rise, and told him that our friendship for him had never been altered by the misunderstanding that had taken place. When all were seated, he read a letter to the Queen, and asked Rassam if he was ready to write the letter he had promised formerly, regarding the European workmen. A reply in the affirmative having been given, he told us to be happy, and consider ourselves as his friends, and to go back to our tents. A few days afterwards Mr. Flad left, as you know; all our things, except a part of Rassam's Pisa wine, sent back. His Majesty's constant desire has always been to make his best to make us comfortable. With his own hands he spread carpets in Rassam's tent, the head Ras in mine and Prideaux's. He gave us mules, shields, horses; took us out several times shooting with him, a few days ago, to witness the trial of a small gun made by the Gaffat gentlemen; and on the 24th June, a great proof of his good-will and friendship, by feasting, to the best of his abilities, the birthday of his friend, our gracious Queen. I can give you but a very concise account of the many events that took place, but believe that the principal facts have been related; at all events I have only spoken of things of which I am perfectly sure. We are still living in the same place; and now that the rainy season is beginning in earnest, the place will soon be a perfect swamp. We got orders about three weeks ago to send all our heavy luggage to Korata. The Gaffat gentlemen are there since Mr. Flad's departure, so that it is not impossible that we may be sent there for the winter, though little is known—or, rather nothing at all—about his Majesty's intentions. Living in a confined space in the middle of a camp without any sanitary regulations, I fear that our health will suffer. Cameron is very weak, and worn out, and even Mr. Stern has lost much of his former stamina. We have all been more or less unwell, and it requires great care to avoid sickness. I took the liberty in my note to you (through Mr. Flad) to ask you to be kind enough to send us some medicines and stores, of both we are much in want. Cameron and myself mess together, and, as we are somewhat shaky, are looking forward to vegetables, joints, fish, sauces, brandy, &c., with almost as much impatience as to news about our future fate. I keep no diary; kindly, therefore, do not destroy this letter, as I will ask you to kindly let me have it on my return, if ever such an event takes place.

(Signed) H. BLANC.

Inclosure 3 in No. 632.

*Consul Cameron to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Zegay, May*, 26 1866.

I DO myself the pleasure of forwarding you some letters inclosed to Colonel Stanton. The letter to Mr. Hammond may be considered official. I would thank you

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

not to make any official use of those for Danby Seymour and Mr. Hertslet. I only send them to you, as they may contain something you do not know regarding our affairs. I have no friend at Aden, except Mr. Steinhaenser; I would beg to be remembered kindly to him, also to Burton, the traveller, when Dr. Steinhaenser writes to him.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 4 in No. 632.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Hammond, May 24, 1866.

[See No. 629.]

No. 633.

Consul Cameron to Mr. Henry Seymour, M.P.—(Received August 9.)*

Dear Sir, *Zegay, Abyssinia, May* 25, 1866.

I DID myself the pleasure of writing to thank you for your having spoken a kind word on my behalf in the House. I expected at that time to be soon on my way home, but there was a passage in the King's letter to Mr. Rassam which had not been translated properly. It was to the effect, that His Majesty wanted pledges of friendship in the shape of workmen. The fact is that we were only to be released if others supplied our place as hostages. It is an ugly business. Mr. Rassam wished to get us out of the King's reach as soon as possible. The latter gave us permission to leave, and after we had gone one stage on our road to the frontier, sent soldiers, who chained us and put all our property under seal. Mr. Rassam with Lieutenant Prideaux and Dr. Blanc had separated from us, in order to have a farewell interview with His Majesty. They were seized on their arrival at his camp, their uniforms torn open, their swords taken off their persons, their arms, money, and everything else they had taken possession of. They were kept in confinement, but without chains for three days. We were brought to the camp chained two and two. On the day after our arrival we had an interview with the King. My chain was opened, and I was ordered to take my seat with Mr. Rassam and his party, who were already on the ground. The Rev. Mr. Stern and the other Magdala prisoners were left in chains till the following day. It was the old story: complaints about having been abused—except as regards myself and Mr. Kerans. I had obeyed orders, and asked permission to go to Massowah without delay, which His Majesty took as an insult. The charge against Mr. Kerans was a very droll one. He had brought up a carpet of very common pattern—a Turk and a Frenchman shooting a lion. This lion was supposed to represent Abyssinia; France and Turkey were the hunters. The carpet had been sent up as a present by Mr. Kerans' cousin, my Vice-Consul, Mr. Speedy, and His Majesty construed the pattern on it as a real allegory aimed at himself.

Now everything is friendship. Mr. Rassam, having got a wigging in public for his having wished to get us out of the country, is again in favour.

You will have heard of the rest of the story by this time, and why he is returned together with us.

On the whole, I feel somewhat like the lad in the Arabian nights, who made his cream tarts with pepper, and found that in doing so he had committed a great political offence.

I went round the Abyssinian Frontier, in order to inquire about some Christian Abyssinian women who had been made slaves of long ago, and been lost sight of in the Soudan; and to try and get back some cattle which had been lifted from the vicinity of the Roman Catholic Mission Station on the Bogos. On reaching Kassala I found myself ill with fever, and was afraid to go to Massowah, so I wrote to the King, telling him the business I had come upon into the Soudan, and begging permission to go to the English Protestant Mission Station near his frontier, in order to obtain medicine and medical attendance, as I was very ill.

I assure you that I returned to Abyssinia as fearlessly as I would go to London.

Then came the request for toleration from the French Government, Mr. Stern's beating, the non-arrival of an answer to a letter the King had sent through me to England, and an order in its stead to go to my post, which, after waiting a few weeks

*Laid before Parliament, 1867.

in order to try and arrange the quarrel between His Majesty and the missionaries, I obeyed literally, and have been a prisoner ever since in consequence.

This is about the whole truth put into a nutshell.

I never was more surprised than when I heard that my returning to Abyssinia had been censured in England. If a Consul at Massowah is never to enter Abyssinia for either pleasure or business without applying for leave from England, there is no use in keeping up the post. In fact, I believe no one could live in Massowah without occasionally seeking the upland, the climate is so bad.

I have nothing to do with parties; my business is to serve the existing Government to the best of my abilities. But truth is truth, and "fair play's a jewel," as you say in dear England. It is not quite fair to tear my character to pieces, without hearing first what I have to say for myself. Remember me kindly to Sir H. Rawlinson, and if you have an opportunity pray thank Lord Chelmsford and the Earl of Malmesbury for having spoken in my behalf.

I would write to Mansfield Parkins to do so for me, but I am literally limited to a certain amount of paper in my correspondence just now, and have some other letters to write.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

No. 634.

Mr. Gibson to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 14.)*

My Lord, 25, *Moorgate Street, August* 13, 1866.

I BEG to inform your Lordship that I have several times offered my services to the late Government to release Mr. Consul Cameron, and the other captives now still detained in Abyssinia. My offers were always politely declined. Had I been allowed to proceed, the prisoners would long before this have been in England, as I am confident from my knowledge of the language, manners, and customs, I should have succeeded. I attribute the failure of the present mission to sending such a person as Rassam. Those who are acquainted with the prejudices of the different sects of Eastern Christians, will understand the antipathy the Abyssinians have to all Christians under the Turkish sway. Should your Lordship grant me an interview I shall be happy to explain fully the plans I should adopt.

I was Superintendent of the Red Sea and India Telegraph Company at Kosseir, to which post I was nominated through my knowledge of the country and language.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. GIBSON.

No. 635.

Mr. Eveleigh to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 9.)*

14, *Clifton Villas, Maida Hill, London,*
My Lord, *August* 8, 1866.

AS a relative of Her Majesty's Consul, Mr. Cameron, and with a desire to liberate the captives in Abyssinia, and to turn evil to good account, for although the first natural impression is to revenge such wrongs as they have suffered, yet, under the Christian principles I have been taught and have professed from my youth, and the knowledge I have obtained of that country and the more southern parts, I am sure the injuries can be turned to a far better and more noble account, by opening out a very extensive source of commerce between this country and the parts referred to, thereby extending British influence and trade without acquiring territory, and yet commanding peace and prosperity, with far more than indemnity for every expense.

I would thank your Lordship kindly to grant me an interview, and allow me to explain the plans which I would propose for carrying out these views, by devoting a few years of my life in that country as an Ambassage from this Government.

Trusting my devotion to medicine and science for thirty-five years will enable me to render a good account in this as in some other undertakings, I have, &c.

(Signed) GEO. EVELEIGH.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

No. 636.

*Memorandum by Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

THE intelligence from Mr. Rassam brought by Mr. Flad is certainly very unfortunate and perplexing. The latest news, up to the 13th of April, brought home by me in June, was most satisfactory; everything was progressing smoothly and well; and the very fact—that of the ex-captives being sent off without again going before the King, and which was done with his approval—now given as the cause for the change in the King's behaviour, was then reasonably considered as most likely to prevent any further unpleasantness. And so it would have done had not some other circumstances raised the King's suspicions; on which he used the departure of the ex-captives, without leave-taking, as a pretext for detaining, and, for a short time, ill-using the whole.

It would appear that, in accordance with the sanction of the King, both parties left Korata on the 13th of April—the ex-captives by land for Gorgara, at the north-western extremity of Lake Tsana; Mr. Rassam and his mission by water for the King's camp at Zegey. The former were stopped the next day, made prisoners again, all their property taken from them, placed in irons, and afterwards taken to the Royal camp. The latter, on reaching the King's camp, was, with his companions, suddenly arrested, their swords were taken from them, also their property, and they were placed under a guard. The reason assigned for this treatment was, Mr. Rassam sending the ex-prisoners away without their receiving a public pardon, and dismissal from the King. After three days had passed, explanations took place; the charges against Captain Cameron and the missionaries were publicly read out, acknowledged by them to be true, and pardon asked for. The King granted it before the whole Court assembled, and then asked pardon of Mr. Rassam for the treatment he had subjected him to. Mr. Rassam said he was satisfied, and expressed his regret that anything he had done should have annoyed the King—that it was quite unintentional; indeed, he believed that he was acting only as the King himself desired. Amity was restored; and up to the date of Mr. Flad's leaving, the 21st of April, the King had shown to Mr. Rassam the greatest possible courtesy, and the whole party were being well treated; their property had also been mainly restored.

The breach of etiquette was, there can be no doubt, only a pretext; the real cause of the change in the King's behaviour was, some one had excited suspicions in his mind that directly Mr. Rassam and the liberated captives were safe out of the country, the British Government would resent the treatment Captain Cameron had received, either by direct attack, or by urging on the Egyptian Government to advance against Abyssinia from that side. There can be no doubt, also, that the person who did this was the adventurer Bardel—the man who has taken every opportunity of doing injury to Captain Cameron. He told the Chamberlain Samuel, the King had better be careful how he let all the Europeans leave the country; Samuel told the King; and the latter immediately had his fears aroused, and determined on keeping all the Europeans until he obtained some material guarantee or unmistakeable assurance that no retributive steps were to be adopted against him.

In order to get this assurance, he determined on keeping Mr. Rassam's party and Captain Cameron's; despatching Mr. Flad, one of the German missionaries who had been in semi-confinement at Gaffat, and whose wife and children would remain in Abyssinia, with a letter to Her Majesty, asking her to send him means, and people "who would open his eyes;" that is to say, workmen who would develop the resources of his country, and teach his people to utilize the valuable products which were to be found in it. This is no new idea of his, and he took advantage of the position he had gained not only to advance this project, but at the same time to obtain, by the fact of his request being complied with, a certain assurance that no ill-will was borne against him.

The acts of the King in April were certainly a breach of the promises he made in February, when, on receiving Her Majesty's letter he released all the captives, and handed them over to Mr. Rassam, with permission to take them out of the country. His treatment of Mr. Rassam, and the officers with him, was undoubtedly most unjustifiable, and such as, under ordinary circumstances, would call for severe measures being adopted; but under the peculiar circumstances of the case, and unless Her Majesty's Government was prepared to engage in a war with Abyssinia, and to march an army into the country to bring off Mr. Rassam, and all by force of arms, I confess I do not see how serious notice can be taken of these acts of the King. Officially, from

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Mr. Rassam, Government has heard nothing of what was done by the King; the proceedings above epitomized have been confidentially communicated by Mr. Flad, who brought home the letter for Her Majesty.

Another point with regard to the inexpediency of taking serious notice of what has occurred presents itself, and that is the danger of causing further injury, if not death, to Mr. Rassam, the officers with him, and Captain Cameron's party, on an offensive attitude being assumed. There would be no difficulty in conquering the country, and punishing the King, provided Her Majesty's Government was prepared to go to the expense of such an undertaking; but I conclude that is not to be thought of.

The only thing that remains, and what I would venture to recommend, is that the King's confidence may be won by his being frankly and most liberally met; that the means he alludes to, and of which Mr. Flad has a list, should be supplied by Government, and presented to the King; that efforts should be made to obtain the services of an enterprising, well-educated person, who would proceed to Abyssinia to set up the machinery which Government sends out, and who would be able to do what the King most requires, to teach some of his people the use of the machinery, and how to take advantage of what his country contains. This person should be able to superintend everything, and might take with him four or five men of his own selection, who would work under him as smiths, carpenters, &c. It is better so than to send simple artizans by themselves, who being under no control would quickly destroy themselves by excesses, or fatally offend the King. He and they should go out entirely of their own free will and accord; should be fully informed of the risk they run, and that they are to serve under the King for three years or longer, if agreeable to both parties. That Government are not responsible for their safety, or that they shall be allowed to return punctually at the end of three years; for this they must depend on themselves, and on their satisfying the King. If they work well for him, I am confident, and so is Mr. Flad, that they will not only be perfectly safe, but that they will be highly honoured, and greatly enriched. I believe myself that such a person could be found, who would be glad of so good an opportunity of advancing himself, and I shall be happy to make arrangements for his engagement.

All that I think would be required of Government in the event of a person being met with is, that his expenses and those of his companions out, also his and their salaries until they joined the King, should be paid by the Government; and as a provision to them all against actual loss, that Government should guarantee the payment, to any persons appointed by them in England, of their full salary for the three years according to the sum agreed on, should it so happen that the King failed to remunerate them himself according to the compact, that their health yielded to the effects of climate, causing their return home, or death, and their salary was not paid by the King, or that their lives were taken by the King or lost in his service, and he failed to recompense their friends. Beyond the above, Government is to have nothing to do with them.

This Superintendent, his assistants, and the articles which it is proposed Her Majesty should send as presents to the King, and of which a list is appended, should all accompany Mr. Flad on his return to Abyssinia. Owing to the rainy season Mr. Flad cannot start from the sea-coast for the King's camp until early in October. He would have to leave England about the middle of September for Aden, and from thence would be sent from Massowah in Her Majesty's ship "Victoria." At Massowah he would find letters from the King telling him what route to follow to join the Royal camp.

Mr. Flad brought a letter from King Theodorus to Her Majesty;* another had been previously received in June last,† in answer to the one from Her Majesty delivered by Mr. Rassam. I would suggest that these two letters should be answered in one, which should be as short as possible. The contents of the first letter should be acknowledged with great satisfaction as what was expected from a Sovereign entertaining friendly feelings towards Her Majesty, and gratification should be shown at the King having so promptly handed over Captain Cameron and the others to Mr. Rassam. Regret might then be expressed that delay should have occurred in the carrying out His Majesty's good intentions, and a request that he would speedily complete what had been so well begun, by sending Mr. Rassam, Captain Cameron, and all to England, that Her Majesty may hear from them about His Majesty and his country. It might then be added that, in compliance with the request contained in His Majesty's last letter, and to show the friendly feeling felt towards him, as well as a desire to see his country

* April 17, 1866: see Inclosure 3 in No. 609. † January 29, 1866; see Inclosure 2 in No. 609.

benefited, certain articles were sent for his acceptance, which it was trusted might prove useful in promoting the object His Majesty had in view. One of the points the King wrote about three years ago was that he might send an Embassy to England. This might be noticed now with great advantage, and he could be told in the letter that, with a view of enlightening him as to the blessings that a bountiful Providence had granted this country, as well as the advantages that followed on the increase of knowledge, if His Majesty would send some of his nobles or able counsellors to England with Mr. Rassam, they would be received with honour, and treated as worthy people coming from a friend. This would, I think, have the best possible effect; it would assist the early exodus of Mr. Rassam and party, and would, in conjunction with the people and presents sent, tend to entirely remove the suspicions which have been so unfortunately raised in the King's mind. It has been mentioned that it would be best to try and enter into some kind of arrangement with the King, that before the people now going to work for him should enter his country the Europeans there should have left it. I look upon it as most dangerous to the success of the whole scheme should this be attempted; it will tend only to confirm the King's suspicions, and would, I firmly believe, cause him to even forego the chance of getting the workmen he is so anxious for, and would lead to the immediate consignment to captivity, not only of Captain Cameron and his companions again, but that of Mr. Rassam and his party also, with a certainty of their release being uneffectable without armed interference. On the other hand, fairly and frankly trust the King; show him that his word is fully believed in; lead him to see that the stories which have been told him are false; that nothing but friendly feelings exist towards him, and I am confident no further difficulty will arise, and that he will be only too glad to try, and prove his regret for what has passed, and his earnestness in faithful conduct for the future.

It is mentioned in Mr. Flad's report,* and I have heard from other quarters, that an expedition from the Egyptian side against Abyssinia is about to be carried out. This cannot be too stongly deprecated, and, if possible, measures should be taken to prevent it. As sure as Egypt attacks Abyssinia, so surely will the King believe it to be only at the instigation of the British Government, and so surely will he imprison, if not destroy, all the Europeans with him.

I would mention one other subject in which the King is deeply interested, and most desirous of assistance in, that is, instruction in the use of artillery. His own people are very deficient in this knowledge, and though he has guns of sorts, they are of little value to him. It was suggested that an artillery officer should be sent out with Mr. Flad. I would not recommend this. It is quite unnecessary to send an officer: a qualified sergeant of artillery, such as there is now in the garrison at Aden, might be sent up to join Mr. Rassam's Mission, and remain with it during the time it would have to stay yet in the country. That would give sufficient opportunity for him to show how the guns should be worked, and to allow of translations of range tables, instructions for boring, and setting fuzees, &c., being made. I would also recommend that with him a couple of light 6-pounder Armstrongs, such as were used against the Arabs last winter, which are also in store at Aden, should be sent up with 100 rounds per gun as a present to the King. These would be highly valued by him.

One of the first questions King Theodorus would ask of Mr. Flad on his return would be, Did you see the Queen of England? I would strongly urge that it is a matter of great importance that he should reply in the affirmative, and it would certainly aid greatly towards the release of those whose departure from Abyssinia is so greatly desired. If Her Majesty would be graciously pleased to grant Mr. Flad an audience it would do more almost than anything else to promote the success of the object for which he came to England, and for which he left behind his wife and children.

Since writing the above I have, through the kindness of various gentlemen in London, been placed in communication with several persons who have offered their services but have not yet been able finally to close with any particular one.

The last who has applied is the most likely to suit. and I think is really inclined to engage himself; as far as he is individually concerned he would have done so this morning, but before completing the arrangement he wished to hear from his friends, to whom he had written on Saturday, but had not received a reply. He is an Irish gentleman, well connected,† and has been engaged in important works as civil engineer for the last twenty-two years, and has very strong testimonials. He is exactly the sort of person required, one who would himself be able to superintend the setting

* See No. 613.

† By name, Talbot.

up and proper application of machinery; would pick out serviceable and good men to go with him; and while, from being a man of good education and steady principles, he would be careful how he conducted himself, he would also be able to control the others whom he would select, and who would be dependent on him. His salary would be 1,000*l.* a year, and the workmen's according to their capabilities. He has had the risk fully explained to him, as also what is proposed in this paper as regards himself, and those who go with him; and as far as he was concerned, he told me he was willing to engage on the terms, provided his friends approved.

He will give a final answer on Wednesday next; and when, if it is in the affirmative, he will also give me an approximate estimate of the cost of the machinery and tools he would take with him, as also the pay to the workmen.

Since Monday afternoon two more gentlemen have expressed their desire to go to Abyssinia to work under and for the King, so that there are now three applicants. I had another interview yesterday with Mr. Talbot, when he furnished me with a rough estimate of the cost of the machinery, which judging from the list brought home by Mr. Flad, would be what the King would like to have.

The things mainly desired by the King are:—

Foundry and apparatus for smelting; iron existing to a very great extent in his country, with very fair coal and plenty of wood.

Means of making muskets, copper caps, wheeled carriages, and boats.

The first essential for the above is a steam-engine of about twelve horse-power. This once got up, would help to do everything. The other articles suggested are, with their prices roughly quoted, annexed:—

	£
One steam-engine with boiler and fittings complete, 12-horse power, ready for setting up	300
Cupola and fans	50
Puddling and smelting apparatus complete for different classes of iron	400
One vertical drill for general use, including gun and cannon work	100
One lathe made to order, with tools	100
One saw bench, large size, for heavy timber, with assortment of saws	100
One brick moulding and milling machine	80
One thrashing machine for all kinds of corn	50
One patent churn	5
Belts for steam machinery	30
Machinery for screw-bolts, &c.	20
One complete set of carpenter's tools	40
One do. smith's do.	30
One copper-cap making machine	20
One gunpowder mill, small size	50
One ton of assorted steel	40
Two anvils—one 4, the other 3 cwt., and one vice	15
Miscellaneous—	
Two filters, one packed inside the other: a small patent water-testing chest; some paint, oil and brushes; one crate of mixed glass; two diamonds for cutting glass; assorted chemicals, to be selected by Superintendent (much required), and some hand lamps, &c.	70
Total	£1,500

The above are an approximate to the rates of the day, given as a rough estimate, but rather over than under the mark. They will all be most useful, worked by the one engine.

In addition, the following to be purchased, and sent as presents for the King's especial use from Her Majesty:—

One Ordnance telescope of good power, with tripod stand A supply of gunpowder and caps Some handsome large square carpets Some pieces of various coloured silks Half-a-dozen ornamented tumblers, large size Half-a-dozen glass water-bottles A breech-loading fowling piece, double barrel A double-barrel Jacob's rifle with shell apparatus; 500 shells prepared, and 3,000 spare tubes A Prussian needle gun, with cartridges A Dean and Adams revolver, Tranter's improved A pair of binocular field glasses	Say £500

To work and look after the machinery, the Superintendent would require the workmen as below mentioned, with salaries as set opposite their names:—

	£
Superintendent's salary, per annum	1,000
One gunsmith	300
One fitter	300
One iron founder	300
One ship's carpenter	270
One carpenter	250
One smith	230
One general man	230
Total	£2,880

These men would, on joining the King, receive their salary from him; but up to the time of reaching his camp, it was proposed all charges on their account should be paid by Her Majesty's Government; this would be equal to three months' or a quarter's salary, 720*l.*; and to enable them to start fairly, a moderate sum should be given to each as outfit allowance, 90*l.* to the Superintendent, and 30*l.* to each of the workmen, or 300*l.* in all.

Their passage money to Aden would also have to be paid:—

	£
Superintendent, 1st class	60
Seven workmen, 2nd class, 30*l.* each	210
Total	£270

The entire expenditure will be as follows:—

	£
Machinery	1,500
Other presents	500
Quarter's salary to Superintendent and workpeople	720
Outfit allowance	300
Passage to Aden	270
Total	£3,290

Or, say in round terms, 3,500*l.*

Beyond this Government would be bound to nothing but the guarantee of the three years' salary in the event of King Theodorus failing to pay it. This is most improbable, so that in reality it is a mere nominal responsibility; all other risks the men take on themselves.

There was one other thing recommended in the first part of this Memorandum, that a couple of light Armstrong guns, or one might be sufficient, with 200 rounds of ammunition, be sent from the Aden Arsenal as a present to the King. It would be very highly valued, and a serjeant of Artillery could very easily be sent up with it from Aden to show its working, and teach the King's men gunnery generally during the time Mr. Rassam may continue in Abyssinia. The cost of the Armstrong and ammunition I do not know at present.

The scheme is now complete, and ready for Lord Stanley's consideration and decision. Of its success, if thus liberally and generously carried out, I have not the slightest doubt myself. It will re-assure the King, remove the absurd suspicions he holds now, prove to him friendly feelings are really entertained towards him in spite of all that has passed, and practically convince him of the value of the friendship of Her Majesty. The sum may appear large, but I would submit that it is small compared to the object it will gain, and a mere insignificant trifle compared to the cost of a campaign in such a country as Abyssinia.

I would beg the favour of his Lordship's decision being early communicated to me, that I may give a final answer to the three applicants as soon as possible. They would be greatly obliged by hearing it on Saturday morning, as they are kept in town until they are made acquainted with the result.

Of the three I would decidedly recommend the first applicant, Mr. Talbot.

W. L. MEREWETHER.

London, August 16, 1866.

No. 637.

*Mr. Murray to Mr. Eveleigh.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 17, 1866.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant,† offering to proceed to Abyssinia in an official capacity, in order to promote the commerce between that country and Great Britain; and I am to thank you for this offer, of which, however, his Lordship has no occasion to avail himself.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 638.

Mr. Murray to the Secretary to the Treasury.

(Extract.) *Foreign Office, August* 18, 1866.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to inform you that the Rev. Mr. Flad has recently arrived in London from Abyssinia, being the bearer of letters from King Theodore to the Queen, and also of letters from Mr. Rassam to the Secretary of State.

It appears therefrom, as well as from Mr. Flad's statements, that King Theodore, who, soon after Mr. Rassam's arrival, had made over to him the whole of the prisoners, in order that he might remove them to Europe, at the last moment changed his mind, and not only refused to let the prisoners depart, but also placed Mr. Rassam and the gentlemen by whom he was accompanied under the same restraint. The object of the King in now detaining the whole of these persons, including Mr. Rassam is that Mr. Flad, whose wife and children are also detained by him as hostages, should return to Abyssinia accompanied by a certain number of artisans willing to take service with the King, and also as the bearer of certain articles for the use of the King.

Lord Stanley does not doubt that the Lords of the Treasury will agree with him in opinion, that no reasonable means should be neglected for obtaining the release of Her Majesty's Officers and of all the persons who were made over to Mr. Rassam on his arrival in Abyssinia.

It seems to Lord Stanley, therefore, that such articles as the King has expressed his desire of receiving should be sent out by Mr. Flad; and that any artizans who, of their own accord, may be willing to enter into the King's service, should so far be assisted in the journey that they should be sent out at the public expense.

In considering this matter his Lordship has had the advantage of consulting Colonel Merewether, the Political Resident at Aden, who happens to be in England on leave of absence; who has cheerfully volunteered his services in carrying the views of Her Majesty's Government into effect, and who has succeeded in finding qualified persons desirous of embarking on this enterprize.

I annex an extract of a statement made to Lord Stanley by Colonel Merewether of the cost which this will entail, and I am desired to state that Lord Stanley confidently calculates on the assent of the Treasury to this disbursement.

The expense of Mr. Flad's journey to England, and other expenses which he has incurred on account of the captives, and also those of his return to Abyssinia, will also form an item in the account of monies disbursed on this service, for which the Board of Treasury from time to time has provided.

As it is necessary that Mr. Flad should return to Abyssinia in the course of a month or six weeks, I am to request that the Lords of the Treasury will favour Lord Stanley at their earliest convenience with a reply to this letter.

No. 639.

Mr. Hamilton to Mr. Hammond.—(Received August 21.)

Sir, *Treasury Chambers, August* 21, 1866.

WITH reference to Mr. Murray's letter of 18th instant, I am commanded by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to acquaint you, for the information of Lord Stanley, that they approve of the arrangements proposed by his Lordship in

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 635.

reference to the Mission of Colonel Merewether to the King of Abyssinia for the purpose of securing the release of the captives in that country.

I am to state that my Lords have given directions for the issue to Mr. G. Lenox-Conyngham of the sum of 3,500*l.* to meet the expenses to be incurred.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GEO. A. HAMILTON.

No. 640.

*Mr. Murray to Mr. Gibson.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 21, 1866.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant,† offering to proceed to Abyssinia in order to procure the liberation of the British subjects now detained in that country; and I am to thank you for this offer, of which, however, Her Majesty's Government do not propose to avail themselves.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 641.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 28.)*

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, August* 27, 1866.

I HEREWITH inclose you a copy of a letter received a few days since by Mrs. Stern, from her husband the Rev. H. A. Stern, the missionary, who has been so long a captive in Abyssinia. And in doing so I may ask whether your Lordship is fully acquainted with the fact that Mr. Stern and the other missionaries, and their wives and children, had all their goods confiscated, and their property of every kind, even to their clothes, taken from them and destroyed.

Now, my Lord, it is admitted on all hands (except by those who would gladly forget the position into which these poor people have been thrown by the culpable neglect of the commonest act of courtesy on the part of Her Majesty's servants) that the cause of the sufferings of the captives was mainly that of not answering the King's polite letter to Her Majesty Queen Victoria. In Mr. Flad's Mission, I believe he was requested to ask for some compensation for the losses he and the rest of the captives had sustained by the confiscation and destruction of all their property. He was consequently referred to Mr. Murray, who, I am told, not only refused to give them a farthing, but treated the matter in the most uncourteous and ungentlemanly manner.

Your Lordship is not aware, perhaps, that Mr. Stern had an expensive photographic apparatus, a very fine collection of natural curiosities and books, besides money, clothes, &c., which were all taken away from him by the emissaries of the King; not one iota of which has been returned.

I may also state that the Negoos never sent the captives a loaf of bread or a jug of water during their captivity at Magdala.

It has fallen to my lot, my Lord, as the father-in-law of Mr. Stern, to be made acquainted with many facts which have never yet transpired; and those facts go to show circumstances not at all redounding to the credit of the English captives; nor do I desire to reveal them to their prejudice. One thing, however, I must state, and that is, the unremitting care of Mr. Flad, and the untiring benevolence of that gentleman, were the means of saving the Consul and his friends from starvation for many months. And when supplies of money, &c., were sent from Massowah, the Consul refused the missionaries any participation in them, although he knew they had been the means of saving him from absolute want, over and over again.

I should not have troubled your Lordship with this statement, but that I felt convinced your Lordship would not concur in Mr. Murray's refusal to give even a suit of clothes for the poor captives to return in, if your Lordship was at all aware of the actual state of the case; and I feel assured that your Lordship's sense of justice to these sufferers will not permit you to treat them with contempt, even if you cannot see that they are entitled to some compensation.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 634.

Your Lordship can do as you please as to whether you consider this communication official or private.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

Inclosure in No. 641.

*The Rev. H. Stern to Mrs. Stern.**

My dearest Charlotte, *Zegay, Lake Tsana, May* 26, 1866.

AFTER such a long period of feverish anxiety and harassing care, I thought that at length our interminable sad captivity was to end. That this fond expectation, like so many others, was doomed to disappointment you have probably already heard. Painful as it is to cherish gloomy forebodings, I dare not without practising self-deception, conjure up in my imagination visionary prospects of freedom, which, as the past has so frequently demonstrated, are always destined to be scattered to the winds. Without adverting specially to the different periods which seemed propitious to close my own personal misery, had not something always of a local character intervened, hostile to my liberation, I will just mention one or two facts which will convince you that my surmises are not unfounded.

It is now nearly three years since these unhappy Abyssinian complications began. Of all the causes which produced them I will not and dare not just now speak. This, however, is certain, that the Negoos was offended because he did not receive an answer to his letter to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, sent to Her Majesty's Government in 1862. Well, that reply, and a very gracious one too, at last is written; but instead of being immediately dispatched to the King, when it would doubtless have effected our freedom, it is, contrary to the advice of the Europeans and the prisoners here, detained eighteen months at Massowah. Passing over many many weeks of intense suffering, a better future once more brightens our horizon. Hurrying away from Magdala, we find in the excitement of motion, the exercise of unfettered limbs, and the delight of meeting those dear faces whose smiles would diffuse a sunshine over our hearts so long inured to prison gloom, something to mitigate if not to obliterate the keen trials of the past, when, to our astonishment, shackles once more encircle our wrists, which, after five days of tedious explanations and mutual apologies, are removed; and between conjectures and doubts, hope and despair, we are condemned to pass our time in a dreary enclosure of the royal camp.

I am no politician, nor do I arrogate to myself such a dignity; but this I know, that procrastination, neglect, and blunders, have inexorably conspired against the mitigation and relief of misery in our unfortunate case. You and every one here, well know that I am not easily appalled at difficulties, or disposed to cower in the presence of danger, but this perpetual wear and tear of cruel suspense jars and grates upon my nerves,—nay, worse, it shakes and undermines almost visibly, my once strong and vigorous constitution.

Since the departure of Mr. Flad for England, the Negoos has been very attentive to Mr. Rassam, Dr. Blanc, Lieutenant Prideaux, as also to the late Magdala prisoners, But cows, sheep, honey, potent hydromel, &c., must not blind us to the various contingencies that may yet arise. I have had bitter experience, and so am not easily gulled by a little subserviency. As far as I can judge from the past, I fear we shall yet have to breast (to use a nautical phrase) many a heavy sea ere we outride the storm.

Do not think that I am desponding or inclined to waver in my trust in the goodness of Him, who has hitherto so wonderfully sustained me in all the trials and hardships that have fallen to my lot. No, no, my motto is, and ever will be, "Commit thy way unto the Lord and trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass."

The note I gave to Mr. Flad you will estimate at its proper value.

I should like to write more, but it is interdicted to dilate on our mysterious history.

God bless you and the dear children; and that our Heavenly Father may ere long re-unite us, is the fervent prayer of, &c.

(Signed) HENRY A. STERN.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

P.S.—You will communicate this, and the contents of all my previous letters to whomsoever you may feel disposed.

H. A. S.

No. 642.

*Captain Goodfellow to Lord Stanley.—(Received September 5.)**

My Lord, *Aden, August* 19, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a letter dated 23rd ultimo, from Her Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt, and to inform your Lordship that, in obedience to the instructions conveyed therein, I dispatched Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" from Aden on the 10th instant, with the stores and money required by Mr. Rassam, to Massowah, and by the same opportunity I sent him the information contained in the letter above referred to, reporting Mr. Flad's arrival in England, and his being in communication with the Foreign Office on the subject of his journey. I also forwarded the private letters that arrived from the Foreign Office from Mr. Flad, one to the address of His Majesty the Emperor Theodorus, one addressed to M. Munzinger at Massowah, and the third to Mr. Rassam himself.

2. The "Victoria" returned from Massowah on the 17th instant, but I regret to say brought no further intelligence of the Mission. M. Munzinger had received no further news from the interior, and was unable to say when messengers might arrive with despatches; he therefore did not detain the vessel. He reports that the King is at Debra Tabor, with cholera in his camp; that the Europeans were at Korata and Dejaj Gobasi, in Tembean, and expected to arrive at Adowa shortly. All the stores, &c., forwarded on a former occasion, had been dispatched; and M. Munzinger states, that he will lose no time in sending off those that had then arrived.

3. The "Victoria" will again visit Massowah for intelligence in the course of a few days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 643.

*Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received September 5.)**

My Lord, *Alexandria, August* 27, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship, a despatch from the Acting Political Resident at Aden,† that has just reached me under flying seal, acknowledging the receipt of your Lordship's instructions, which were forwarded to me by telegraph, on the subject of the communication to be made to Mr. Rassam, touching Mr. Flad's journey to England;‡ and reporting that Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" had been dispatched from Aden to Massowah on the 10th instant, for the purpose of conveying the stores and money required by Mr. Rassam, and that your Lordship's communication for that gentleman had been forwarded by the same opportunity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 644.

*Captain Goodfellow to Mr. Murray.—(Received September 10.)**

Sir, *Aden Residency, August* 19, 1866.

THE letters inclosed by you in your note of the 26th ultimo§ reached me, and they were at once forwarded to their respective addresses by "Victoria," which left this for Massowah on the 10th instant. Trusting that you will convey my best thanks to Mr. Flad for his letter to me,

I remain, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 642.

‡ Viz., that he had arrived in England, and was in communication with the Foreign Office.

§ No. 627.

No. 645.

Mr. Purday to Mr. Murray.—(Received September 11.)*

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, September* 10, 1866.

MORE than a fortnight ago I took the liberty of addressing your Lordship on the subject of the captives in Abyssinia,† inclosing at the same time a copy of a late letter from the Rev. H. A. Stern, my son-in-law, and printed copies of his former letters. Not having been favoured with an answer, I presume they never reached your Lordship. If my conjecture is right, may I take the liberty of asking your Lordship for a reply to this?

I am, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 646.

*Mr. Egerton to Mr. Purday.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 13, 1866.

LORD STANLEY has received your letter of the 10th instant, relating to the claims which you state are preferred by the British subjects now detained in captivity in Abyssinia, to compensation from Her Majesty's Government on account of the loss incurred by them in consequence of the confiscation of their property by the King of that country, and with reference to your statements that money and "a suit of clothes" had been refused by this Office "to the poor captives to return in," I am directed by His Lordship to request you to state to what circumstance you refer; also, when and by whom such application was made, and whether you possess a copy of the reply to which you refer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. C. EGERTON.

No. 647.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received September 15.)*

My Lord, *Alexandria, September* 3, 1866.

I BEG leave to forward herewith to your Lordship an extract from a Smyrna Journal, "L'Impartial," which purports to be the text of a letter addressed by the Count de Bisson to the "Journal de Nice," on the state of affairs in Abyssinia.

As it appears almost incredible that such a tissue of misrepresentations and falsehood could have been sent for publication, without some ulterior object in view, and as such statements as are contained in this letter as to the assistance given by the Governor of Aden to the Tigré rebels, might be of very serious consequence to the captives in Abyssinia, should they reach the ears of the King, I have considered it advisable to forward the extract in question for your Lordship's information, in case it might be considered necessary to warn Mr. Flad on the subject before his return to Abyssinia, in order that he might be prepared to meet any questions addressed him by the King on these subjects.

It is difficult to see what advantage the Count de Bisson can expect to gain by spreading these false reports, unless it may be the hope that King Theodore may apply to him, as a French Agent, for assistance against the rebels in Tigré and their supposed British allies, and thus to a certain extent acknowledge and strengthen the position he has assumed on the frontier of Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 647.

*Extract from a Smyrna Newspaper ("L'Impartial").**

M. LE COMTE DU BISSON, fondateur de la colonie Française d'Abyssinie, vient d'adresser au "Journal de Nice" la lettre suivante:

"L'Empereur Théodoros vient d'appeler aux armes le ban et l'arrière-ban de ses

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † See No. 641.

vaillants. Deux cent mille guerriers sont réunis en ce moment dans les plaines de Dembéa.

" Les cloches des églises et des monastères sonnent le tocsin trois heures par jour dans toute l'Abyssinie, et le tambour impérial résonnant dans les villes, les villages, les hameaux, annonce aux populations fanatisées que la patrie est en danger.

"' Abbà Sanghia ! Vive Théodoros !' cri de guerre qui retentit d'une frontière à l'autre.

" L'armée va partir pour le Tigré, vaste province montagneuse qui touche à la Mer Rouge, où l'étendard de l'insurrection se promène triomphant.

" Goubassié, nègre de pure race, espèce d'halluciné, se prétendant le descendant de Salomon et de la reine de Saba, revendique le trône. Quoiqu'il en soit de l'exactitude de ses prétentions, il a réussi à soulever les populations ruinées par les guerres précédentes ; les faibles détachements impériaux ont été massacrés, et aujourd'hui il est le maître absolu de toutes ces contrées. Autour de sa personne se sont ralliés les partisans de Négoussié, d'Oubié, de Balgueda, d'Aréa, de Saha Salassé, les Souverains dépossédés par Théodoros. Son principal général, Hyaro Mékina, de la race Choa, a sous ses ordres plus de 100,000 combattants.

" Une Compagnie Anglaise a vendu des armes et de la poudre à Goubassié. Le Gouverneur de la Colonie d'Aden a fait de nombreuses expéditions de fusils réformés et de munitions, et les communications les plus actives pour ce commerce clandestin sont établies entre Aden et le Tigré, par Tarenta.

" Les forces des insurgés se trouvent donc passablement armées ; et, sous ce rapport elles sont supérieures à celles de Théodoros, qui ne possède que 20,000 tirailleurs.

" Toute sa nombreuse et redoutable cavalerie ne lui sera d'aucun secours, dans cette Suisse Africaine où les luttes à l'arme blanche sont excessivement difficiles.

" Des concessions très-larges ont été faites à l'Angleterre par le chef des rebelles.

" Si le Négous succombe, elle seule en profitera. Elle deviendra la maîtresse de la Mer Rouge et du centre de l'Afrique, la plus riche contrée du globe, en productions tropicales, en mines de fer, de cuivre, de plomb argentifère, d'or, et en bassins houilliers.

" La Mer Rouge, donc, sera un lac Anglais, et le percement de l'Isthme aura été fait à son profit.

" Mais, victorieux au Tigré, il faudra bien se résoudre à descendre dans les vastes plaines de Dembéa. Là, on retrouvera les centaures de l'Amarha, et nous verrons encore une de ces batailles titanesques auprès desquelles les fusillades de notre vieille Europe ne sont que jeux d'enfant.

" Choc effrayant, duel implacable de 300,000 hommes ; combats singuliers, corps à corps, sans quartier ni merci. Vainqueurs ou morts, de prisonniers nulle part ; de fuyards pas un.

" En apprenant les succès des révoltés et leurs accointances Anglaises, Théodoros entra dans une de ces colères foudroyantes qui font blanchir son noir visage.

" Il donna l'ordre de mutiler immédiatement tous les captifs Anglais. L'intervention énergique de la belle impératrice sauva seule de cet atroce supplice tous ces malheureux Anglais.

" L'ambassade extraordinaire, confiée au Commodore Rassam et à deux autres personnages, a eu un résultat désastreux.

" Tous ses membres sont aux fers.

" Le Négous avait bien accueilli l'ambassadeur Rassam.

" Il posa carrément ses conditions à l'élargissement de M. Duncan Cameron et de ses compagnons. Elles furent acceptées avec empressement ; les voici :—

" 1. Le renvoi immédiat à Calcutta de toutes les troupes Britanniques réunies à Aden (sept régiments et deux batteries de montagne.) Cette clause fut exécutée sans aucun retard.

" 2. L'abandon du territoire envahi par les Egyptiens au nord de l'Abyssinie et la dissolution de l'armee Soudanienne du Vice-roi.

" Ce second article fut admis également. Mais le soupçonneux monarque déclara à M. Rassam qu'il resterait en Abyssinie jusqu'à l'exécution complète du Traité.

" Sur ces entrefaites, l'insurrection Tigréenne prit un développement formidable, et tous, représentants et sujets Anglais, furent incarcérés.

" M. Flad, missionnaire Anglican, fut dépêché à Londres, porteur d'un ultimatum avec ordre de revenir à Gondar, rapporter la réponse.

" Et pour être certain de son obéissance passive Théodoros lui dit :

" ' Tu aimes bien ta femme, tu adores tes enfans, je t'approuve ; mais, si tu ne retournes pas je les fais vendre comme esclaves ; la race des parjures ne doit pas exister.'

" M. Flad vient d' arriver à Londres.

" En attendant, l'Ambassadeur extraordinaire et sa suite, le Consul-General, l'Evêque Anglais Stern et dix missionnaires sont au carcan.

"La Propagande Biblique, la plus riche du monde, avait expédié le Docteur Beke pour traiter de la rançon des captifs. Il n'a eu que le temps de se soustraire à la tempête."

No. 648.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(*Received September* 15.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, September* 5, 1866.

THE inclosed despatch under flying seal has this instant reached me, and I have merely time to forward it on to your Lordship, without making any remarks on the very serious intelligence contained therein.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 649.

Captain Goodfellow to Lord Stanley.—(*Received September* 15.)*

My Lord, *Aden, August* 28, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to state, for your Lordship's information, that I received a despatch from Massowah this afternoon by native boat, from M. Munzinger, in charge oft he Consulate at that place; in it was inclosed only one short note from Mr. Rassam, to the address of the Political Resident, a copy of which is attached.

2. M. Munzinger reports that the messengers who brought the above note arrived at Massowah on the 10th instant, and that they state that they did not leave Debra Tabor for fifteen days after it was written, in consequence of Mr. Rassam requesting them to delay their departure; but that on the 10th July they quitted his camp, but were unable to arrive at Massowah earlier on account of the rainy season and flooded state of the rivers *en route*.

3. They report that up to the end of May the King was at Zegay, whilst the Europeans were at Korata; that cholera breaking out in the royal camp His Majesty removed his army to Debra Tabor, sending Mr. Rassam and his companions to Gaffat; and that, up to the date of Mr. Rassam's note, he had been well treated, but after that the King's behaviour towards the Europeans suddenly changed in a most unaccountable manner, he caused them all to repair to Debra Tabor, and there insulted them by speech, and treated them as prisoners, without actually putting them in irons; he took all their property, and two days before the departure of the messengers (on the 8th of July) sent both the old and new prisoners to Magdala, escorted by Ras Engedda and a strong guard. M. Bardel accompanied them, but apparently more as a soldier of the King than a prisoner, so that now the former prisoners have returned to their old quarters, accompanied by the members of the Mission.

4. Mrs. Flad was not disturbed, she was permitted to reside at Gaffat, and Mrs. Rosenthal was sent to her as a companion. The King is stated to have begged Mrs. Flad not to be alarmed, being, as he was pleased to say, the wife of his son, Flad. Messrs. Essler and Schiller were also granted permission to remain in Mrs. Flad's house.

5. The prisoners were supplied with food by the King as heretofore, and none had been sick; Mrs. Waldmeier being the only person who had had an attack of cholera, which she had got over.

6. Tisso Gobese was reported to have extended his power as far as Gondar, and that the King only possessed Begemder and the road as far as Magdala; during the time he had been at Debra Tabor, and where he would most probably pass the rainy season, he had lost Agowmedr. Wakshum Gobese had entered Adowa, and would soon make himself master of the whole of Tigré, as his army was reported to be considerable.

7. As it is very probable that some more messengers may reach Massowah in a few days, Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria" will be dispatched on the 1st proximo for further intelligence, and I trust that I shall then be enabled to report more favourably to your Lordship of the treatment of the Mission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Inclosure in No. 649.

*Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Debra Tabor, June* 26, 1866.

ON the pretence of his having heard from Jerusalem that I had been sent by Her Majesty's Government on false pretences for the purpose of obtaining the release of the European prisoners, and after we are out of the country England would avenge the insult offered to her by the imprisonment of our Consul; and also that a railroad had been laid down between Egypt and Kassala for the purpose of transporting English, French, and Turkish troops to Abyssinia; His Majesty has placed strict restrictions upon my movements and those of my party, though I have tried my best to assure him that the report was false, and had been invented by mischievous people who do not wish to see Abyssinia and England on amicable terms.

Cholera broke out in the Royal army about the beginning of this month, and has played great havoc in this neighbourhood. We are all, thank God, in perfect health.

Please don't allow my papers or letters to be sent up unless you are certain that they contain nothing but what would please our friend. I do not mean officials. I hope you will be able to send the books I sent for, for the Emperor.

Please send this note on to the Foreign Office, and oblige,

Yours, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 650.

Mr. T. M. Flad to King Theodore.—(*Communicated to the Foreign Office, September* 17.)*

(Literal translation.) *London, September* 1, 1866.

IN the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God.

May this letter reach His Imperial Majesty the King of Kings Theodore, which is sent of Mr. Martin Flad. May the Redeemer of the World give your Majesty health and prosperity. Amen.

To God, our Heavenly Father, be honour and praise, now and for ever.

The business your Majesty had sent me for to England is, through the grace of Christ our Lord, accomplished. The artists your Majesty was anxious to get are found, and ready to come with me to your country. On account of the steam-engine, which is to be made for your Majesty's country, and which is required by the artists I shall bring over to you, my way back to your country is delayed for one month.

If God keeps me in health, I hope to reach Massowah at the end of October or later.

Of Her Majesty the Queen Victoria I have, since I arrived here, nothing seen but friendship. For the necessity of life, I receive of Her Majesty every day five German crowns.

Once I had a dinner together with Her Majesty's Minister, Lord Stanley, at Her Majesty's castle. On that occasion Her Majesty talked with me in a very friendly manner.

Regarding your Majesty, the Queen Victoria is a little grieved, saying, Why has the Emperor Theodore not sent over to me the prisoners, whose relations are daily weeping before me. In reply to this I said, After having conveyed the artists to your Majesty I shall come back, and bring the released prisoners over with me to England. This hope I gave to Her Majesty.

The last war in Germany has come to a termination. The King of Prussia, before going to battle, proclaimed a day of repentance and united prayer throughout his dominions. His Majesty humbled himself before God, and was earnestly praying; out of which it came that he got the victory over all the German Confederations, including Austria.

Throughout Europe is great sickness, and a great number of people die every day.

In Persia, sixteen villages were swallowed up from the earth.

Many believers say that the Lord's second advent is near, according to Matthew, xxiv, 30, to chap. xxv, 46, and Revelations, xx.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

May God our Heavenly Father protect your Majesty, and give me grace to see you soon in good health and prosperity.

(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

For the 2,000 dollars I had received from Sheek Djuma, I bought tools and instruments for your Majesty's workmen, and some good silk, which I hope will please your Majesty.

T. MARTIN FLAD.

No. 651.

*Colonel Merewether to Mr. Murray.—(Received September 19.)**

Sir, *Esgair, Machynlleth, North Wales, September 17, 1866.*

MR. TALBOT reports he is getting on very well with the machinery, and has engaged six men. He has also returned the Agreement I drew up duly signed by him. If it is approved by Lord Stanley, I will have similar ones drawn up for each of the workmen in duplicate, one copy for the Foreign Office, and one to be kept by each man.

Mr. Talbot and the men want the money sanctioned for them as equipment allowance. I have to-day sent him a note to you—to present at the Foreign Office—mentioning the amount due; and should feel much obliged by your allowing it to be paid to him out of the Treasury grant, that they may get themselves ready in time.

I shall be in town early on Monday next, the 24th, but, of course, could come before if required. Till Sunday a letter addressed to me at Esgair, Machynlleth, North Wales, would reach me direct.

I have not yet got my Aden letters which came by the mail on Saturday, but expect them to-morrow following me from Edinburgh.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 651.

*Copy of Agreement with Workpeople going to Abyssinia.**

AGREEMENT entered into by on the one hand, and William Lockyer Merewether, Companion of the Bath, Lieutenant-Colonel in Her Majesty's Bombay Staff Corps, Resident at Aden, &c., on the other, to the effect that the said will proceed to Abyssinia, there to enter the service of and work for the Emperor Theodorus under the following stipulations:—

That the engagement shall be for three years, renewable at the pleasure of the Emperor and the said but then on terms to be agreed on between them only.

That the salary of the said during this engagement for three years, shall be pounds per annum to be paid by the Emperor Theodorus, except in so far as is below notified.

The salary to commence from date of engagement.

The exceptions are—

1st. That salary up to the time of reaching the Emperor's camp, equal to about one quarter, shall be paid to the said as compensation for the time expended *en route*.

2nd. That in the event of the Emperor, in consequence of the death or sickness of the said , failing to act up to the engagement, the amount of the three years' salary remaining unpaid to the said is guaranteed, and shall be paid in England to the appointed heirs or authorized representatives of the said

Further, passage money from England to Massowah, the port of Abyssinia, shall be paid for the said , and a sum of money amounting to pounds given to him for outfit.

On the faith of the above agreement and guarantee, the said proceeds to Abyssinia to enter the service of and to work under the Emperor Theodorus: and in so doing he acts entirely of his own free will and by his own desire.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

It is understood that if the said should not proceed to Abyssinia, and should not enter into the Emperor's service, this agreement shall have no effect.

No. 652.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Murray.—(Received September 19.)

(Extract.) *Esgair, Machynlleth, September* 18, 1866.

I HAVE told Flad to write to King Theodorus, and he will have done so by the mail leaving to-day. It will relieve the King's mind, and my letters to Rassam will reassure also.

The machinery is progressing well, and will be ready to time, I hope. I shall be in town, as I mentioned yesterday, early next Monday, to see after matters myself and arrange about the other presents which have to be purchased. If required sooner I can come up by any night's mail.

I am sorry to hear what you add in your postscript. Has the news come from Aden or Egypt? The King should be fighting in Tigré now—and on that campaign depends his future. The Bombay mail should be in London on Thursday and bring reliable intelligence from Aden—the Egyptian bazaar reports are not always trustworthy, as Stanton knows, though often having some leaven of truth in them.

I have not yet got my letters from Aden by the Calcutta mail which arrived last Saturday. I suppose they are touring after me in Scotland.

I wrote yesterday about Mr. Talbot and equipment money for him and his men, which I hope you have kindly given that they may complete their arrangements.

I have settled about the "Victoria" meeting us at Suez.

No. 653.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Murray.—(Received September 19.)*

(Extract.) *Inverary, Argyleshire, September* 5, 1866.

I HAVE been travelling about in the highlands, and perpetually on the move, or I should have acknowledged before the receipt of your note, conveying intimation of the Treasury assent having been given.

I am in communication with Mr. Talbot, and he is busy getting the machinery ready; but owing to its having to be made in pieces not exceeding a certain weight for convenience of carriage, more time will be required in its preparation than I at first expected. I hope, however, everything will be ready by the 10th of October.

The delay does not so much matter. Flad being in communication with the King can tell him why it is, which will please and satisfy him, and I have written all about it to Rassam in such a way that he may, if he likes, have my letter translated to the King.

I have sent instructions for the "Victoria" to meet me at Suez, calling at Massowah on the way up that she may bring the latest intelligence, if there is any. Letters just received from Aden say the "Victoria" had come back from Massowah, but without any letters from Rassam's camp. Native reports said that cholera had broken out in the King's camp at Zegay, on which the King had sent Cameron, Rassam, and all back to Korata.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 654.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Murray.—(Received September 22.)

Sir, *Esgair, Machynlleth.*

WILL you kindly authorise the payment to Mr. Talbot, who will deliver this note, of the amount set down for his equipment and that of the men going with him. He has entertained six, and the amount is as follows:

	£
For Mr. Talbot	100
For 6 men (£30 each)..	180
Total	280

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

I agreed that Mr. Talbot should have 100*l.* and not 90*l.* as first mentioned by me. This will not matter as the total will be within the estimate, six men only being sent instead of seven.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 655.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Murray.—(Received September 22.)*

Sir, 42, *Great Russell Street, September* 21, 1866.

INCLOSED is a translation of a letter just received by me from Mrs. Flad, from which you will perceive that, in consequence of evil reports, Mr. Rassam and the other prisoners have been again under the displeasure of the King, and God only knows what may be the consequence if there does not arise some way of putting a stop to these difficulties. There is but little doubt who it is that is stirring up the King to mischief. Bardel is at his dirty work again.

It would appear that the Jerusalem Convent affair is again made a principal matter of offence, and no doubt it has been much aggravated by designing people. If it could be possible to get the Convent restored to the Abyssinian priests, it would take away one great source of the King's complaint.

In 1852 Consul Finn received instructions from the Government to protect these people from the attacks of the Turks. In 1855 and 1857 the same Consul informed the King that he had received instructions from Her Majesty's Government to protect the Abyssinians, and that all the Consuls at the various places on the way from Jerusalem to Abyssinia were instructed to protect the pilgrims in their journeys to and from these places.

In 1863 some of the monks from Jerusalem arrived in Abyssinia, and made a complaint to the King that they had been expelled from their convent by Turks and Copts, snd when they sought to be protected as heretofore, the then Consul refused to interfere, stating that he had no authority from the British Government to do so; he accordingly had driven them from his house, and refused to have anything to do with the matter. This was one of the causes of the imprisonment of Consul Cameron and the other Europeans.

The Abyssinian priests from that period have manifested the greatest enmity against the British Government. This enmity has induced them to send all kinds of information, which has appeared in the English newspapers, to the King, and especially that of the reported intention of the Pasha to make a railway from Souakin to Kassala, in order that troops may be transported to the frontier of Abyssinia, which report no doubt has induced the King to act in the extraordinary way stated by Mr. Rassam and Mrs. Flad. In addition to which, many reports, which they have picked up in Jerusalem from various parties with whom they come in contact there, have been industriously circulated to the prejudice of the British Government.

I think, if I might take the liberty further to suggest it, that, if it were possible that the Convent could be restored to the monks before I returned, which might be accomplished, probably, by my being sent to Constantinople with a despatch to that effect to the English Ambassador, and then go afterwards to Jerusalem to see it accomplished,—that would go a great way towards bringing the King to a satisfactory feeling towards the captives, and would show him that the British Government were desirous of doing everything in their power to restore confidence. I could meet the artisans in Egypt. But if, after all this, the King should go on in his way, then, may the consequence be whatever it may, attack him at once with your arms.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Inclosure 1 in No. 655.

*Mrs. Flad to Mr. Flad.**

(Translation.)

My dear Martin, *Gaffat, July 7*, 1866.

ONLY with a few words I venture to inform you of our last sad experiences, our present situation, and gloomy future. Now and then I feel as if the seventh tribulation, in which we are at present, wishes to devour us utterly.

On the 2nd of June came the King Theodore to Korata. He returned to Zegay on the 4th. As poor Mrs. Rosenthal had been unwell, she, together with her husband, accompanied by Dr. Blanc, were, through Mr. Rassam's interposition, sent over from the King's camp to Korata. Mrs. Rosenthal soon got better; but our prospects became from day to day more cloudy. When the first rains began to fall all of us had more or less to suffer from fever. The small-pox also, was amongst and around us; and when the King came over to Korata with his camp the cholera broke out there and in the town. We had the most fearful scenes. The priests were day and night engaged in burying the dead. It was most exciting for the nerves to hear, day and night, in every house, and from the King's camp, the "leseo" (lamentation), till at last the King prohibited any more lamentation for the deceased being made.

At this time Mr. Rassam, with all those who are with him, came over from Zegay to Korata.

On the 12th of June we were ordered by His Majesty to proceed from Korata to Gaffat (near Debra Tabor, three days' journey from Korata).

On the 15th, when we had our encampment at Kanseela, a fearful thunderstorm with hailstones came over us. Many of our people were attacked by the cholera, and had to be buried in the morning. Three of our own servants died, and many of your acquaintances; also some of the proselytes. Mrs. Waldmaier had also an attack, but recovered soon. This was only the beginning of the hardships we had to go through. Though hundreds of people were dying around the King, his heart got only more hardened; and by all these visitations from above he became more suspicious and capricious.

Arrived at Gaffat, Mr. Rassam with his people were placed at first in the houses of the Europeans, and afterwards in the houses of the Tigré silversmiths, which he had decorated with tapestry of Abyssinian cloths. In the house occupied by Mr. Rassam he placed his own alga (Sufan). Of all this the natives anticipated bad things to come after, and ere long we had to experience that their fear was correct.

On the 25th of June, Mr. Rassam, with the once released prisoners, also Messrs. Staiger and Brandeis, and our friends at Gaffat, were summoned to appear before the King at Debra Tabor. After their arrival before His Majesty, to the terror of all they saw that the Fetha-ne-egest ("codex") was opened. A judgment took place. Messrs. Stern, Rosenthal, and Makerer, were charged that they had calumniated the King before the English Government. He at the same pretended to have received a letter from his monks at Jerusalem, in which they inform him that a railroad was in work from Souakin to Kassala. To Mr. Rassam he said, "Your mouth (words, speech) is sweet, and you are a good man; but those above you are bad, therefore you have to go with me wherever I go." Mr. Rassam, together with the rest, were kept at Debra Tabor; only Messrs. Staiger, Brandeis, Essler, and Schiller, were permitted to return to Gaffat.

The next day Dr. Blanc and Mr. Rosenthal were allowed to return to Gaffat. On the 3rd of July the King himself came to Gaffat. All the Europeans went to receive and to salute him. The King, already in bad humour, seeing Mr. Rosenthal, said to him in a most violent manner, "Why did'st thou abuse me?" To Dr. Blanc he said, quite raging, "Why did'st thou say that the Turks will come and take my country?" Immediately they both were transported to Debra Tabor, where they were put, together with Mr. Rassam, in one prison.

They were not put together with other native prisoners.

The King also was angry with M. Saalmüller having, without asking permission, given to Messrs. Staiger and Brandeis a gun to each.

Samuel has made all this mischief, and certainly he has been influenced by M. Bardel, who is in the King's favour.

Messrs. Staiger, Brandeis, Schiller, and Essler, had for one day a guard of soldiers in their houses. To me the King sent word, saying, "Don't fear; I shall protect you, because your husband, whom we have sent with a message to England, committed you

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

and your children to my care. I will protect you." I don't put much confidence in his words, but prepare myself for the worst. Our friends at Gaffat are just now making a very large cannon for him. He is friendly towards them.

On the 6th instant the King left Debra Tabor. He took Mr. Rassam and all the rest with them, to put them on the fortress Magdala.

Mrs. Rosenthal, after having been guarded at Debra Tabor for two days, he sent her over to me without saying a word.

How I feel under these sad circumstances, being alone with three little children, you may easily imagine. Can it be that we shall meet again, or was our sad parture on the shore of the lake for eternity? Our children are well: daily they talk of their absent papa, and pray for him.

Now and then it is a comfort to me to know that their angels see always the presence of the Lord.

The Lord gives me willingness to suffer, yea, even to die, for him; but my heart pains me, and bleeds for our dear children's sake.

Don't cease to pray for me. I trust the Lord will answer my prayers which I send up to him for you.

With the continual prayer that the Lord may protect you in all your ways, I am, &c.

(Signed) PAULINE FLAD.

P.S.—As Mr. Rassam is unable to find messengers, I forward this by the two proselytes, Hasa and Tazfaye.

Inclosure 2 in No. 655.

*Mr. Flad to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *September* 19, 1866.

YOU will already have heard of the sad news of our friends in Abyssinia, how they were abused by the King, deprived of all they possessed and sent to Magdala, where I fear all of them will have been put in chains.

Just now I have seen Mr. Murray, and he wished me to write to you, and to inform you of what I had just now told him.

As this mad man is going on in his dishonourable way, once flattering, and a second time abusing and imprisoning those whom he had called his friends, I think it is of no advantage to send him the required artisans, because the release of the prisoners would, I fear, not be obtained. Most likely he would go on in requiring other things from the British Government, to which they never could surrender. And they, after having had a great expense, and given to that man six prisoners more, they would at last be forced to use their arms, if ever the Government wishes to release the poor sufferers. Therefore, I deem it advisable that Her Majesty's Government should at once use stronger terms, and I am sure that if the last report is true, Mr. Rassam and companions will give the same advice.

On account of this sad news I abstain from going to Leeds this week. If you come to town on Monday, please send me a note, and tell me what time I can meet you at the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. M. FLAD.

No. 656.

Memorandum by Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, September 25, 1866.*

THE last mail from India has brought intelligence which most materially alters the status of the Abyssinian question from what it was when suggestions as to the mode of procedure to be followed towards the Emperor Theodorus were submitted by me.

A letter has come direct from Mr. Rassam, dated Debra Tabor, June 26, mentioning that the King had placed restrictions on the movements of himself and party, as

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

well as of the quondam captives. By this I clearly understand Mr. Rassam meant to convey that they had all been placed in confinement, but worded it as above for fear of the letter being intercepted by the King's people.

The alleged cause for this treatment was reports having reached the King from Jerusalem that Mr. Rassam was playing the King false; that directly the Consul and his companions were got safely out of Abyssinia, a combined force of English, French, and Egyptian troops was to advance on Abyssinia to punish the King for his treatment of the British Consul. All Mr. Rassam's endeavours to disabuse the King's mind had proved fruitless.

By the same opportunity a later letter, dated the 7th of July,* has been received from Mrs. Flad, who was left with her three children at Gaffat, mentioning the imprisonment of Mr. Rassam, at first at Debra Tabor in the meanest possible prison, aud further that on the 6th of July the King had left Debra Tabor, taking with him Mr. Rassam and all the rest to place them in the fortress of Magdala, where Captain Cameron and the others were so long confined.

In July last Mr. Flad came to England, sent by the King. He then brought intelligence of Mr. Rassam and the ex-captives being detained by the King, and privately told of their all having been confined by the King for a few days, then re-liberated, and treated with due and proper consideration.

At that time two courses appeared left open for adoption—either to take the high hand at once, and resent the detention of Mr. Rassam; or, taking into consideration circumstances which were also made known at the time, and which afforded some excuse for the King's behaviour, a further attempt should be made, by frank and generous treatment, to win back the King's confidence, and to induce him to send out of his country all detained. He was anxious to obtain skilled English workmen, and machinery. The prompt despatch of both, with some useful valuable presents, seemed likely to gain the object in view.

Trusting that it might do so, and wishing to try every means possible before resorting to harsh measures, I suggested the adoption of the latter course, and according to instructions received have obtained the services of a small body of select and well-skilled men, who are ready and willing to go out to Abyssinia for the purpose of entering the King's employ. Useful machinery, such as would suit the purposes of the King, has also been ordered, and will be ready early next month.

The imprisonment of Mr. Rassam, the person who was sent to the Abyssinian Court with a letter from Her Majesty, and therefore in the position of an Envoy Extraordinary, is so gross an outrage and insult to the English Government, that simple adherence to the original plan is rendered impossible.

I would therefore now earnestly recommend that Mr. Flad be sent back to Massowah with a letter to the King from Her Majesty, pointing out what her intentions had been; but that before her true friendly feelings could be displayed to him, intelligence had reached that he, unmindful of the rule existing among all nations, which makes the person of an Ambassador sacred, and forgetful of all previous assertions of friendliness, and especially of the promise which he had given to send Mr. Rassam and others of Her Majesty's subjects out of his country in safety and with honour, had caused Mr. Rassam and the others to be seized and placed in confinement. That such barbarous and outrageous conduct cannot be tolerated; that he will be made responsible for these acts, and for any injury which may happen to Mr. Rassam, or to any of his party, or to any of the British subjects, or of those in service with them. Their immediate release and safe conduct beyond the Abyssinian frontier should be demanded in the first instance, and should this demand not at once be complied with, the King of Abyssinia should be distinctly told that he will be made to answer for the consequences, and for the evils which he will bring on his country.

Mr. Flad, leaving this on the 3rd of October, would reach Massowah about the 21st or 22nd idem. He would dispatch it immediately to the King, and wait a reply at Massowah.

The arrangements for the workpeople and machinery might still be allowed to hold good; and I should still take them to Massowah, as originally proposed, so that should matters have again changed, and the King make a proper *amende*, harsh measures might still perhaps be avoided.

Should, however, it be found on my reaching Massowah that the King still retains Mr. Rassam and the others in close confinement, and will not comply with the demand made upon him by the English Government, then I would strongly advise that no further delay should be allowed; but that the question should be taken up vigorously,

* Inclosure 1 in No. 655.

and every means adopted to show that the promptest measures would be taken to compel him to do so, and to punish him for his insulting outrage.

The threat of punishment having been passed should be strictly adhered to. There would be no difficulty in administering it when once decided on, and the fact of his refusal causing that decision to be arrived at, instructions could be given to me to proceed on from Massowah to Bombay, and there submit the wishes of Her Majesty's Government to the Government of India, the India Office here having been consulted with. The forces to be employed for operations in Abyssinia should undoubtedly be sent from India, so as to take advantage of native troops on account of the greater ease of movement, less expense, and sufficient effect. To insure success it should not be less than 9,000 to 10,000 strong. Speaking briefly, it should consist of three brigades of infantry, two having one European and three native regiments; the other, four native regiments; two troops of horse artillery, one light field battery, a mountain train, and a select body of good native cavalry;—a strong brigade. European dragoons, though most excellent in the day, require too much material to get them easily through a new and difficult country. Such a force under a good general would insure success. It might be organized and dispatched with the aid of steamers, so as to allow of the campaign being brought to a close before the summer and rainy season next year sets in. One point is most essential, and that is that the command and political relations should be entrusted to one person, the best that could be selected; this selection might be left to the Government of India.

The greater part of Abyssinia is now in a state of rebellion against the Emperor Theodorus, and when it was distinctly proclaimed that war was only being entered upon to punish that monarch for his conduct, that private property and private rights would be respected, and that with the punishment of the King and the release of the British subjects now in confinement, the army would be withdrawn, and the country handed over to its legitimate rulers, two-thirds of the people would gladly join against Theodorus, who is merely an usurper, and would assist in every way. This would especially be the case in the province of Tigré, through which the force would have to move in the first instance. The distance from Massowah on the coast, to Gondar, the capital, is only fourteen good marches, and would easily be done in twenty days. Massowah would be the depôt for supplies, replenished from Egypt and India. At the same time that an English force entered from Massowah, an Egyptian one might be moved to act from that side. It would be a move which would meet with very cordial co-operation from that Government; the manner of it might be described on Government deciding on war.

The above is merely what was mentioned by me this morning. I feel confident that, if Her Majesty's Government decide on severe measures being taken, that the whole nation will join in acknowledging the necessity and justness of their adoption. I can speak from certain knowledge that there is a very strong feeling of surprise, both in England and on the Continent, that such measures have not been before adopted.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

14, *St. James's Square, September* 25, 1866.

No. 657.

From Captain Desborough, September 25, 1866.

[Inquiring as to purport of latest news from Abyssinia.]

No. 658.

Mr. Egerton to Captain Desborough.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 26, 1866.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th instant,* and I am to inform you in reply, that his Lordship regrets to state that the latest accounts from Mr. Rassam gave indications of a change on the part of King Theodore towards himself and the former prisoners; and accounts from Mrs. Flad, up to the 7th July seem to render it probable that the whole party have again been imprisoned.

The matter is under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. C. EGERTON.

No. 659.

Dr. Krapf to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 4.)†

My Lord, *Kornthal, near Stuttgardt, Wurtemberg, October* 1, 1866.

AS a stranger, I feel I have to ask most humbly your Lordship's pardon for having ventured to address these lines; but the well-known kindness of your Lordship, and the importance of the case, which induced me to write, gave me hopes and confidence that my daringness would be kindly excused.

Your Lordship has no doubt obtained recent information that Theodorus, the present King of Abyssinia, has, on the fortress of Magdala, again imprisoned several English and German subjects, including the English Consul Cameron and Mr. Rassam, whom Her Majesty, in 1865, has most graciously and humanely dispatched as her Ambassador to effect the release of the unfortunate prisoners.

It was to be hoped that this humane measure would be crowned with a happy issue, and for a time it appeared very successful indeed; but soon ill advisers, of whom I know one personally as an intriguer from his childhood, turned the King's mind to thoughts hostile to England—the humiliation of the English having been, in my humble opinion, the King's aim from the beginning. We must remember that every Abyssinian ruler must have performed some feat which the historiographer can note in the annals of the empire as the peculiar exploit by which the deceased King was in a high degree distinguished. When Major Harris, whose dragoman I was in 1841, had, at the order of Her Majesty's Government, delivered handsome presents to Sahela Selassie (the King of Shoa), the Royal poets and singers immediately pronounced it as the peculiarity of his reign that the Queen of the white nations had sent him tribute. We can therefore not be surprised if the haughty monarch Theodorus resolved on striving for the honour of being reported in the annals of Abyssinia as the lion-like King who has humbled the greatest nation of Europe, thereby showing himself, as he thinks, the worthy successor of David and Solomon, from whom he claims his descent.

My Lord, it can never be my design to give the British Government any advice as to the steps to be taken against the ruler of Abyssinia, who has offended England so glaringly that she would endanger her honour, her interests, and her influence in the countries adjacent to the Red Sea, if she would bear this offence without impunity, but having travelled and resided for eighteen years on the East African coast, in Tigré, Shoa, and Amhara especially (as my "Travels, Researches, and Missionary Labours," published in 1860, at London, may show), I think I have obtained some knowledge, which, under the present circumstances, when a warlike conflict between Great Britain and Abyssinia seems unavoidable, might be turned to some good account.

No doubt the British Government will hesitate to declare war when they consider that the life of a number of Europeans is at stake in the event of such a declaration, as the reckless King, on hearing of the English warlike demonstrations, might butcher the prisoners, and other Europeans upon whom he can lay hold, immediately, and in cold blood. The question therefore arises whether there is no mode of rescuing the prisoners before the King can harm them, and whether there is not some reason to think that the King will delay the execution of his wrath.

In reference to the latter question, I fully believe that the King will postpone his

* No. 657. † Laid before Parliament, 1867.

bloody design, especially when he hears that in case of his killing the Europeans the English will give themselves no rest until they have put themselves in possession of his person, of his grandees, and advisers. His plan will doubtless be, first to annihilate, as he thinks, the invading troops, to make as many prisoners of war as he can, and finally return victoriously to Gaffat to slaughter all the Europeans together in the most cruel manner. He of course has no idea of the possibility of being overthrown by the English, as he has never lost a battle in his conflicts with Abyssinian and Egyptian opponents.

But, in regard to the speedy release of the prisoners at Magdala, and the other Europeans at Gaffat, my humble suggestion is, that the English should send an armament of about 2,000 men to the Island of Massowah, in the Red Sea, whence the King will soon hear the news, and the rumour will swell 2,000 into 20,000 men. This news will immediately induce the King to march from Western to Eastern Abyssinia, to Tigré, there to meet the invading army. But whilst the English load their forces at Massowah, and move them in forced marches up to the high land and frontier of Tigré, which is about four days' (80 or 90 miles) distant from the coast, another force of about 1,000 men (chiefly horse) should be sent to the Bay of Tadjoura, opposite to Aden on the African main, whence they would move inland as far as to the place Aoossa, where the noble river Hawash terminates in a lake and sand. The flying column would then, as fast as possible, march along the banks (which abound in wood and grass and wild animals, as far as to the point where the Berkona, a tributary stream, falls into the Hawash. The Berkona rises in the Wollo country, Worrakallo, near Totola, where I have passed it as a rivulet in 1841. Having reached the Abyssinian high land near Lake Haik, in the territory of Tehuladere, the flying force would arrive in two days at the foot of the fortress of Magdala, which the commandant no doubt would surrender immediately on seeing himself beseiged at once by an European force which could throw shells and rockets in case of refusal.

The Adal or Danakil tribes, occupying as a pastoral people the territory between the Red Sea, Tadjoura, and the Abyssinian frontier, would scarcely object to an English force marching through their country if the object would be clearly stated and mentioned to them that their own country would not be hurt, and if besides an adequate present were promised. As they hate King Theodorus on account of his having violated their Mahommedan coreligionists in the Wollo country, and in other parts of Abyssinia, they would doubtless welcome the English, and supply them with camels and provisions of cattle, as they would consider them the deliverers of their Mahommedan friends in Abyssinia Proper.

Magdala having been surrounded, a part of the flying division would hasten on to Gaffat to rescue the other Europeans and to take the Royal arsenal at that place. All this could be effected before the King hears of it in Tigré, and before he can send a reply to his generals at Magdala and Gaffat in the rear. Neither could he divide his troops, as he has powerful rivals all around in Godjam, in the Wag country, and more especially in Tigré, whose leader perhaps would welcome the English coming from Massowah.

But as the Island of Massowah is, together with the country, situated between the coast and Tigré, under Turkish sovereignty, the Turkish authorities will no doubt protest against the English marching through the coast district—a protest in which they might be aided by the French Consulate at Massowah. Should this be the case, it might be sufficient to keep a maritime demonstration near Massowah, and by this compel the King to remain in Tigré, whilst the whole English force of 2,000 or 3,000 men would march through the Adal country, to which Turkey has no rightful title. Should she object to the landing in the Bay of Tadjoura, England can reply that Captain Haines, the Governor of Aden, has, in 1840, bought the islet Mashaikh, which commands the entrance into that large and safe harbour.

Theodorus never expects an enemy coming from that quarter, as he had never to deal with the Danakil, and is entirely unacquainted with the state of things in that direction, so that the English could be in the heart of Abyssinia before the King is aware of it in Tigré, where he will expect the invaders.

I have taken the liberty to inclose my map of travels which may explain more fully what I mean. The level road along a fine perennial stream cannot but be acceptable to a marching army, whilst the mountainous terrain from the coast of Massowah, in Tigré and westwards, will present many difficulties, especially in regard to heavy artillery which, in general, should be exchanged for that of the lightest calibre, as it will scarcely be wanted except in dealing with fortresses. True, the British army in coming from Massowah would sooner be in the cool climate than in

marching over the hot plain of the Adal country. In every case the time between November and April must be used. From May and June it will be fearfully hot in the Danakil country, and the rainy season will begin in Abyssinia.

As the King's army consists chiefly in horse, rockets and shells will be most effectual against it. I have seen Major Harris throwing, one evening, the whole Shoan army into confusion by firing a few rockets into the air. There is no doubt an English force of 2,000 to 3,000 men will completely overthrow the numerous army of the King in the first encounter, provided the English Commandant is on his guard against the stratagems of which the King is very fond and in which his main strength lies. If that were not the case it would perhaps be not worth the trouble and expense to employ 3,000 men against an Abyssinian army, which may best be compared to an immense band of tinkers.

It would indeed be most desirable that Abyssinia, which has been harassed by revolutions ever since the time of Mr. Bruce (1772), should be regulated, if not permanently occupied, by an European Power, for the Abyssinians will never be able to elevate themselves independently of Europe. Abyssinia excels every other country in Africa by its healthy climate, its agricultural productiveness, and other capabilities. Extended as the Abyssinian Empire already is, yet it might seize all Central Africa without somebody disputing or opposing its conquests. If governed by an enlightened Ruler, Abyssinia would easily match Egypt, and prove a powerful friend or foe even to India, to which it presents the key.

If the Slave Trade is to be radically destroyed in Eastern Africa, it must be chiefly done in Abyssinia, which presents the high road to Central Africa.

I have no doubt that, ere long, Egypt or France will be mixed up with that remarkable country, which is a compound of physical and moral qualities; a compound of alpine heights and low valleys; of various languages and religions; of human physiognomies of all shades; in fact, what its name shows, a Habeshi (mixture) throughout.

It is to be hoped that the British Government will not overlook the present rightful opportunity of interfering with that distracted and unfortunate country which has all things but an enlightened and good Ruler. I feel most sorry that England must act in a hostile manner against Abyssinia, which has received nothing but benefits from the English. England has sent costly presents to the Rulers of Tigré (Ras Wolda Selassie, through Mr. Salt), of Shoa (Major Harris), and of Amhara (to Ras Ali). Besides, England has several times prevented Mahommed Ali, Pasha of Egypt, from conquering Abyssinia. And now this very England is compelled to assume a hostile attitude against a country which ungratefully is pushing away the hand of friendship. But it must come so, in order that Eastern Africa should be drawn into the world's movement, and that England should be, against her will, compelled to be on her guard, and to secure her standing-point in the Red Sea and her avenues to India, when the great Oriental crisis will come on with the tremendous waves of a raging sea—perhaps at no distant period.

With the repeated prayer for pardoning my liberty, I am, &c.

(Signed) Dr. L. KRAPF.

No. 660.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Murray.—(Received October 4.)**

Sir, 14, *St. James's Square, October* 1, 1866.

I HAVE carefully thought over what you told me on Saturday. It was not much, but I could see clearly the Cabinet had found it inexpedient, not to say impossible, to proceed to extremities with King Theodorus. I regret this deeply, because as matters have now come to pass, I am confident the bold and firm attitude is the proper course, and the only one likely now to bring affairs to a speedy issue. The having to put up with further insult from this barbarian tells terribly against us as a nation, both in Europe and in the East.

However, the Cabinet have to decide on that point, and appear to have done so; all I can now do is to give what aid is required to carry out Lord Stanley's wishes, and in furtherance thereof would offer the following suggestions:—

The letter to the King, of which Mr. Flad is to be the bearer, to give it any chance of success, should, I would submit, contain some opening of prospective

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

advantage to the King, provided he releases all the prisoners, advantage which he will be able to see within his reach and may hear of without the delay of reference to England. To afford this, I would recommend that part of my last proposal should be carried out. That part which related to my following Mr. Flad and taking the artificers, machinery, presents, &c., with me to Massowah. In the letter, it could there be mentioned that Mr. Flad was sent in advance with the letter conveying Her Majesty's sentiments, but that a Mission was following under an officer who had instructions from Her Majesty and the Government to enter fully into the question of the differences which had so unfortunately arisen, and to act in such a manner as would best conduce to the restoration of that friendly communication which was the object of both to bring about. If the King received Flad properly and was inclined to change his tactics, the fact of my following with the artificers and presents would be a convincing proof to him of the desire of Government to act in fair and full faith towards him, and may afford a good opening for adjustment of differences. The letters he will have received from Flad, written from England, may have helped to bring about that change. If the King persists in the violent and unjustifiable course he has adopted, the artificers can be sent back to England, and little more cost will have been incurred than was originally intended; and it will then rest with Government to decide what further measure should be taken—while being on the spot I should be able to send home the fullest information.

Should Lord Stanley approve of this proposal my best endeavours will be devoted to bring about an amicable settlement of this unfortunate business. If it was required, I should be quite ready to go to Matemma or to any other place from which negotiations could best be carried on. All that would be necessary would be that I should be allowed to take such other people with me as would give dignity and weight to the Mission, things which Mr. Rassam sadly wanted, and that latitude should be given me to decide at once, on the spot, how the general instructions given by Her Majesty's Government should be carried out. The question of extreme measures would, of course, not be entered into under any circumstances without reference first to Government.

At this season of the year the squadron in the Indian Seas have little to do beyond visiting different places, it might, with great advantage, be sent across from Bombay to Massowah—as many ships as Commodore Hillyer could take with him—to add importance to the arrival of the Mission, and to wait there for a time until the future movements of the Mission were decided on. This would cause no extra expense, and, at this season of the year, the climate of Massowah is good enough.

Other points might be discussed hereafter.

Of course, with regard to the artificers, they would not be allowed to enter Abyssinia unless matters were materially changed from what they now are, and then only at their own choice and free will. They are willing enough to go, provided there is not more than the ordinary risk attendant on living in a country where law affords no protection, and the will of a despotic monarch is the only rule.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 661.

*Her Majesty to the King of Abyssinia.**

(Written on a sheet of painted vellum.)

VICTORIA, by the grace of God, &c., to Theodore, King of Abyssinia, sendeth greeting.

Relying on the assurances contained in your Majesty's letter of the 29th of January,† which duly reached us, we were in daily expectation of the arrival in England of our servant Rassam, together with our servant Cameron, and the other Europeans, so long detained in your country, but whom your Majesty had announced that you had sent with our servant Rassam. When Flad arrived bringing your Majesty's further letter of the 17th of April‡ in which, while repeating that you had released and made over to our servant Rassam, our servant Cameron and the other Europeans, in order that they might leave the country, you stated that you had kept our servant

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† Inclosure 2 in No. 609.

‡ Inclosure 3 in No. 609.

Rassam for the sake of consulting together upon the extension of the friendship between us. We will not disguise from your Majesty that we found it difficult to reconcile your assurances with the obstacles which were still opposed to the departure of our servants and the other Europeans from your country; but we were willing to accept the desire expressed by you for the extension of friendship between us, and we accordingly admitted Flad to our presence, and having heard from him your Majesty's wishes, we gave directions for the transmission to your Majesty, by the hands of Flad of such articles as we understood from Flad your Majesty desired to obtain, and we also gave our sanction to the engagement in your Majesty's service of skilled workmen such as you desired to employ in Abyssinia. These arrangements were made, and Flad was on the point of leaving England to rejoin your Majesty, when intelligence reached us that you had withdrawn from our servant Rassam the favour which you had hitherto shown him, and had consigned him, together with our servant Cameron and the other Europeans, to prison. We have received no explanation from your Majesty of the grounds of a proceeding so inconsistent with the assurances and professions formerly made by your Majesty, and we have, therefore, lost no time in allowing Flad to depart, and have given to him this letter for your Majesty, not allowing ourselves to doubt that immediately on its receipt you will redeem your promises, and give effect to your professions, by dismissing our servant Rassam, with our servant Cameron and the other Europeans, in conformity with the statement made in your letter of the 29th of January.

Your Majesty must be aware that it is the sacred duty of Sovereigns scrupulously to fulfil engagements into which they may have entered; and that the persons of Ambassadors, such as our servant Rassam, and those by whom they are accompanied, are, among all nations, assuming to be civilized, invariably held sacred. We have, therefore, the more difficulty in accounting for your Majesty's hesitation, and we invite your Majesty to prove to the world that you rightly understand your position among Sovereigns, and do not desire to neglect the international duties which it is incumbent on all Sovereigns to fulfil. Your Majesty may be assured that we shall be disposed to attribute to misapprehension on your part, rather than ill-will towards us, the delay that has occurred in the return of Rassam, and those whom you had engaged to send with him; but in the uncertainty which we cannot but feel as to your Majesty's intentions, we cannot allow Flad to be the bearer of those tokens of good-will which we purposed that he should convey to your Majesty. But, in full confidence that the cloud which has darkened the friendship of our relations will pass away on the return of Flad, and desiring that you should as soon as possible thereafter receive the articles which we had proposed to send to your Majesty in token of our friendship, we have given orders that those articles should be forthwith sent to Massowah, to be delivered, for conveyance to your Majesty's Court, to the officers whom you may depute to conduct our servant Rassam, and our servant Cameron, and the other Europeans, so far on their way to our presence. And so we bid you heartily, farewell.

Given at our Court at Balmoral, the 4th day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1866, and in the thirtieth year of our reign.

Your good Friend,
(Signed) VICTORIA R.

(The large Signet.)

(Not countersigned.)

Superscribed—
To Our Good Friend Theodore,
King of Abyssinia.

No. 662.

Captain Goodfellow to Lord Stanley.—(*Received October* 4.)

My Lord, *Aden, September* 18, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report that Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" proceeded to Massowah for despatches at the beginning of the current month, and returned to this on the 9th instant, bringing no further intelligence of the mission. As messengers were expected to arrive on or about the 15th instant, she will be again dispatched on the 20th to ascertain if any letter or news has since reached the coast.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 663.

Memorandum for Mr. Flad on his Return to Abyssinia, dated October 8, 1866.*

THE period having arrived at which you proposed to return to Abyssinia, Her Majesty's Government have no wish that you should prolong your stay in this country.

You will receive with this a letter from the Queen to King Theodore,† to be delivered on your arrival at his Court; and that you may shape your language according to its contents, I furnish you with a copy of it.

The King will naturally expect to hear from you what are the feelings of the British Government towards him.

You will not disguise from him that the confidence which they were disposed to place in his promises and assurances was considerably weakened by his detention of Mr. Rassam and the others, and has been nearly destroyed by the intelligence which has just reached England of his having placed Mr. Rassam, and those whom the King solemnly made over to him for conveyance out of his dominions, in confinement.

You will say that, fearing lest evil-disposed persons, seeing their own downfall in the establishment of a good understanding between the British Government and the King, may have endeavoured to infuse suspicion into the mind of His Majesty, the British Government has authorized you to say that nothing is further from their desire or intention in any way themselves voluntarily to seek to disturb, or to encourage the Governor of Egypt to disturb, King Theodore in the peaceable possession of his dominions; but you will not disguise from his Majesty that, in return for such good-will, the British Government require substantial proof on his part that the same good-will is entertained by him, and that the first and immediate proof of its existence, which can now be given, is the release of Mr. Rassam, Captain Cameron, and all other Europeans detained in Abyssinia against their will, and their safe conduct beyond the frontiers of the King's dominions. Their prolonged detention, so far from being a security for the King, cannot fail to obliterate all the feelings of friendship and good-will with which he has heretofore been looked upon, and whatever benefit the King may expect from amity with the Queen, will unquestionably fail him if he disregards the claim now made by Her Majesty for the fulfilment of his promises, by dismissing her Ambassador Rassam, and setting free her Consul, and all other Europeans in his custody.

You will see that the letter from the Queen speaks only of presents to be sent in return for the prisoners. You are not authorized to hold out any expectation that the British Government will be directly or indirectly instrumental in inducing any other Europeans to place themselves in the power of the King. You will not conceal from the King that, in coming to a decision to that effect, the British Government have been mainly influenced by the intelligence that has lately reached them; but it will rest in your discretion to point out that, if the King really desires to obtain the services of foreigners, his best chance of doing so is to prove, by releasing those whom he now detains against their will, that any persons who may enter into his employment may have no apprehension of similar detention when desirous to depart from Abyssinia.

(Signed) STANLEY.

Foreign Office, October 8, 1866.

No. 664.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 15.)*

My Lord, *Alexandria, October* 1, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I received, by the last mail from Aden, information that the steam-ship "Victoria," which had been sent to Massowah in the hopes of procuring intelligence of the Abyssinian captives, had returned from that port on the 9th ultimo, without having been able to procure any later intelligence than that already forwarded to your Lordship.

It was the intention of the Resident at Aden to send her again to Massowah on the 20th September, but I fear we cannot expect as yet any further intelligence, as the rains, judging from the unusually high state of the Nile, must have been very severe in the Abyssinian mountains, and it is probable that the communications with the coast are suspended, in consequence of the flooded state of the rivers in that country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 661.

No. 665.

*Captain White to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 15.)**

My Lord, *Richmond, October 15,* 1866.

I RETURNED to town from the Spanish Main on the 11th instant, in consequence of information which reached me of the imprisonment of a Consul and the subjects of Her Majesty in the dominions of His Majesty the Emperor Theodore. I called the same day at the Foreign Office to make tender to Government of my services in the matter, and was informed that the Ministry were adopting steps for the release of the captives. I was, at the same time, requested to make to your Lordship in writing such remarks as I might consider likely to aid the good cause.

I will leave London to-morrow *en route* to Gondar, and will deliver to the prisoners such letters as Government wish to have so transmitted. I will afterwards obtain, with God's aid, and I trust your Lordship's sanction, the early restoration of these unhappy ones to the bosoms of their families.

I knew the Emperor and his people ere His Majesty ascended the Throne. They were struggling, against much difficulty, into modern civilisation, and had in their characters much goodness. Astronomy, music, magnetism, and surgery could, when judiciously availed of, achieve excellent results among the inhabitants.

I have taken part in several Consular cases in the countries adjoining the Red Sea, and have almost invariably found that the Consuls have been but endeavouring to honestly discharge their duties at times when they have incurred from the passions of the people great personal danger and sometimes death.

His Majesty was, in my opinion, a good specimen of his race. He was capable of great cheerfulness, frankness, and generosity, and, for such remote parts, at such a time, both polished and talented. He was of great physical courage and could form strong friendships, and might be made, even at this untoward moment, and without much difficulty, a warm and perhaps very useful ally of Her Majesty.

Many of the records of my life are at the Foreign Office. In them is to be found the language given below in quotation, and addressed to me by Major-General Sir G. M. Sherer:—

"My dear Captain Melvill White, "*Jersey, April* 4, 1863.

"Never can I forget your services during the rebellion in 1857–58. The manner in which you had drilled your Naval Brigade, and made them, as they really were, most efficient soldiers, does you the greatest credit. Your detachment coming to my aid at so critical a moment, was of the greatest possible assistance to me, and seeing your determined conduct on that occasion gave me additional confidence. I think you may be justly proud in having performed such acts of heroism, which few men at your age have ever achieved, and can only say that if every officer in India had shown a little front, the rebellion would, I consider, have been crushed at the outset.

"Believe me, &c.

(Signed) "G. M. SHERER, *Major-General,*

"*Late Aide-de-Camp to the Queen.*"

I herewith forward a Demerara "Royal Gazette," wherein are comments on my past life. I will call at the Foreign Office during the day, in order to seek an interview with your Lordship, when I hope to learn the present place of confinement of the Consul, and what articles he was, when last heard from, apparently most in need.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. MELVILLE WHITE.

No. 666.

*Mr. Murray to Captain White.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 15, 1866.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of to-day offering to proceed to Abyssinia to procure the release of the English captives there.

I am, in reply, to convey to you Lord Stanley's thanks for your offer, but, as arrangements are now in progress for communicating with the King of Abyssinia, I

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

am to state that Lord Stanley does not think it advisable to disturb those arrangements by sending another Agent.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 667.

*Captain Goodfellow to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 22.)**

My Lord, *Aden, October* 1, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report that Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" returned from Massowah yesterday, but has brought no further intelligence regarding Mr. Rassam or his party.

2. M. Munzinger reports that the rumours prevalent in the country confirm the statements made to him by the messengers, and which were reported in my despatch to your Lordship's address dated 28th of August last,† and is of opinion that no further letters are likely to arrive from Mr. Rassam until the return of Mr. Flad, but that probably some news of the Mission may be sent by Mr. Flad.

3. The King is reported to be still quiet at Debra Tabor, whilst the rebels have conquered nearly the whole country, three provinces only remaining in the King's possession. Wakshum Gobesi had taken possession of the whole of Tigré, excepting Hamazeyn, which he is stated as likely soon to conquer.

4. Being given to understand that Mr. Flad and his party will arrive at Suez on or about the 3rd proximo, and as it would be highly desirable that they should at once proceed to Massowah, I have to inform your Lordship that the "Victoria" will be dispatched hence on the 20th instant for that port, and her Commander directed to touch at Massowah on his way up to obtain any intelligence that may have arrived at the coast, and also to enable me to give M. Munzinger warning of Mr. Flad's return, that he may make all arrangements with regard to carriage, &c., for that gentleman's upward journey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 668.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Hammond.—(Received October 29.)**

Esgair, Machynlleth, North Wales,
Sir, *October* 27,.1866.

I FIND it necessary to give the workpeople some more of the advance sanctioned for them, so I have applied officially to you for the remaining half of the quarter's salary, 360*l*. The first 360*l*. I drew the other day.

I have sent you one of the printed copies of the paper, showing all the arrangements connected with the workpeople, and presents. In the margin of page 9, I have written in pencil what seems to have been drawn previous to to-day.

The machinery and presents will be all ready and packed by the 1st proximo. Everything will be embarked on the 3rd at Southampton, and Mr. Talbot, with the men, will go on board at the same time. The steamer will quit Southampton on the 4th.

I shall follow by the mail leaving London on the 10th, viâ Marseilles, so as to meet Mr. Talbot and his party at Alexandria.

I spoke to Mr. Murray about my course of procedure in this matter. As you may recollect, when it was decided that one more attempt at pacific solution should be made, I suggested that Mr. Flad should be sent in advance, with a letter from Her Majesty of remonstrance, and that I should follow, with the workpeople and presents, to act on arrival at Massowah as seemed best. Lord Stanley approved generally of my proposals, and after the discussion of them had been concluded, said instructions should be drawn up before my departure.

As the time for that is approaching, those will, I conclude, be now prepared.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 649.

Whatever their nature may be, one thing I would point out to be an essential to the success of a pacificatory course, if it should offer, and that is, that I should be the bearer of a letter from the Queen, intimating that I was sent to Massowah by Her Majesty with presents, &c., to show her friendly intentions towards King Theodorus, to communicate with him, and to receive his reply to Her Majesty's letter, forwarded by hand of Mr. Flad. Nothing more need be said; indeed, it would be simply an introductory letter. But without it the King might pretend to say, Who is this person who has come to Massowah? I know him not, nor who has sent him.

Will you kindly consider this, and bring it to Lord Stanley's notice? The Queen will, I believe, be at Windsor after the 3rd proximo, so there will be no delay or difficulty in getting the letter ready when approved.

The last intelligence from Aden is satisfactory in so far that no news from Abyssinia is good news. Had the captives been subjected to any further ill-treatment, it would certainly have been reported, or Mrs. Flad would have written to Massowah.

The "Victoria" left Massowah on the 27th September. Nothing had been heard up to that time of the tremendous battle, taken by the Paris correspondent of the "Times" from the Nice "Chronicle," and said to have occurred on the 30th of July.

On the contrary, our news is that the rebels in Tigré have been steadily and successfully advancing, while the Emperor remained inactive at Debra Tabor.

I have come down into Wales to see my family for a few days, but will be back in London on Thursday evening the 1st proximo, or before if required.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 669.

*Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 30.)**

My Lord, *Alexandria, October 19, 1866.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that Mr. Flad arrived at Alexandria yesterday, the 18th instant, and, being unable to obtain pratique, proceeded immediately by the quarantine train to Suez, *en route* to Aden.

I saw Mr. Flad for a few moments before leaving the ship, and ascertained from him that all his arrangements were complete, and that I could be of no immediate service to him; but, at his request, I have applied to the Egyptian Government for a letter to the Governor of Massowah, desiring him to render any assistance in his power that Mr. Flad may require for his future proceedings, and I hope to be able to send this letter to the care of the Acting Political Resident at Aden by the next Indian Mail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 670.

*Mr. Hammond to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 31, 1866.*

I HAVE shown Lord Stanley your letter of the 27th instant.† He is glad to hear that the arrangements for the dispatch of the presents and Mr. Talbot and his party are so advanced, and that they will be shortly followed by yourself.

Lord Stanley does not understand that any special instructions are required for the guidance of your conduct in this matter.

According to present arrangements, as set forth in the letter from the Queen to King Theodore, of which Mr. Flad is the bearer, the presents are to be lodged at Massowah to await the arrival at that place of the captives, against whom they are to be exchanged. If you should be of opinion that it would be advisable that you should also remain at Massowah, as being thereby better enabled to communicate with the captives and Mr. Flad, and if you should be willing to stay there, Lord Stanley would gladly avail himself of your services in that respect.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 668.

But he does not think it necessary or desirable that you should be furnished with a further letter from the Queen to King Theodore, or that you should attempt to open any direct communication with the King. In fact, Lord Stanley considers that it would be better that your presence at Massowah were not made known to the King, for if he was made aware that another agent and another Royal letter were at hand, he would not unnaturally be tempted to defer the release of the prisoners until he had ascertained what that agent had to say, and what Her Majesty might have written in the letter.

Neither can Lord Stanley anticipate any other reply to Her Majesty's letter of which Mr. Flad is the bearer, than one which shall accompany the prisoners to the coast. If the prisoners arrive, the presents may be exchanged against them; but as regards Mr. Talbot and the artisans, their departure for the interior, of which no promise has been held out to the King, must be regulated by circumstances, and if at the last hour you should feel doubt as to their safety you may suspend their departure, or at all events, after stating the case to them, leave them to decide whether they will go or not. You will in no case urge them to go if disinclined.

It will be for you to decide whether, while matters are in suspense, it might not be better on sanitary grounds to allow the party to remain at Aden.

Lord Stanley desires me to take this opportunity of expressing to you his special thanks for the very great trouble you have been good enough to take in regard to these matters.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 671.

*Lord Stanley to Colonel Stanton.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 2, 1866.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 19th ultimo,† and I have to state to you that I approve the steps which you have taken to further the objects of Mr. Flad's Mission to Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 672.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Hammond.—(Received November 3.)*

Sir, 14, *St. James's Square, November* 3, 1866.

I FOUND your letter of the 31st ultimo‡ on my return to town yesterday, and have to express my best thanks for the confidence placed in me by Lord Stanley, as shown by his not giving any explicit [instructions], but leaving me to act according to my own judgment, as circumstances may require.

As far as I can tell at present, it would be decidedly advisable that I should stay for a time at Massowah, to watch events, collect intelligence, and to be ready to take advantage of any favourable opportunity that may offer for obtaining the object in view—the release of the captives, and I will gladly remain there.

With regard to that part of my letter of the 27th ultimo§ to which Lord Stanley dissents, viz., "that I should be the bearer of a letter from the Queen," I would venture to explain that I am quite prepared to carry out Lord Stanley's wishes as conveyed in your letter, and to appear as little as possible in the matter. But, at the same time, I would beg to observe that there is something more in my request than appears to be understood from the expressions used by you.

It is just possible that the King may act at once on receipt of Her Majesty's letter, sent by the hand of Mr. Flad, and take measures to cause the transmission of the captives at once to the frontier of his Kingdom, as far as his power extends.

At the same time it is also possible, and more probable, he will propose some intermediate course, to which a reply should at once be made. Again, between Debra Tabor, where he now is, and Massowah, direct communication is closed by the intervening Province of Tigré being in a state of rebellion: messengers may pass to and fro,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 669. ‡ No. 670. § No. 668.

but no party could. It is, therefore, most likely, supposing the King wishes to release the captives without further delay, that he will write down to Massowah to say that he can only forward them to Matemma, on the Egyptian frontier, where they will be delivered over. In that case, it would be most desirable that I should proceed there with the presents, to see that no circumstances should interfere to mar the successful arrangement of the interchange which would then have to take place. The road to Matemma is entirely through friendly Egyptian territory, and I should be careful not to run any risk of endangering myself and those with me.

Massowah is not quite so near to London as North Wales, nor so easy to refer from. I therefore begged to suggest that I should be entrusted with a letter from Her Majesty, merely mentioning who I was, and that I had been sent to see the conditions of Her Majesty's letter well carried out. This would give me the right, as well as proper weight, to appear in case of any opportunity offering, or of its being of the first importance that I should act at once without having to await the result of a reference, whereby the loss of the favourable moment might be chanced.

Having such a letter in my possession, I should be in a position to do anything that was required, and should not run the risk of being discredited. It may be that I shall not have to use it at all; in which case I shall be very happy to return it as intrusted to me; but I should be very thankful to have it in possession, and Lord Stanley may rest assured I should not use it unadvisedly. It would in no way alter or affect the previous letter sent by Mr. Flad. It would indeed, only supplement it—being in reference to Her Majesty's intentions regarding the presents, and what is expected from the King in return.

Any reply from the King to Her Majesty's first letter would of course be forwarded at once to England.

If there is likely to be much delay, Mr. Talbot and party could at any moment be taken to Aden, and left there for a while.

In conclusion, I beg to be allowed to express my sincere thanks for the gratifying manner in which Lord Stanley has been good enough to notice my endeavours to carry out his wishes.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 673.

*Mr. Hammond to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 5, 1866.

I HAVE laid before Lord Stanley your letter of the 3rd instant, and he directs me to acquaint you that he continues to be of opinion that it would not be expedient that you should be the bearer of a letter from the Queen to King Theodore.

It is difficult to provide beforehand for every contingency that may possibly occur, or to give you precise and definite directions by which to shape your conduct.

According to the arrangement specified in the Queen's letter, of which Mr. Flad is the bearer, the presents are only to be placed in the hands of the King's messengers on the delivery of the prisoners at Massowah. You seem to anticipate that the King may demur to this arrangement, and, pleading his inability either to send the prisoners to Massowah or to convey the presents back from that place, may offer to effect the exchange of the prisoners for the presents at Matemma, where the prisoners would be in safety, being beyond the Abyssinian territory.

Lord Stanley understands that, with reference to this contingency, you think it desirable that you should be authorized to convey the presents to Matemma, and there make them over to the King's officers in exchange for the captives.

Lord Stanley will not withhold from you this authority, on the distinct understanding, however, that you do not put yourself or any other Europeans in the power of the King, unless the prisoners are safely delivered to your keeping, at some place out of the Abyssinian territory, where they are secure from any further attempt which might be made on the part of the King's troops again to seize them.

For obvious reasons, it is undesirable that any suggestion should be made by you to the King inconsistent with the terms of the Queen's letter† sent by Mr. Flad, or with the Memorandum‡ which Lord Stanley gave to Mr. Flad on his departure, of which I inclose copies for your information and guidance.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 661. ‡ No. 663.

It would clearly be imprudent to suggest a new arrangement till the fate of that already explained to the King is ascertained, or without a moral certainty that any such new arrangement will secure the release of the prisoners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 674.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Hammond.—(*Received November* 8.)

Sir, *November* 5, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report that Mr. Talbot with the work-people and presents intended for the King of Abyssinia, left Southampton yesterday.

I have to submit the accompanying Memorandum, showing the expenditure incurred in collecting and despatching the above.

I regret exceedingly to have to state, that owing to unavoidable circumstances the cost of the machinery has exceeded the estimate originally formed. That estimate was necessarily hypothetical to a more than usual extent, being based on the general cost of such articles as worked and applied in England. The machinery made for the King of Abyssinia being required of such form as would allow of its being readily carried into the interior of a country, where no regular roads exist, mountains have to be crossed, and nothing but pack-carriage available, had to be constructed especially for the occasion, and the full cost only became known on its completion. It was also of great importance it should be got ready with the least possible delay, and I was continually urging its being speedily finished. This of course added to the cost. The machinery was only completed last week, and had to be packed immediately to reach Southampton in time to be booked by the steamer leaving on the 4th instant. The accounts were only made out and delivered to me on Saturday. Could they have been prepared and submitted to me before the articles had been dispatched, I might have caused some portion to have been taken out and left behind. But that would have destroyed the completeness of the set, which would scarcely have been worth while for so small a saving. As they have been dispatched they are most perfect, and should it so happen that they are not sent up to the King of Abyssinia, all the articles, especially the 12-horse power engine, which is made on an entirely new principle to allow of easy portability, could be sold for their full value. The engine was designed and made in the establishment of Messrs. Easton, Amos, and Anderson, Southwark, and neither pains nor trouble were spared by them in preparing the machinery in the best style and by the earliest date possible. Part of the time double men were engaged to push on the work. Mr. Talbot has been most constant in his attendance while the machinery was being got ready, from the very commencement, only leaving the works once for a few days to bid good-bye to his friends in Ireland.

The remainder of the expenditure, which was better under control was kept well within the aggregate of the other items.

Inclosed also are the original agreements entered into with Mr. Talbot and the workpeople. It will be observed that there is an addition at the end of each, which I found it necessary to make, and which I hope will be approved. It shows more completely how and when the agreement is to cease in case of the party not going up into Abyssinia—was satisfactory to the workpeople—and the extra expense incurred under it will be easily met by the sale of the presents, which in that case would be no longer required.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

P.S.—A portion of the packages containing some of the machinery could not be shipped in the "Massilia" on the 3rd instant. They will follow by the Pera on the 12th. The freight on these not being known yet, must be accounted for afterwards. It will not be much.

W. L. M.

Inclosure 1 in No. 674

Memorandum.

	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
Expended in purchase of presents, freight of ditto, as shown by accompanying bills—						
a. Marshall and Snellgrove	57	16	3			
b. Negretti and Zamba	9	9	0			
c. Madame Temple	15	0	0			
d. Watson, Bontor, and Co.	32	3	0			
e. John Crossley and Sons	44	13	6			
f. Mappin and Co.	61	3	0			
g. Garden and Son	162	15	7			
h. Freight on packages, as per Peninsular and Oriental Company's bill	56	5	5			
				439	5	9
Quarter's salary paid to Mr. Talbot and six workmen				720	0	0
Equipment money to ditto—						
To Mr. Talbot, superintendent	100	0	0			
Mr. Morris, 1st assistant	60	0	0			
Five workmen, 30*l.* each	150	0	0			
				310	0	0
Paid passage to Suez for Mr. Talbot and party—						
Two first-class* tickets (30*l.* each)	60	0	0			
Five second-class tickets (19*l.* each)	95	0	0			
Transit through Egypt—						
Two first-class (4*l.* 10*s.* each)	9	0	0			
Five second-class (2*l.* 5*s.* each)	11	5	0			
				175	5	0
Paid Mr. Talbot for hotel expenses in Egypt—						
Two first-class (10*l.* each)	20	0	0			
Five second-class	5	0	0			
				45	0	0
Cost of machinery as per bills from Messrs. Easton and Amos— ..				2,050	8	7
†Paid to Mr. Talbot in advance on account of small articles, instruments, &c. to accompany machinery				50	0	0
Freight on packages to Suez, as per Thomas Hall's bills				109	18	11
Grand total				3,889	18	3

RECEIVED FROM THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
First advance on account of machinery	500	0	0
Second ditto ditto	50	0	0
First ditto equipment	280	0	0
Second ditto ditto	20	0	0
Advance on account of presents	450	0	0
Ditto ditto passage money	220	5	0
First advance on account of quarter's salary	360	0	0
Second ditto ditto	360	0	0
Total	2,240	5	0
Balance to be paid	1,649	13	3

	£	*s*	*d.*
Original estimate of total expenditure	3,500	0	0
Excess over estimate	389	18	3
Total	3,889	18	3

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Original estimate of cost of machinery	1,500	0	0
Actual cost	2,050	8	7
Excess over estimate	550	8	7

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

[See Amended Account, No. 675.]

* These tickets handed over to Mr. Talbot.—W.L.M.

† This will be accounted for by items hereafter, Mr. Talbot having the bills. A portion was unexpected him.—W.L.M.

Inclosure 2 in No. 674.

Agreements.

Agreement entered into by Matthew Edward Talbot, Esquire, on the one hand, and William Lockyer Merewether, Lieutenant-Colonel in Her Majesty's Bombay Staff Corps, Resident at Aden, &c., on the other, to the effect that the above-named Matthew Edward Talbot agrees to forward to Abyssinia, with machinery presented by Her Majesty to the Emperor Theodorus, and there to enter the service of, and work for, the said Emperor, under the following stipulations:—

THAT the engagement shall be for three years, renewable at the pleasure of the Emperor, and the said Matthew Edward Talbot, but then on terms to be agreed on between them. That the salary of the said Matthew Edward Talbot during this first engagement shall be (1,000*l.*) one thousand pounds per annum, to be paid by the Emperor Theodorus, except in so far as is below notified; and that the said Matthew Edward Talbot shall take with him certain artificers as agreed to between him, the said Matthew Edward Talbot, and the said William Lockyer Merewether, at salaries so arranged, that the aggregate, including that of the said Matthew Edward Talbot does not exceed the sum of (2,880*l.*) two thousand eight hundred and eighty pounds annually.

The salary to commence from date of engagement.

The exceptions are—

1. That salary up to the time of reaching the Emperor's camp, equal to about one quarter, shall be paid to the said Matthew Edward Talbot, and those proceeding with him, by Her Majesty's Government, as compensation for the time expended in reaching the Emperor's camp.

2. That in the event of death, or of sickness, contracted from badness of climate, compelling return to England, and the Emperor failing to act up to the engagement, the amount of the three years' salary remaining unpaid to the said Matthew Edward Talbot, or those proceeding with him shall be guaranteed and paid by Her Majesty's Government to the appointed heirs or assigns of each or all in the first instance or to themselves, or to persons accredited by themselves in the second.

Further it is agreed that the passage of the said Matthew Edward Talbot, and those proceeding with him, from England to Massowah, the port of Abyssinia, shall be paid by Her Majesty's Government, and a suitable sum given as outfit money to each, viz. (100*l.*) one hundred pounds to the said Matthew Edward Talbot, and (30*l.*) thirty pounds to each of the others.

On the faith of the above agreement and guarantee the said Matthew Edward Talbot, and others with him, proceed to Abyssinia, to enter the service of, and to work under, the Emperor, entirely of their own free will, and by their own desire.

London, August 16, 1866.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER, *Lieutenant-Colonel, Resident, Aden.*
MATHEW E. TALBOT.

Witness present:—
(Signed) C. H. MOBERLY.

It is understood that if the said Matthew Edward Talbot should not proceed to Abyssinia, and should not enter into the Emperor's service, this agreement should have no effect, but pay and expenses in returning to be paid up to the date of re-arrival in England, no unnecessary delay taking place on either part.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER, *Lieutenant-Colonel, Resident, Aden.*

Agreement entered into by John Brampton on the one hand, and William Lockyer Merewether, Companion of the Bath, Lieutenant Colonel in Her Majesty's Bombay Staff Corps, Resident at Aden, &c., on the other, to the effect that the said John Brampton will proceed to Abyssinia, there to enter the service of, and work for, the Emperor Theodorus, under the following stipulations:—

THAT the engagement shall be for (3) years, renewable at the pleasure of the Emperor, and the said John Brampton; but there on terms to be agreed between them only.

That the salary of the said John Brampton, during this engagement for three

years shall be 300*l.* per annum, to be paid by the Emperor Theodorus, except in so far as is below notified.

The salary to commence from date of engagement.

The exceptions are—

1. That salary up to the time of reaching the Emperor's camp, equal to about one quarter shall be paid to the said John Brampton as compensation for the time expended *en route*.

2. That in the event of the Emperor, in consequence of the death or sickness of the said John Brampton, failing to act up to the engagement, the amount of the three years' salary remaining unpaid to the said John Brampton is guaranteed, and shall be paid in England to the appointed heirs or authorized representatives of the said John Brampton.

Further, passage-money from England to Massowah, the port of Abyssinia, shall be paid for the said John Brampton, and a sum of money amounting to 30*l.* given to him for outfit.

On the faith of the above agreement and guarantee, the said John Brampton proceeds to Abyssinia to enter the service of, and to work under, the Emperor Theodorus, and in so doing he acts entirely of his own free will, and by his own desire.

It is understood that if the said John Brampton should not proceed to Abyssinia, and should not enter into the Emperor's service, this agreement shall have no effect. But pay, and expenses in returning to be paid up to date of re-arrival in England; no unnecessary delay taking place on either part.

London, September 15, 1866.

(Signed) JOHN BRAMPTON.
W. L. MEREWETHER, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

Agreement entered into by Richard Joy on the one hand, and William Lockyer Merewether, Companion of the Bath, Lieutenant-Colonel in Her Majesty's Bombay Staff Corps, Resident at Aden, &c., on the other, to the effect that the said Richard Joy will proceed to Abyssinia, there to enter the service of and work for the Emperor Theodorus, under the following stipulations:—

THAT the engagement shall be for three years, renewable at the pleasure of the Emperor and the said Richard Joy, but then on terms to be agreed between them only.

That the salary of the said Richard Joy during this engagement for three years shall be 270*l.* per annum, to be paid by the Emperor Theodorus, except in so far as is below notified:—

The salary to commence from date of engagement.

The exceptions are:—

1st. That salary up to the time of reaching the Emperor's camp equal to about one quarter should be paid to the said Richard Joy as compensation for the time expended *en route*.

2nd. That in the event of the Emperor, in consequence of the death or sickness o the said Richard Joy, failing to act up to the engagement, the amount of the three years' salary remaining unpaid to the said Richard Joy is guaranteed, and shall be paid in England to the appointed heirs or authorised representatives of the said Richard Joy.

Further, passage-money from England to Massowah, the port of Abyssinia, shall be paid for the said Richard Joy, and a sum of money amounting to 30*l.* given to him for outfit.

On the faith of the above agreement and guarantee, the said Richard Joy proceeds to Abyssinia to enter the service of, and to work under, the Emperor Theodorus, and in so doing he acts entirely of his own free will and by his own desire.

It is understood that if the said Richard Joy should not proceed to Abyssinia, and should not enter into the Emperor's service, this Agreement shall have no effect. But pay and expenses in returning to be paid up to date of re-arrival in England; no unnecesary delay taking place on either part.

London, September 21, 1866.

(Signed) RICHARD JOY.
W. L. MEREWETHER, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

Agreement entered into by William James Lewer on the one hand, and William Locker Merewether, Companion of the Bath, Lieutenant-Colonel in Her Maiesty's Bombay Staff Corps, Resident at Aden, &c., on the other, to the effect that the said William James Lewer will proceed to Abyssinia, there to enter the service of and work for the Emperor Theodorus, under the following stipulations :—

THAT the engagement shall be for three years, renewable at the pleasure of the Emperor and the said William James Lewer, but then on terms to be agreed between them only.

That the salary of the said William James Lewer during this engagement for three years shall be 270*l.* per annum, to be paid by the Emperor Theodorus, except in so far as is below notified.

The salary to commence from date of engagement.

The exceptions are :—

1st. That salary, up to the time of reaching the Emperor's camp, equal to about one quarter, shall be paid to the said William James Lewer, as compensation for the time expended *en route*.

2nd. That in the event of the Emperor, in consequence of the death or sickness of the said William James Lewer failing to act up to the engagement, the amount of the three years' salary remaining unpaid to the said William James Lewer is guaranteed, and shall be paid in England to the appointed heirs or authorized representatives of the said William James Lewer.

Further, passage-money from England to Massowah, the port of Abyssinia, shall be paid for the said William James Lewer, and a sum of money, amounting to 30*l.*, given to him for outfit.

On the faith of the above agreement and guarantee the said William James Lewer proceeds to Abyssinia, to enter the service of and to work under the Emperor Theodorus, and in so doing he acts entirely of his own free will and by his own desire.

It is understood that if the said William James Lewer should not proceed to Abyssinia, and should not enter into the Emperor's service, this Agreement shall have no effect. But pay and expenses in returning to be paid up to date of re-arrival in England. No unnecessary delay taking place on either part.

London, September 22, 1866.

(Signed) WILLIAM JAMES LEWER.
W. L. MEREWETHER, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

Agreement entered into by George Carr on the one hand, and William Lockyer Merewether, Companion of the Bath, Lieutenant-Colonel in Her Majesty's Bombay Staff Corps, Resident at Aden, &c., on the other, to the effect that the said George Carr will proceed to Abyssinia, there to enter the service of, and work for the Emperor Theodorus, under the following stipulations :—

THAT the engagement shall be for three years, renewable at the pleasure of the Emperor and the said George Carr, but then on terms to be agreed between them only.

That the salary of the said George Carr during this engagement for three years shall be 300*l.* per annum, to be paid by the Emperor Theodorus, except in so far as is below notified.

The salary to commence from date of engagement.

The exceptions are :—

1st. That salary up to the time of reaching the Emperor's camp, equal to about one quarter, shall be paid to the said George Carr as compensation for the time expended *en route*.

2nd. That in the event of the Emperor, in consequence of the death or sickness of the said George Carr, failing to act up to the engagement, the amount of the three years' salary remaining unpaid to the said George Carr is guaranteed, and shall be paid in England to the appointed heirs or authorised representatives of the said George Carr.

Further, passage-money from England to Massowah, the port of Abyssinia, shall be paid for the said George Carr, and a sum of money, amounting to 30*l.*, given to him for outfit.

On the faith of the above agreement and guarantee, the said George Carr proceeds to Abyssinia to enter the service of, and to work under the Emperor Theodorus, and in so doing he acts entirely of his own free will and by his own desire.

It is understood that if the said George Carr should not proceed to Abyssinia, and should not enter into the Emperor's service, this Agreement shall have no effect. But pay, and expenses in returning, to be paid up to date of re-arrival in England; no unnecessary delay taking place on either part.

London, September 25, 1866.

(Signed) GEO. CARR.
W. L. MEREWETHER.

Agreement entered into by John Charles Morris on the one hand, and William Lockyer Merewether, Companion of the Bath, Lieutenant-Colonel in Her Majesty's Bombay Staff Corps, Resident at Aden, &c., on the other, to the effect that the said John Charles Morris will proceed to Abyssinia, there to enter the service of, and work for, the Emperor Theodorus, under the following stipulations :—

THAT the engagement shall be for three years, renewable at the pleasure of the Emperor and the said John Charles Morris, but then on terms to be agreed between them only.

That the salary of the said John Charles Morris during this engagement for three years shall be 500*l.* per annum, to be paid by the Emperor Theodorus, except in so far as is below notified :—

The salary to commence from date of engagement.

The exceptions are :—

1st. That salary up to the time of reaching the Emperor's camp, equal to about one quarter, shall be paid to the said John Charles Morris as compensation for the time expended *en route*.

2nd. That in the event of the Emperor, in consequence of the death or sickness of the said John Charles Morris failing to act up to the engagement, the amount of the three years' salary remaining unpaid to the said John Charles Morris is guaranteed, and shall be paid in England to the appointed heirs or authorised representatives of the said John Charles Morris.

Further, passage-money from England to Massowah, the port of Abyssinia, shall be paid for the said John Charles Morris, and a sum of money, amounting to 60*l.*, given to him for outfit.

On the faith of the above agreement and guarantee, the said John Charles Morris proceeds to Abyssinia to enter the service of, and to work under, the Emperor Theodorus, and in so doing he acts entirely of his own free will and by his own desire.

It is understood that if the said John Charles Morris should not proceed to Abyssinia, and should not enter into the Emperor's service, this agreement shall have no effect. But pay, and expenses in returning, to be paid up to date of re-arrival in England; no unnecessary delay taking place on either part.

London, October 8, 1866.

(Signed) JOHN CHARLES MORRIS.
W. L. MEREWETHER, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

Agreement entered into by Charles Bowers on the one hand, and William Lockyer Merewether, Companion of the Bath, Lieutenant-Colonel in Her Majesty's Bombay Staff Corps, Resident at Aden, &c., on the other, to the effect that the said Charles Bowers will proceed to Abyssinia, there to enter the service of and work for the Emperor Theodorus, under the following stipulations :—

THAT the engagement shall be for three years, renewable at the pleasure of the Emperor and the said Charles Bowers, but then on terms to be agreed between them only.

That the salary of the said Charles Bowers during this engagement for three years shall be 300*l.* per annum, to be paid by the Emperor Theodorus, except in so far as is below notified.

The salary to commence from date of engagement.

The exceptions are :—

1st. That salary up to the time of reaching the Emperor's camp, equal to about one quarter, shall be paid to the said Charles Bowers, as compensation for the time expended *en route*.

2nd. That in the event of the Emperor, in consequence of the death or sickness of

the said Charles Bowers failing to act up to the engagement, the amount of the three years' salary remaining unpaid to the said Charles Bowers is guaranteed, and shall be paid in England to the appointed heirs or authorized representatives of the said Charles Charles Bowers.

Further, passage-money from England to Massowah, the port of Abyssinia, shall be paid for the said Charles Bowers; and a sum of money, amounting to 30*l.*, given to him for outfit.

On the faith of the above agreement and guarantee, the said Charles Bowers proceeds to Abyssinia, to enter the service of and to work under the Emperor Theodorus, and in so doing he acts entirely of his own free will and by his own desire.

It is understood that if the said Charles Bowers should not proceed to Abyssinia, and should not enter into the Emperor's service, this Agreement shall have no effect. But pay and expenses in returning to be paid up to date of re-arrival in England; no unnecessary delay taking place on either part.

London, October 12, 1866.

(Signed) CHARLES BOWERS.
W. L. MEREWETHER, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

No. 675.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Hammond.—(Received November 9.)

Sir, *London, November* 9, 1866.

WITH reference to my letter to you of the 5th instant,* I have the honour to inclose to you herewith an amended account (accompanied by vouchers 1, 6, and 8,) amounting to 3,899*l.* 18*s.* 3*d.*, being my expenditure incurred in preparing and dispatching presents, workpeople, and machinery, intended for the Emperor of Abyssinia; and I have to request that you will lay the same before Lord Stanley, and move his Lordship to give directions that the balance of 1,659*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.* may be paid to me.

I regret that the vouchers are not so complete as they ought to be, but I will take care that those wanting, viz., vouchers 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7, shall be forwarded to you as soon as possible after my arrival at Suez.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 675.

COLONEL MEREWETHER in Account with Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Date.		£	*s.*	*d.*		No. of Voucher.	£	*s.*	*d.*
Sept. 25	Amount received from the Chief Clerk	280	0	0	Cost of presents and freight	1	439	5	9
Oct. 10	Ditto ditto ..	500	0	0	Quarter's salary paid to Mr. Talbot and six workmen	2	720	0	0
,, 20	Ditto ditto ..	1,100	5	0	Equipment money to ditto	3	310	0	0
Nov. 2	Ditto ditto ..	360	0	0	Passage to Suez for Mr. Talbot and six men	4	175	5	0
					Hotel expenses in Egypt for ditto ..	5	45	0	0
					Cost of machinery, as per bills annexed	6	2,050	8	7
					Paid to Mr. Talbot, in advance, on account of small articles, instruments, &c. to accompany machinery	7	50	0	0
	Balance	1,659	13	3	Freight on machinery	8	109	18	11
		3,899	18	3			3,899	18	3

Foreign Office, November 5, 1866.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER, *Lieutenant-Colonel, Resident at Aden.*

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* No. 674.

No. 676.

*Captain Goodfellow to Lord Stanley.—(Received November 13.)**

My Lord, *Aden, October 25, 1866.*

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Lordship's information, that Mr. Flad arrived here this morning, and informed me that, in consequence of certain packages of his baggage, containing articles purchased by him for the King of Abyssinia whilst in England, not having come out with him, he considered it advisable to await their arrival by the next mail, seven days hence, before proceeding to Massowah. I informed him that I was of opinion that it would be a pity to waste any further time, and that I considered his reaching Massowah as soon as possible was of the utmost importance, even without the articles he enumerated, as they were certain to arrive by the steamer expected on the 2nd proximo, by which date the "Victoria" could take him to Massowah, and return for the packages in question; that, by his proceeding to Massowah at once, he could, if not able to proceed up country immediately, write and inform the King of his arrival; and that, if even an opportunity should occur for his taking the journey himself, he could not expect to start from Massowah for some days after arrival, owing to the difficulty of procuring carriage, &c., for his luggage at that place; and that, therefore, under any circumstances, his immediate departure hence could not but be of the greatest advantage, either in the matter of assuring the King that he had actually returned, and that everything that was required had been carried out during his absence in England, or else to enable him to make preparations for immediate departure on the arrival of the "Victoria" with the cases seven days after his arrival at Massowah.

2nd. I am glad to be able to state that he has decided on leaving at once, and Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" will put to sea, consequently, to-morrow morning for Massowah, to convey him thither, and to return to make the subsequent trip to Suez, touching at Massowah *en route*, as soon as possible after the 2nd proximo.

3rd. I regret that I should not have been able to let her leave this earlier, but Mr. Flad informs me he requires a number of articles, such as provisions, cooking utensils, bedding and camp equipage, and furniture, before taking his departure. These are not procurable at once, and time is lost in collecting them. I, however, hope to have all his requirements supplied before noon to-morrow, when Her Majesty's ship "Victoria" will leave this. I take the opportunity also of forwarding 2,500 dollars to M. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate, to defray any expenses that may arise, and I trust that my proceedings may meet with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 677.

*Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received November 28.)**

My Lord, *Cairo, November 14, 1866.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from the Acting Political Resident at Aden, with its inclosures, which has just reached me under flying seal, and which contains intelligence from Mr. Rassam up to the 17th of September.

At that date Mr. Rassam and his party, as well as Consul Cameron and the other captives, were confined, strictly guarded, and with chains on their legs at Magdala, but otherwise appear to have been well treated, and are reported to be in good health.

The King professes always the most friendly sentiments towards Mr. Rassam, but appears, or pretends, to believe that Her Majesty's Government have hostile intentions against him, and are merely waiting till the prisoners are safe out of his country to commence hostilities.

Mr. Rassam's despatches were brought from Massowah to Aden by Her Majesty's ship "Victoria," which had conveyed Mr. Flad to that port; but your Lordship will perceive from Captain Goodfellow's despatch, that Mr. Flad anticipates considerable difficulty in reaching the King's camp, as the road from Matemma to Debra Tabor is reported to be in the hands of the rebels, and the date of his departure appears at present very uncertain.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

I imagine, however, my Lord, on Colonel Merewether's arrival at Massowah, many of the difficulties may be found to be surmountable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 678.

Captain Goodfellow to Lord Stanley.—(*Received November* 28.)*

My Lord, *Aden, November* 3, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Lordship's information, that Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria," after leaving this on the 25th ultimo to convey Mr. Flad to Massowah, returned here yesterday for his luggage, and has brought a despatch and some private letters from Mr. Rassam and his party.

2. The despatch to your Lordship's address is attached, and will thoroughly explain the present position of the Mission and the other Europeans in Abyssinia; the messengers that brought down these letters arrived at Massowah on the 22nd and 24th ultimo respectively, and they state that the King is still at Debra Tabor, but may possibly come to Tigré, in which case the objection that Mr. Flad has to travel through that province will be removed. Mr. Flad informs me also that he cannot now proceed viâ Matemma, that road likewise being in the hands of the rebels; he states that if he cannot possibly go himself, he intends forwarding a translation of Her Majesty's letter, with a letter from himself to the King, acquainting him of his own arrival and the fact of the artizans being on their way out; and concludes by asking my advice as to whether in the latter case, instead of waiting at Massowah, he might not proceed up to Suez in the "Victoria." I have informed him that I consider that his quitting Massowah again so soon after his return would be extremely objectionable, and that if it is not actually possible for him to start very soon, either by Tigré, or viâ Matemma for the interior, that he cannot do better than acquaint the King by letter with the fact of his return with an answer from Her Majesty the Queen; indeed, when here I requested him to do this as soon as possible if he found it impracticable to leave Massowah, so that no time might be lost, and that Colonel Merewether might not be delayed at Massowah unnecessarily, and it was with this object I persuaded him to leave this at once, but impressed upon him that he was on no account to leave Massowah itself except for the King's camp.

3. Her Majesty's steamer "Victoria" will start to-morrow for Massowah and Suez, at which latter port she will await Colonel Merewether's arrival.

4. Copies of all the letters just received have been forwarded for Colonel Merewether's information. I trust my proceedings will be approved by your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. R. GOODFELLOW.

No. 679.

Mr. Rassam to Lord Stanley.—(*Received November* 28.)*

My Lord, *Magdala, August* 26, 1866.

I REGRET to inform your Lordship that since the middle of last month, both my companions, Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, and myself, have been chained on the feet by order of the Emperor, on the pretence that Her Majesty's Government has an intention of sending troops to make war against him.

On the 19th ultimo I wrote and apprised you of what had taken place since my letter which I dispatched to you at the end of May, but unfortunately the letter was seized by the rebels of Lasta, while the messengers were passing through Sokota.

About the beginning of June the cholera appeared among the Royal troops, while we were at Zegay on Lake Tsana, consequently, His Majesty moved up to the mountains towards Debra Tabor. I had to accompany him with the whole of my party on his journey up.

Ever since the departure of Mr. Flad for England, the Emperor has been extremely kind and attentive, and on our arrival at Debra Tabor, on the 15th June, he took us to Gaffat, a distance of about three miles, and located us in comfortable houses in the European quarter. His Majesty actually superintended the furnishing of my room,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

where he placed his temporary throne for the sake of impressing on his people the regard he entertained for me. We thought we were going to be allowed to spend the rainy season quietly at that place, but unhappily we were soon doomed to great disappointment. The Emperor returned to Debra Tabor as soon as he saw me comfortably settled, and took up his quarters there.

In the course of the ensuing week, he paid me two visits in my house, and he always spoke in gratifying terms of the respect and regard he entertained for our Queen and her Government, and of the esteem in which he held me.

On the 25th idem I was summoned to appear before His Majesty, and I was asked to take with me the missionaries and any other gentlemen who were with me. I accordingly repaired to Debra Tabor, and took with me Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, Consul Cameron, and Messrs. Stern, Rosenthal, and Kerans. All the Emperor's European artizans accompanied us thither, as they also had received orders to go.

On arriving at the Court, we were ushered into the Royal black tent, and no sooner did we sit down, than the European artizans were summoned by His Majesty, and sent back, accompanied by four Abyssinian Chiefs, with a message for me, to the effect that the Emperor had heard that a railroad had been laid down between Egypt and Kassala, for the purpose of transporting British, French, and Turkish troops thereon, for the purpose of invading Abyssinia. I assured His Majesty that there could be no foundation for this rumour, as when I passed through Kassala, nine months before, even the idea of laying a railroad was not even known there.

Another message was then sent to me that the Emperor had heard from Jerusalem, that I had been sent to him by Her Majesty's Government on false pretences, for the purpose of obtaining the release of the European prisoners, and after we were safe out of the country, my Government would avenge the insult offered to it by the imprisonment of the Consul. This report I did my best to prove a mischievous calumny, and I said that I felt confident that the people who sent that false report, did so for the sake of creating discord between England and Abyssinia. After this, he began to reiterate his grievances against Mr. Rosenthal and Captain Cameron, and ultimately began to send complimentary messages, saying that with regard to myself he entertained the highest confidence in me, and that he did not hold me responsible for the actions of my Government, but, said he, as he had heard of the hostile designs of my Government, he felt himself bound to watch my movements; and that in future I must live near him. I was told then to remain in the black tent, and he sent and fetched our luggage from Gaffat.

Afterwards I obtained permisssion for Dr. Blanc and Mr. Rosenthal to return to Gaffat, the former for the purpose of attending a patient who was dangerously ill, and the latter for the sake of joining his wife. Soon after that I was granted a little liberty, as I was allowed to go down to Gaffat to pay some visits, and I was told by His Majesty that he wished me to make myself happy, and to go out whenever I felt inclined.

On the 3rd ultimo the Emperor went down to Gaffat to see one of his factories which was reported to have fallen down. Soon afterwards he returned, and sent to me to say he wished to speak to me; as he also directed that the persons who were living with me in the tent should accompany me, I took with me Consul Cameron, and Messrs. Prideaux and Stern. On approaching the Royal presence I was surprised to find that Dr. Blanc and Mr. Rosenthal had been arrested and brought up to Debra Tabor. His Majesty seemed very much displeased, and began by opening his old grievance against Captain Cameron and Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal, and he tried very much to make my Government a party to the writings against him by the two latter gentlemen. He then proceeded to talk about matters which do not concern either my Government or myself.

We were then all ordered to be taken to a dark room in the Court adjoining his residence, and to be guarded strictly.

After sunset His Majesty began to send me civil messages, and desired me not to give myself up to melancholy, as he had great friendly feelings towards me. I then deemed it my duty to speak to him plainly upon the injudicious course which he was pursuing towards me, who had come to him with a friendly letter from the British Queen. That his treatment of me was contrary to the friendly sentiments entertained by my Government towards him, and to the sincerity which I had always displayed.

Soon afterwards he came himself to pay me a visit, and he brought with him some wine and spirits for the sake of drinking to our healths. He said to me that he hoped I did not mind seeing him angry that afternoon, that I should look to his heart and not to his face, because he esteemed me as much as ever, and as Christians we ought

* Laid before Parliament 1867.

always to be ready to forgive each other. He said that he had an object in what he had done that day, but towards me he was always the same.

I remained in the dark room with my party two days, and on the 5th we accompanied His Majesty eastward, as he had to start with his whole army towards this place. On the third day we reached Aibunkub, a distance of about thirty miles from Debra Tabor, His Majesty was as usual very kind and attentive, but although we travelled with him, and encamped near him, we were strictly guarded.

On the 9th he sent us on to Magdala, on the plea that he wished to place us in a safe quarter for the rainy season, as he intended to march against the rebels, and did not like to leave us in any insecure place on account of the disturbance in different parts of the country. We reached this place on the 12th ultimo, after a march of four days, and the whole time we were strictly guarded. Here we were all placed in one room, and our servants were located in another adjoining ours. We were told that this house belongs to Ras Engeda, the chief Minister.

On the 16th idem the Chiefs of Magdala came to us with a number of chains, and said that, as the Emperor had not sent definite orders as to the mode of our imprisonment, they were obliged to be on the safe side by putting our feet in fetters, and so they began to chain my party in the following order, Mr. Kerans, Mr. Stern, Mr. Rosenthal, David Pietro, Consul Cameron, Mr. Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc. A ring of my fetters having broken while they were trying to rivet them, I was not chained till the following day. The Chiefs assured me the chains were not a sign of ill-will, as they were certain their master was my friend, and hoped that before many days were over, everything would be all right again. His Majesty had ordered that all my servants, and those of Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, should be allowed to come up to the fortress, but that the rest of the prisoners, including Consul Cameron, should be allowed only one female domestic each, in accordance with the prison discipline of Magdala. Some bread and a little mead was only allowed to be supplied to us three.

His Majesty had also written to the Magdala authorities, ordering them to be very civil to me, and said that although he had sent me as a prisoner here, I was still his friend; indeed, the Chiefs have done all in their power to make us comfortable. Since we were chained, they gave me a room to myself furnished with Royal carpets, and one to Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux. Consul Cameron and Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal retain the room in which we were first located, and Messrs Kerans and Pietro live with our Indian tenants in the same apartment.

On the 9th instant I received a friendly letter from the Emperor, asking after my health, and that of Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, to which I had to send him a similar answer.

I have heard from Gaffat that, a few days ago, His Majesty made a long speech before his European artizans and others, in which he affirmed his great friendship and esteem for me, but he said for the sake of my Government he had put me in chains, because he had heard from the sea-coast that they had hostile intentions towards him.

Everybody in this country is at a loss what to make of the extraordinary conduct of the Emperor, because, on the one hand, he professes such great friendship towards my Government and myself, and on the other, he seems to believe any story trumped up by evil-disposed persons, who do it for the sake of creating a breach between him and the British Government; and, while declaring himself my best friend, he places me in chains.

He keeps us in this country against the advice of all his best councillors. When he appealed to the opinion of his chief nobles, they all, without any exception, advised him to allow us to return to our country, and that he should place implicit confidence in me.

Dr. Beke, who professes to know the rules and habits of the country, ought not to have come out until he knew that I would not be received, bearing as I was Her Majesty's gracious letter. His coming, and his abrupt departure, have done no good to the prisoners in whose behalf he had come.

Messrs. Rosenthal and McKelvie were allowed to remain at Gaffat, the former on account of the difficulty of travelling to this place during the rainy season, and the latter on account of being laid up by sickness before our departure. Mr. Kerans and McKelvie had previously volunteered their services to His Majesty; those of the former have been rejected, but the latter's have been accepted. Messrs. Bardel, Makerer, Steigers, Brandeis, Essler, and Schiller, have also entered the Emperor's service.

As I have been in want of money for current expenses, I have been compelled to draw upon your Lordship for 1,000 German crowns, and I trust that you will pardon me for having taken the liberty, on account of the difficult position I am placed in. I fear it will not be an easy matter for me to obtain any further funds in this country.

Thank God, we are all well, and trying to make ourselves as comfortable as possible under the present trying circumstances.

I should feel obliged by your Lordship informing the families of my fellow-prisoners of their well-being.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

P.S. *Magdala, 17th September*, 1866.—Since the date of the above I have received another very polite letter from the Emperor, in which he informs me of his intended journey hither, and asks me not to fear but to be comforted.

He also informs me of his success in having had a large brass gun cast at Gaffat, which is said to be an 18-pounder, and about 7½ feet long.

He has written again to the Magdala authorities about me. He gives them strict orders to attend to all my wants.

He has this time honoured Captain Cameron and the Rev. Mr. Stern with his compliments—the first time he ever did so since my arrival in this country.

H. R.

Inclosure 1 in No. 679.

*Consul Cameron to Mr. Hammond.**

Dear Sir, *Magdala, August* 20, 1866.

YOU will have received my letter from Zegay.†

At that time I had hopes that we would be left in quiet until the answer arrived to the King's letter, forwarded by Mr. Flad.

The King has, however, now picked a quarrel with Mr. Rassam and his people on the ground of information he states himself to have received to the effect that England intends to attack him.

We all had some rough scenes with him, and expected chains every moment, after his first scene with Mr. Rassam in regard to the report which he says has been conveyed to him about the intentions of England.

Argument is useless with him. He openly laid claims to all the territories of Turkey, and pressed Mr. Rassam to give an opinion in favour of his right.

We are now kept as capital, in order to extort whatever he may want by bullying us.

We were sent up here on the 12th July, and chained on the 16th of that month.

We have foot-chains only this time, but are strictly watched and regularly guarded by night and day.

Even correspondence is difficult, as orders have been given to chain us hand and foot, if we are caught writing.

Nothing but an energetic movement into the heart of the country, for the express purpose of rescuing us, can get us out.

Further concessions will only lead to further unreasonable demands.

The King says openly that he expects another Embassy.

Nothing but a rapid movement, without warning, be assured, will bring him to his senses.

Above all, the Government should avoid writing strongly, unless they have troops on the spot.

He will only be exasperated, and perhaps deal summarily with us all.

He has received so many strong letters from Egypt that he has no further faith in pieces of paper, and the protest of the French Consul, which was rather a rough one, has done more harm than good, as it was not followed up.

We are all well, thanks to the good climate of this place.

Beg my dear friend Hertslet to excuse my not writing to him this time; I will have another opportunity in a few days; and ask him to be kind enough to communicate the fact of my being in good health to all friends and relations.

Our party consists of Mr. Rassam, Dr. Blanc, Lieutenant Prideaux, Messrs. Rosenthal, Stern, and Kerans, the Italian, David Pietro, and myself.

The two missionaries, Brandeis and Steiger, have at last given way and entered the King's service as workmen. Macraire, Bardel, and the boy McKelvie have entered the King's service at their own request; and the two hunters, Essler and Schiller, have, I hear, done the same.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 629.

We know not ourselves what to expect. Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal were told that they should make up for their misdeeds, such as they are, by making themselves useful to him.

They offered to do anything His Majesty required, but we have heard nothing more of the matter, although it may be started again at any time.

In fact, the life and property of none of us are safe as long as the King labours under his present delusion—that we cannot get at him in this mountainous country—and that he has the power of getting everything from Europe by merely keeping and torturing us in this way.

However, while there is life there is hope, and I hope still that we will live through everything, and return to our own country once more.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) C. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 679.

*Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, September* 17, 1866.

IT is now nearly half-a-year since I had the pleasure of hearing from you, and I attributed the cause of your long silence to your expectation of my departure from Abyssinia, and your visit to England. You must have been sadly disappointed when you heard of the turn the Abyssinian affair took after the account I gave of my success in my letter of March last. Indeed, that happy time seemed to me too good to last. I wish I could write to you fully about all the matters, but my position is difficult, and I must not make matters worse by writing copiously the history of all that has transpired since I arrived in this country. Even when Mr. Flad left, I dared not communicate to you or to Her Majesty's Government what had transpired. I felt convinced that through the veracity of that gentleman and his thorough knowledge of all that had taken place, Her Majesty's Government would find out the state of affairs.

If I live to see you again, you will be more than surprised to find that through the foolish talk of some fools and mischief-makers, the good understanding which I had established between the Emperor of Abyssinia and England is destroyed. It is a melancholy affair altogether, and I trust that I shall have it in my power one day to write fully regarding it.

My official† to the Secretary of State will inform you of our condition, and I have no doubt that long before my communication of our disgrace reaches you, you will hear it from other quarters. The common saying is, evil reports travel fast.

Between my present position, where I and all my party are strictly guarded, and the disturbed districts between this and Massowah, I find it very difficult to send any letters to the coast. However, I am now trying all kinds of ways, and there is no lack of friends who render me assistance; indeed, even in my present unmoveable state, I am not forsaken, not even by the King himself. He is continually writing to the Magdala authorities to show me all the attention in their power, which they do faithfully. They visit me every now and then, and tell me not to fear, because that their master esteems me greatly, and doubt not but that everything will be right again soon.

I am the only prisoner at Magdala whom they visit.

The Bishop (Aboona Salama of Abyssinia), though not in chains, no one is allowed to go and see him; we are not placed with the other prisoners as Cameron and his party were, but are allowed to live in houses near the precincts of the Palace.

I am still in the dark as to the cause which led His Majesty to take this grave step, and what he expects to benefit by it; I have spoken to him plainly upon all matters, and he cannot possibly believe that either Her Majesty's Government or the British nation will be flattered at his extraordinary conduct towards me and my party. He still professes to be friendly to me and my Government.

Dr. Beke's foolish Mission, it is believed, has done us all great mischief. It is very curious that no sooner did my friend receive his letter than he took it into his head to detain us all in this country, and ask me to send to England for artisans for him. There is no one in this country who approves of the steps which Beke took in the Abyssinian matter; and as our friend is of a suspicious character, of course he could not understand how, after the Great Queen of England wrote to him upon a matter

* Laid before Parliament. 1867. † No. 679.

private individuals came forward to beg of him upon their knees to grant them the same favour. Had Beke communicated to me before he addressed our friend in reference to his Mission, I would have certainly advised him not to make his appearance. However, it is now no use talking about the past; the mischief has been done, and now we must bear.

It is surmised that his abrupt departure has put myself and party into this fix. It is also believed that the false rumour which reached our friend, that I had been sent on false pretences by the British Government came from Massowah; some fools or mischief-makers, I have no doubt, are at the bottom of it.

The second messenger who came from Beke (and who was half-cracked) reported amongst our friend's followers that he had heard a captain of an English steamer abuse the Abyssinians for having Englishmen in prison, and that he had . . . . . them and their King.

I suppose you will wonder what object our friend has in putting us in prison; his conduct has puzzled every one. My own idea is, that he either desires war or trying to intimidate us by forcing Her Majesty's Government to comply with his wishes; however, time will show; our friend has never been known to treat a prisoner so civilly (barring the chains) as he has ~~acted towards~~ me. He writes to the authorities here, "Although I have imprisoned Mr. Rassam, yet he is still my friend, so you must treat him well." How applicable that common English phrase is, "Save me from my friends," to my situation. There is no doubt that the conduct of our friend towards me is not admired by any one: on the contrary, his most faithful followers condemn his act.

The day we were arrested at Zegay, our friend took away all our money, and since then he has only returned to me 1,500 dollars; consequently I have been obliged to draw on Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for 200*l*. As some of the Emperor's artisans here had some money to spare, and they were in want of orders on England, it was very lucky that I managed to obtain that sum, otherwise we might have starved. The rations I am allowed would scarcely feed one Indian servant. It is true that whenever I require anything for the Mission (that is, Blanc, Prideaux, and myself), the authorities supply it to me; but I do not think it advisable to revert to such an expedient unless I am compelled by want or circumstances.

Perhaps I shall yet be able to obtain some little more cash from the European workmen.

I have not heard whether any money has been sent for me to Matemma. My messengers whom I sent thither in the beginning of June last for stores have not yet made their appearance, because they had arrived at Debra Tabor the day after we left, and the King detained them with him on account of the overflow of the two rivers (Chettes and Bashilo), between this place and Debra Tabor.

As the rains are nearly over, and the water in the rivers is decreasing rapidly, I suppose His Majesty will soon dispatch the messengers with the stores.

All the Europeans who are imprisoned with me look to me for assistance, and of course I have to provide them with everything necessary. I send by this opportunity copies of all the correspondence which took place between the Emperor and myself, in case of accident to the originals. They would show how polite His Majesty and I are. I have not had a good opportunity to have the Amharic letters translated into English, nor could I send any copy of them to Government, as they require a good deal of explanation, and I am not in a position to undertake such a task just now. Kindly keep them in your safe keeping until I return, or if you like you can send them to Mr. Layard to keep for me.

I would give a great deal to be able to send a full report to Government upon all matters, but I dared not on account of my fear of endangering the lives of all the Europeans in this country.

I fear your visit to England will detain for some time the messenger I sent with letters at the end of May. I am very anxious that he should return with the things I sent for. I like to please His Majesty, if possible. Things may yet take a good turn, but I doubt it. If our friend make matters up with me before the return of Mr. Flad there may be some hope of patching up matters, but as I am almost certain that that gentleman cannot possibly succeed in his mission to Her Majesty, of course our friend will think that he has a good cause to detain us here.

As I do not like to make the packet very large, for the convenience of the messengers, as they have to smuggle it through no end of dangers, I shall not write to anyone else by this opportunity, and so I shall feel obliged by your sending a copy of this letter to Sir W. M. Coghlan and Mr. Layard. Prideaux begs to be remembered to

you and all other friends. He is in perfect health, and bears his misfortune better than anyone else. Please give my love to Goodfellow, and remember me to all other friends who inquire after me. Kindly send me any bit of newspaper which does not contain any abuse.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

P.S.—I shall feel obliged by your sending for the following articles and forwarding them to me by Mr. Flad: one dozen flannel shirts, two dozen snuff boxes, two dozen pencils, one dozen penknives of different sizes, about 100 reels of cotton, lots of needles of different sizes, and common enamelled buttons. If Mr. Flad has left, kindly send them to M. Munzinger and ask him to send them up to me without loss of time.

It is very important that I should keep in favour, and any little present might save no end of trouble. I hope that those things I sent for in May last are now on their way hither.

Farewell, and do not forget me.

H. R.

Inclosure 3 in No. 679.

*Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *August* 25, 1866.

I INCLOSE a letter for Mrs. Blanc; read it and kindly forward it to her address.

Who would have thought that our mission, after having been received so well, would have come at last to such a dreadful smash, and that in the space of a few days we would fall from the throne itself to dark prison and heavy chains. Even in our unhappy circumstances it is a pleasure to know that we personally have done nothing to deserve our fate, a fact His Majesty publicly admitted a few days ago: stating to the Europeans that he loved us though he chained us, and it was solely on account of the news he had received implying duplicity in our Government that he was obliged to deal so harshly with us. For the present we are as comfortable as we can be under the circumstances; if we had a greater command of money it would be better still; we are not much better off than respectable beggars at home.

I wish the splendid food for the million, invented by your late friend in Upper Sinde, was in our vicinity. We have no fruits. Those little crocking prunes, though hard for some teeth, would be very sweet for ours, and under their influence, if applied with tact, would prove the safest way of ridding us of the bile and other obstructions. *Verb. sap.* We want medicine very much, not only for ourselves, but for our native friends. As a rule I do not like to refuse any one now, it would not be prudent; and, if grateful for anything, the Abyssinian is sometimes so if he gets cured from old pox, or such like inveterate disease, which has baffled the skill of all the blacksmiths and such reputed necromancers of the country. We got a few lines from Munzinger two days ago; he tells us that you went home in May for three months. I hope you enjoyed yourself, but also for our sake I hope you have returned to the hot furnace of Aden. I wrote for many things, but, owing probably to your absence, nothing came. If possible, kindly send some comforts, with medicines.

What will be the end of all this embroglio it is difficult to say. I see only one possible solution, one way alone of living in future on terms of friendship with him and other African rulers. Our positions must not be in the way. Anything is better for us than this *status quo*. I firmly believe that, though there is risk, that a policy quite different to the one until now resorted to would be followed by the most happy results.

(Signed) H. BLANC.

Inclosure 4 in No. 679.

*Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, September* 16, 1866.

I HAVE written already twice on all that happened to us, so I must trust that one will reach. I might send you many pages full of all we feel and see, but *cui bono?* it may perhaps only bring us into a scrape, and after all can do no good.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Abyssinian prison life is a curious one: we are silent prisoners, still the friends of His gracious Majesty, and treated with the favour only shown to a few privileged captives. Want of exercise is a great privation; it is very difficult to walk any distance with our irons. A ring is hammered on each leg (anything but a pleasant operation), and three links passed in the rings keep the legs in close proximity to one another; the iron resting on the ancle is very painful, so that every morning we put some bandages above the ancle to avoid the friction. Still it is a nuisance, as with all care vermin do get into them. We have altogether a curious aspect—nothing of the Officer, the Consul, and the Reverend—some of us, I amongst them, without shoes or stockings (and that for the very good reason that having only a pair of shoes I keep them in case (!!) we should ever go out), with trousers ripped on the side and buttoned so as to be able to put them on, or else made of a very thin Abyssinian cloth, so as to be able to pass between the rings. Clothes more or less worn out, with straggling beards and shaven heads, sunburnt, and altogether seedy looking, we have more the appearance of real criminals than of mere hostages. Mr. Stern is rather breaking down, he worries too much. Cameron is picking up wonderfully—eats like ten men, and absorbs liquid in the same proportion. Mr. Rosenthal is quite well, and Rassam is fat and well, though much older. Prideaux is well too; though I have suffered much from neuralgia. We are all getting grey, even Prideaux, though it does not show much, on account of the natural light colour of his hair.

Before coming here we used to say that a good glass of ale and a good cheroot were amongst the blessings of a civilized life we most regretted; now we only long for a walk, our ambition not reaching even to a ride.

Books, letters, and papers are what we most require. A long day without anything to do but read a stupid book again and again is the Magdala day; the evening, Rassam, Prideaux, and myself have a game at whist; the others are too much down in the mouth, and kill themselves, morally at least, by brooding over their misery. As it can do no good, I for one try to make myself as jolly as possible under the circumstances, rather a difficult thing, but not, however, to be despaired.

Do not forget us a few stores: some tobacco, cheroots, and anything to enliven the poor prisoners.

(Signed) H. BLANC.

No. 680.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(Received November 29.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, November 29, 1866.*

HAVING just received a letter from Dr. Beke, who tells me has news from Suez, of the arrival of the "Victoria" November 16, in which it is reported that the Abyssinian captives were still in chains at Magdala up to October 1st; my daughter, Mrs. Stern, the wife of one of these unfortunate people, is very anxious to know if your Lordship has received any information from that quarter. A reply will oblige,

Yours, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 681.

Captain Desborough to Lord Stanley.

Reading, November 29, 1866.

CAPTAIN DESBOROUGH presents his compliments to Lord Stanley, and will feel greatly obliged by his Lordship kindly informing him whether any news has been received from the Abyssinian captives.

No. 682.

*Mr. Hammond to Mr. Purday.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 29, 1866.*

WITH reference to Mr. Egerton's letter of the 26th of September,† I am directed by Lord Stanley to acquaint you that his Lordship has received, through Colonel

* A similar letter was addressed to Captain Desborough.

† No. 658.

Stanton, a despatch from the Acting Political Resident at Aden* reporting the intelligence which he had received as to the captives in Abyssinia up to the 17th of September.

At that date, Mr. Rassam and his party as well as Consul Cameron and the other captives, were confined, strictly guarded, and with chains on their legs, at Magdala; but they otherwise appear to have been well treated, and they are reported to be in good health.

Messrs. Rosenthal and McKelvie had been allowed to remain at Gaffat. Mr. Kerans and McKelvie had volunteered their services to the Emperor of Abyssinia. Those of the former had been rejected but the latter's had been accepted. Messrs. Bardel, Makerer, Steigers, Brandeis, Essler, and Schiller, are also stated to have entered the Emperor's service.

I am, at the same time, to transmit to you, two letters addressed to Mrs. Stern which have reached this office by the same opportunity.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 683.

Mr. Flad to Mr. Hertslet.—(Received December 13.)†

Dear Mr. Hertslet, *Massowah, November* 5, 1866.

I ARRIVED here on the 29th October. Neither in Egypt nor in Aden they were able to give me any news from Abyssinia. Here I found letters of Mrs. Flad, of which I send you an extract. A letter of Captain Cameron to Mr. Hammond was also here, and a packet of letters of Mr. Rassam to the Resident at Aden. These letters had, two days before myself, reached Massowah. The "Victoria" steamer returned on the same day to Aden, and I suppose you will get all the news of Abyssinia before this letter reaches you.

There was no road open for me to go up myself, Tigré being still in the hands of the rebel Wakshum Gobasee, and Gondar, with part of Dembia, is taken by Tasso Gobasee. The day after my arrival I dispatched four messengers on two different roads. Two and two were bearing an Amharic translation of Her Majesty's letter, with an English copy. I myself wrote to him, and explained the reason why Her Majesty's Government would not send up the workmen before he sends over the prisoners. After the "Victoria" returns from Aden I shall send again two messengers.

From the extract of Mrs. Flad's letter you will see that there is not the least hope that Her Majesty's letter will have its effect. There is only one way which the Government ought to take without delay. Captain Cameron, as I hear from M. Munzinger, gives the advice to go to war at once; and this, I think, is the opinion of all. I doubt whether it will also be the advice Mr. Rassam gives. I send a copy of the extract of Mrs. Flad's letter to Colonel Merewether. I don't know whether he will send it to the Foreign Office. If you think it to be of any use, you may make an extract of both and send them to Lord Stanley.

From merchants lately arrived here from Korata, I learn that Mrs. Flad, Mrs. Rosenthal, and all the Europeans in Abyssinia, even his own workman, the King had sent to Magdala. At the foot of the mountain the King has his camp. I fear that if our friends are to be kept a long time on the mountain they will suffer, perhaps die, from want of water and food, as, according to the reports I receive from Abyssinia, Magdala is fearfully crowded with people.

If ever the Government wishes to do anything for the release of their Envoy and Consul, they should lose no time. These are the coolest months here at Massowah. If they wait till the rains commence in Abyssinia, nothing can be done before September 1867; and if our people be kept all this time at Magdala, they will be starved to death.

Between Massowah and Hamazeyn, the first Abyssinian province, there is plenty of water for an army. From Hamazeyn up to Magdala they will have plenty of water, corn, cows, oxen, goats, sheep, game, fowls, &c. If the Egyptian troops could be used from the side of Matemma and Quora, they should not be allowed to enter Abyssinia before their Commander (I mean the Commander of the English army) is able to negotiate with the King. I am certain that if the King should hear that England uses an Egyptian army against him, he would kill all the captives, which never would be the

* No. 678 and Inclosure.

† Laid before Parliament, 1867.

case if the English themselves approached his country. Egypt, if used, should not be allowed to enter Abyssinia, but only to guard the western frontier. It is well known how cruel and bloodthirsty fanatical Mahometan soldiers are when allowed to enter a Christian Empire. There would be no end of bloodshed, which immediately would lead the King to sacrifice all the Europeans around him. This can be and ought to be omitted.

As I learn from M. Munzinger, my first letter to the King from England will have reached him on the 13th October. My second letter I found at Aden, it not having been forwarded. If the King should come to Tigré, as the natives report, I shall immediately proceed to him with Her Majesty's autograph letter, and the articles I bought for his 2,000 German crowns. I have no hope that he will consent to Her Majesty's request,* so my prospects would be to be joined to those at Magdala. I am sure none will envy me the happy prospects I have in view.

To the letter I sent upon the 30th October, I cannot expect an answer before forty days. If you would write to me, if you know anything important, and send your letter care of the Resident, Aden, it would reach me before I leave this.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. M. FLAD.

Inclosure in No. 683.

Extract from Mrs. Flad's Letter to Mr. Flad.†

I HOPE my letter which I sent four weeks ago will have reached you in England. Against the expectation of all of us, and your own, the King changed very soon after you had left us his behaviour to Mr. Rassam. In the beginning of July Mr. Rassam (inclusive Cameron, Stern, Blanc, Prideaux, Rosenthal, Kerans, and Pietro) were sent to Magdala, where, on their arrival, they were put in foot chains. Only a few days ago I had a letter from Mr. Rassam. They are all in good health and as comfortable as one can be in an Abyssinian prison, as you from your own experience know. I think they are better off than we are here at Gaffat, in the direct presence of our friend (the King).

It is impossible for me to describe the anguish in which we are living day and night, uneasy of the things our next future will bring upon us. My only comfort is the Lord's faithfulness. I trust that He will not forsake us. Since a fortnight the King lives at Gaffat. He is engaged with his European and native workmen in making cannon of a very large size. Messrs. Bardel, Makerer, have entered the King's service. Messrs. Steigers, Brandeis, Shiller, and Essler were forced to work for the King. Even myself and Mrs. Rosenthal were forced to do also. He sent eighteen pieces of calico and thirty native tailors, and made us cut out the shirts and have them sewn. Our present position is equal to that in which the children of Israel were placed under Pharoah. Read Exodus v.

28*th August*. Lately the King expressed himself in the following way:—"I know Mr. Rassam is a good man, but on account of the warlike intentions his Government has towards me I have sent him to Magdala." From some expressions the King now and then makes, it seems his intention is to irritate the English Government, until they come and return to him his country, which is nearly all in the hands of the rebels. He would retire and fortify himself in Magdala. From there he thinks he could negotiate with the English to return his country to him, and, as he said some days ago, he thinks he could then make use of Mr. Rassam. "I know," said he, "that Mr. Rassam is a great man, and some one will come to ask for him." How the King came to this idea none of us are able to say. There is no doubt that Dr. Beke's sudden return to England has something to do with it. It made the King believe that England would go to war with him.

A few days ago I had a letter from Mr. Rassam, in which he says that all of them were kindly treated. Every week the King sends very friendly messages to Mr. Rassam. To their guard he gave orders to let their English prisoners have everything they want, only their foot chains should not be taken off. One male and one female servant is allowed to attend on each of them. The rest of their servants are quartered in the houses of the country people. I am in continual correspondence with those who are at

* This letter gives no hope that the Government would send him the artisans if he would set at liberty the prisoners, but speaks only of articles.

† Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Magdala, but not without great difficulties and dangers. The messengers are more afraid of the King than they would be of water or fire.

6th September. The King speaks always favourably of Mr. Rassam. We have no doubt from all the expressions the King uses that he wishes to use Mr. Rassam to negotiate for him with the English Government, after they have declared war with him. I can't say more, as I am afraid that this letter might fall into bad hands. To me the King is friendly. Once he intended to quarrel with me, I believe, from the bad influence of Samuel. After the cannons are finished all of us will have to go to Magdala, and when this letter reaches you, you may think that we are in that fortress. May the Lord give me help and strength. Lately the King said, "Mr. Flad is bringing either something good or something very bad." Every one, the natives as well as the Europeans, are looking towards your return with great anxiety. Some say that you would not be expected back before a year and a-half.

No. 684.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Hammond.—(*Received December* 13.)

Sir, *Suez, December* 3, 1866.

WITH reference to the last paragraph of my letter of the 9th ultimo,* I have the honour to forward herewith vouchers, Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7, to complete the set required to accompany my accounts rendered on the above date.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 685.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Mr. Hammond.—(*Received December* 13.)†

My Lord, *Suez, December* 3, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Lordship's information, that all the packages containing the presents for the King of Abyssinia, including those which were unavoidably detained at Southampton for a week after my departure, having arrived here, and been shipped on board Her Majesty's ship "Victoria," I purpose embarking at noon to-day, and leaving for Massowah.

The "Victoria" brought no further intelligence of any importance, beyond what has already been communicated to your Lordship, by my assistant Captain Goodfellow. She left Massowah on the 9th ultimo. Mr. Flad was still there waiting to hear from the King how he was to reach the Royal camp. The King was at Magdala, pitched with his army at the foot of the mountain. Great difficulty was experienced in getting provisions there for so large a body, and one report said the King intended moving shortly into Tigré, compelled to do so to obtain food.

Colonel Stanton was good enough to go with me at Cairo to his Excellency Sheriff Pasha, the President of the Council and Minister of the Interior of the Egyptian Government, by which means I have been provided with the proper letters in case of its being necessary for me to proceed by the Egyptian frontier to Matemma.

I hope to reach Massowah about the 9th or 10th instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 686.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(*Received December* 13.)†

My Lord, *Cairo, December* 3, 1866.

I BEG leave to forward herewith to your Lordship the original of a document that was presented to me a few days since by the Abbé Stella, a Jesuit priest, who has been residing for some years at Keren, in the country of Bogos, on the Abyssinian frontier, which document purports to be signed by certain chiefs of that country, and requests

* No. 675.

† Laid before Parliament, 1867.

British intervention with the Egyptian Government to secure the country of Bogos from the inroads of the Barka and Baria tribes residing within the Egyptian frontier, and further expressing the desire of these chiefs that their country should be placed under the protection of Great Britain.

I informed the Abbé Stella I would forward the letter which he had delivered me to Her Majesty's Government, and request instructions on the subject of the contents, but carefully avoided giving any hope that their wishes would be carried out, the more so as I imagine any appearance of interference on or near the Abyssinian frontier at the present moment might lead to grossly exaggerated reports in that country which would add to the already-existing difficulties in the way of the deliverance of the captives.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

Inclosure in No. 686.

*Letter from Chiefs of Bogos Country to Colonel Stanton.**

M. le Consul-Général,

QUE la lettre des gens des pays Bogos arrive à notre Seigneur le Consul-Général d'Angleterre à Alexandrie. Comment vous portez vous? êtes-vous en bonne santé?

Les troupes Egyptiennes de Kassala, avec les gens du Barka et des Baria, nous ayant ravagé, dans ce tems-là M. Plowden (de bonne mémoire), Consul Anglais à Massowah, il nous aidat, en nous faisant rendre tous les individus et les troupeaux qu'on nous avait volé, et depuis ce temps-là nous avons été tranquilles. Après la mort de Mr. Plowden arrivat M. le Capitaine Cameron, qui se rendit chez nous, et il nous promît qu'il nous aurait continué l'ancienne protection. A présent nous nous trouvons depuis quelque temps sans protection, et nous vous prions, M. le Consul-Général, afin que vous soyez notre père. Depuis deux ans les gens du Barka et Baria, sujets Egyptiens, ils nous tracassent, ils nous volent les enfants et nos troupeaux, et nous vous prions afin que vous nous aidiez pour avoir nos gens et nos troupeaux volés. En outre nous cherchons, et nous aimons de tout notre cœur que notre pays soit à l'Angleterre, et nous ne reconnaîtrons autre maître que vous. Le porteur de cette lettre il connait très bien nos pensées et nos pays.

(Signé) GHIORGHIS, *Chef de Keren.*
BERRIK, *Chef de Gioffa.*
IMER, *Chef de Tantaroa.*
DERAR, *Chef de Kodi.*
ADEGH, *Chef d'Asirala.*
GONDER, *Chef de Deghi.*
BEREK, *Chef de Ferrahen.*
ALY-BAUHIT, *Chef d'Ab-Ibrahé.*
CLAUDISS, *Chef d'Ona.*
AMHARAI, *Chef de Begiuk.*
NESSUR, *Chef d'Ad-Gebsirá.*

No. 687.

*Lord Stanley to Colonel Stanton.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 15, 1866.

I HAVE to state to you in reply to your despatch of the 3rd instant,† that Her Majesty's Government do not feel themselves in any way called upon to interfere in differences and disputes between native tribes residing respectively within the frontier of Egypt and Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 686.

No. 688.

*Lord Stanley to Lord Lyons.**

My Lord, *Foreign Office, December* 29, 1866.

SIR ANDREW BUCHANAN reports a suggestion made by an Armenian at St. Petersburg, that the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople, if applied to, could obtain the release of the Abyssinian captives.

It would not be right to neglect this intimation, and I have therefore to instruct your Excellency, if any convenient opportunity occurs, to place yourself in communication with the Patriarch, and to enlist his good offices in favour of the captives, if he is able and willing to be of any service.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

1867.

No. 689.

Captain Desborough to Lord Stanley.—(Received January 2.)

Reading, January 1, 1867.

CAPTAIN DESBOROUGH presents his compliments to Lord Stanley, and will feel greatly obliged by his Lordship's informing him whether any and what accounts have been lately received from the Abyssinian captives.

Captain Desborough trusts that, under existing circumstances, Lord Stanley will kindly pardon the liberty he takes in trespassing upon his Lordship's valuable time.

No. 690.

Mr. Murray to Captain Desborough.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 3, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, and to inform you in reply, that no intelligence has been received respecting the captives in Abyssinia since that communicated to you in my letter of the 29th November last.*

I am to add, that the statement lately published in the French "Moniteur," and copied into the English newspapers, must be a repetition of information previously received.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 691.

Captain de Dohsé to Mr. Murray.—(Received January 3.)†

Sir, 20, *Amersham Vale Road, New Cross, January* 2, 1867.

HAVING just now read that Consul Cameron and the missionaries have, notwithstanding so many efforts, not been released yet, I address you again, requesting you to do me the favour of conveying to the Minister of Foreign Affairs my anxious wish that I may be sent to Abyssinia for the purpose of trying by all means to effectuate the release of the above-mentioned English gentlemen, and to return with them immediately to England.

I explained to Earl Russell, as you are aware, my opinion on the matter, and I repeat that only an experienced and energetic officer will succeed. King Theodorus is a thorough soldier, and fond of foreign officers; therefore a military mission, as I always said, would alone impose the King. The latter is not one of the savages, as people think: he is a Christian, and possesses great ambition, like almost all monarchs in the world, especially a man like him risen from the ranks is generally more ambitious and proud.

Having always lived amongst soldiery, he prefers to deal with officers rather than with civilians. He has good advisers (foreigners), and imitates European Monarchs, so that there is no probability that he would accept the presents sent to him. I think he will be highly offended with the sending of them.

Dear sir, I beg you to assist me in my endeavours, being sure that I shall succeed brilliantly, having been twenty years an officer, and being acquainted with Oriental life.

It is now the fourth time I solicit this mission. Will you kindly communicate it to the Minister, and to recommend me to him? I would be most happy to execute that noble deed, which, though dangerous and difficult, would just suit me.

I think it very wrong that others have been sent who never served this country, and that Lord Russell, after having given him ample explanation, founded upon

* No. 682.

† Laid before Parliament, 1867.

experience, namely, that civilians, like those sent before, would never succeed, always declined my request.

Hoping that you will do the best for me, I remain, &c.

(Signed) Captain FREDERICK DE DOHSE.

No. 692.

*Mr. Murray to Captain de Dohsé.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 5, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, in which you repeat your proposal to proceed to Abyssinia, with the view of obtaining the release of the captives there; and I am to state to you, in reply, that his Lordship is unable to avail himself of your offer.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 693.

Mr. Murray to Captain Desborough.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 5, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acquaint you that since my communication to you of the 3rd instant,† a letter has been received from Mr. Rassam, dated the 5th of November,‡ in which he describes all the captives as being in perfect health at Magdala up to that date, and states that although still in chains, they were better treated than formerly.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 694.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 5, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acquaint you that a letter has been received from Mr. Rassam, dated the 5th of November,§ in which he describes all the captives as being in health at Magdala up to that date, and states that, although still in chains, they were better treated than formerly.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 695.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received January 7, 1867.)*

My Lord, *Massowah, December* 10, 1866.

I HAVE the honour to report that the "Victoria" anchored here at eight o'clock this morning after a rough and tedious passage from Suez, tedious owing to the defective state of the boilers of the "Victoria." M. Munzinger, Acting British Consul, immediately came on board bringing a letter from Mr. Rassam dated the 5th ultimo. This was received at Massowah on the 3rd instant, having been twenty-eight days on the road. A copy of it with explanatory notes by me is submitted herewith.

The letter contains little intelligence beyond the good tidings of the continued perfect health of all. There is however one important point, and that is intimation of the receipt of Mr. Flad's first letter from London. Mr. Flad then announced to the King his arrival in London, and the desire of Her Majesty's Government to meet the King's wishes. Mr. Rassam had heard of the arrival of this letter before he wrote,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 690. ‡ No. 695. § See Inclosure in No. 695.

but no change in their position appears to have followed. It remains to be seen what effect will ensue from the receipt of Mr. Flad's second letter, forwarded from Massowah on the 20th September, and his third despatch on the 31st October. Nothing had been heard of the messenger who carried up the former, and judging by the time Mr. Rassam's letter of the 5th November took on the way, it is not likely any answer can be received to the letter for fifty-six days at least from date of despatch, or until the 26th December. I am therefore causing the machinery, &c., to be landed and placed in the British Consulate, and to-morrow will proceed on to Aden to procure some stores which are required, and to enable me to send on this despatch. I shall return in the "Victoria" to Massowah in time to receive the expected communication from the King. Mr. Flad is still at Massowah waiting the King's instructions, should these chance to arrive during my absence, and he be summoned by the King to Tigré, I have directed him to proceed at once without waiting for my coming. I take Mr. Talbot and the artisans with me to Aden.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 695.

*Mr. Rassam to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, November 5*, 1866.

Your welcome epistles of the 22nd November, 11th February, 20th March, and the 13th April, only reaching me a few days ago from Matemma, for which I return you my best thanks. We have not heard from Massowah since the arrival of Mr. Flad there at the end of May,† and the other day when a messenger brought a note from Mr. Flad reporting his arrival in London. M. Munzinger sent me only a few lines by him acknowledging a letter I had sent, he sent neither a newspaper nor a word of any interesting news. In our present sad position such a neglect adds to one's misery, as we feel that even our Agent at Massowah seems to forget us. I wonder what harm he can find in sending us every now and then an overland mail, which may not contain some obnoxious articles about Abyssinia. Thanks to Mr. Flad who has actually sent us news from London, and the only newspapers we have received since our arrival in Abyssinia were sent up by Mr. Flad when he reached Massowah. I have written over and over again to M. Munzinger asking him to send me some money, but I cannot get an answer, not a dollar has arrived for us at Matemma, and if it had not been for the King's artisans who spared us some of their allowances, we should have actually starved. I have a great number of people who are dependent on me, and moreover in our difficult position I have to be liberal. The messenger I had sent down to Massowah at the end of May asking for some things for the Emperor, has

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† I inquired about this and found it was no fault of M. Munzinger's; he repeatedly sent up messengers, as shown below, but some would appear to have been stopped by the rebels, others never to have been heard of since, and some, I have no doubt, were secretly stopped by the people about the Emperor. When Mr. Rassam was supposed to be on his way down country, letters and papers were forwarded on the 29th April, and again about 14th May, to meet him at Kassala. After Mr. Flad's arrival at Massowah the following were sent, 22nd July, letters and newspapers viâ Soudan; 26th July, letters and eleven cases of stores were sent to Matemma, but were kept for two months at Kassala on account of the rainy season. M. Munzinger's servant then went up and conveyed them on to Matemma taking, at the same time, some money: intelligence has been received of these letters, stores, &c., having been taken on to Magdala; it would appear from Mr. Rassam's present letter of 5th November to have arrived—letters, certainly—18th August a letter, newspapers, and 300 dollars sent viâ Gondar. This man, a very trusty one, was unfortunately caught by the rebels and stopped. 18th August, another messenger was dispatched with only two letters, one to Mr. Rassam, the other to the King, with inclosures to Mrs. Flad from Mr. Flad—this man's arrival is acknowledged by Mr. Rassam on the 5th November as having come "the other day." 27th August, letter to Mr. Rassam sent to Matemma, care of Mr. Eipperle, with 1,000 dollars, 13 cases containing clothes and stores. 20th September, letter from Mr. Flad to Emperor, written from London, with one to Mrs. Flad; also letters from Aden for Mr. Rassam and others, and two home newspapers sent by M. Munzinger. 26th October, letter to Mr. Rassam, also some from Aden sent by a boy direct by Lasta (v. map). Duplicate of letters sent by another boy viâ Gondar, three newspapers, 200 dollars, some articles for the Bishop, and list of all letters dispatched from Massowah since June. 31st October, Mr. Flad's letter dispatched to the King with others to his friends at Gaffat. 11th November, newspapers sent, viâ Lasta, to Mr. Rassam, but no letters. 5th December, letters for Mr. Rassam and all his party sent in one packet, no newspapers; lent some clothes for Mr. Rassam, Blanc, and Prideaux.

In a letter dated 15th August, Mr. Rassam had told M. Munzinger not to send any letters up country. M. Munzinger, however, preserved and did his best to maintain communication. The disturbed state of the country and the peculiar position of Mr. Rassam is rendered thus very difficult.—W. L. MEREWETHER.

not been heard of since then, and I cannot make out what has happened to him. His Majesty still continues his friendly communications with me, and no messengers who come here from him are sent without a civil message. He is still at Debra Tabor, and it is not yet known when he will join us. Mrs. Rosenthal, he has not allowed to join her husband, but made her remain with Mrs. Flad at Gaffat, on the pretence of the road between that place and this being in an unsafe state. His Majesty still speaks in flattering terms of me and calls me his true friend: nevertheless he still keeps me and my party in chains. How affectionate he is! Some of my party think that His Majesty never intended to let us depart as he promised to do, but I think otherwise. I believe the report of Dr. Beke's coming up made our friend suspicious, and I hope that one of these days I shall be able to prove to you my opinion. I only wished that he had listened to you when you advised him to wait and see, how I had succeeded with my mission. It might have avoided these complications. It is also premised that we shall never be allowed to leave the country without coercive measures. About this I do not like to give my opinion. I leave it to Her Majesty's Government to do what they think proper. A few days ago I sent you copies of my correspondence with His Majesty in English and Amharic,* and by this opportunity I send you translations of the letters, and an epitome of my account current since my departure from Massowah to the end of last September; the reason I have taken this step is, as I do not know what any day may bring forth, and we might lose everything—the reason I have not sent them to you in an official form because I could not do so without writing a long report with them, which would be unwise for me to do under the present circumstances; kindly keep the whole in your safe keeping until I leave Abyssinia, or the necessary time. The roads between this and the coast are so much disturbed now, that I fear the budget I am now sending will never reach its destination. Remember me kindly to all friends who inquire after me. I am glad to say Blanc and Prideaux are keeping up their spirits, and we are all enjoying perfect health under our present misfortunes. Happily we three are still in favour with the Emperor, and he cannot find any cause to complain of me. Although he still keeps me in chains, yet he constantly mentions me before his nobles and European servants in flattering terms, and he keeps up his usual friendly correspondence with me. This place is extremely healthy, otherwise some of us might have suffered from want of exercise. Our imprisonment is quite different from that of Cameron and his party before I came. They were imprisoned in the common jail with more than 200 prisoners, and had to sleep together strictly watched, and only each was allowed a female servant. Now we are treated like state prisoners, and we three are allowed all our servants, and have separate rooms in one compound adjoining the royal residence. His Majesty wrote several times to the chiefs here to be very kind to me, and to show me great civility, consequently they have all been very attentive and pay me friendly visits often. We three have also been ordered rations, but the rest who are still in disfavour were disallowed everything excepting our company and the succour I am able to render them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 696.

Captain Desborough to Mr. Murray.—(*Received January* 9.)

Sir, *Reading, January* 7, 1867.

PRAY accept my best thanks for your kindness in sending me the information relative to the Abyssinian captives, contained in your letter of the 5th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) L. DESBOROUGH.

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* See Inclosures in No. 708.

No. 697.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(Received January 23.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, January 23, 1867.*

THE friends of the Abyssinian captives are much concerned that they have heard nothing from these poor people, or anything of Mr. Flad's Mission, which they had calculated the last mail would furnish some news of. But as nothing has transpired, I thought your Lordship would not think me troublesome by putting the question directly to yourself as to whether any information has reached the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) C. H. PURDAY.

No. 698.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January 23, 1867*

IN reply to your letter of this day, I am directed by Lord Stanley to acquaint you that he regrets to say that no intelligence has been received respecting the captives in Abyssinia since my letter to you of the 5th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 699.

*Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received February 12.)**

My Lord, *Cairo, February 1, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from Colonel Merewether, dated Massowah, 15th of January, which has just reached me, under flying seal, and which contains intelligence from Mr. Rassam, dated 12th of December, just received at that port.

The position of the captives does not appear to have improved, and the intelligence is far from being satisfactory. The Emperor Theodore is, judging from these accounts, fast losing ground, and the position of the rebels improving.

The messengers sent by Mr. Flad to inform the Emperor of his return do not appear to have been able to reach his capital, and the communication with the coast has become more difficult than ever; the road from Matemma is no longer open, and Mr. Flad still remains at Massowah, awaiting a reply to his communication, nor has Colonel Merewether been able to send on the party of engineers that accompanied him from England.

Colonel Merewether proposes to return again shortly to Massowah in the hope of obtaining later intelligence from Mr. Rassam, but I fear, my Lord, the situation is not likely to improve as long as Mr. Flad remains on the coast, or until some measures are taken by Her Majesty's Government to convince the Emperor that force will be employed against him, should any further delay occur in complying with the demand for the release of the captives.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 700.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received February 12.)**

My Lord, *Massowah, January 15, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I returned to this from Aden on the 30th ultimo; no messengers had arrived from the King or Mr. Rassam during my absence, nor had any fresh intelligence been received.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

2. As it was advisable Mr. Talbot and his party should learn and practise something of camp life before starting for up-country, I landed and established them at Moncooloo in tents, which I had brought with me from Aden. Moncooloo is on the mainland, about four miles from the anchorage, and where most of the merchants of Massowah resort to at night, for though inland a little, it is cooler even in the hottest season. Mr. Talbot and the workmen have resided there since, in an enclosure, where is a building, dignified with the name of British Consulate, but it is nothing more than a rude barn, made of small wood, dried shrubs, and matting; wretched as it is, it is still, I believe, what is commonly used in Abyssinia, so, after causing a few repairs to be made to it, I gave it over to them to use, as well as the tents; the last was surrounded by a thick grove of parkinsonia, planted, I believe, by Mr. Walker, once Vice-Consul; the greater part I caused to be cut down, to make the place cleaner and more healthy.

3. While waiting for intelligence I employed the time in making excursions in the neighbourhood, to see places and obtain information about the country.

4. The first spot visited was Ailat, 27 miles nearly due west of Massowah. The road, a mere cattle track, is chiefly along the dry beds of watercourses or over low hills, occasionally on bits of level plain, with the exception of three places, where gorges have to be ascended or descended; there is no part of the road over which artillery would not drive with ease, and the three exceptions might very soon be made passable by sappers. The first, is short,—only about 200 yards,—but steep, having a direct rise of 80 feet, in that distance it could be zigzagged. The second is much longer. being one mile and a half, but has only a rise of about 400 feet, and were it not or its narrowness, and being clogged with boulders, would be easy enough. There is plenty of earth and of bushes on either side to afford material for a road, which would stand well until heavy rain washed it away, and a heavy fall is not of frequent occurrence. The highest point crossed was found to be only 989 feet above the level of the sea; there is a gradual rise the whole way. From this highest point the road descends 200 feet on to the plain of Ailat. At 17 miles from Massowah, 13 from Moncooloo, there is a spring of good water always running; but any quantity of water may be obtained by digging a few feet in the sandy beds of the water-courses.

5. Ailat is a fine plain, at the foot of the mountains bordering Abyssinia, 12 miles long from north to south, by 5 broad, covered at this season of the year with rich verdure, owing to showers falling once in the 24 hours. It gets some also of the summer rains, so that it is well off in this respect; any quantity of water may be obtained by sinking wells. The whole plain might be cultivated to great advantage with cotton, wheat, maize, jowaree, &c., were there a good Government to arrange for the cultivators; but the place is unfortunate in this respect; it pays a small tribute to the Egyptian Government for the nominal protection afforded by ten soldiers, and the justice they are supposed to have administered to them by the Governor of Massowah, while they also pay a grazing fee to the Emperor Theodorus, because the ground is considered Abyssinian; the result is, the valley is poorly populated, by people who live almost entirely by their cattle, cultivating only a very little jowaree. The village, a scattered one, of about thirty grass and mat huts, is in the centre of the valley. The heat is said to be very great in summer.

6. This would be an excellent place to locate a large body of cavalry on first landing, there being plenty of wood, water, forage, and meat; grain would be scarce at first, but it would soon come in from the countries, north and north-west. Besides, the water to be obtained by digging, there is a perennial spring on the west side of the valley, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the village. Here also are the celebrated hot springs, used by the invalids of the country.

7. There is a road direct from Ailat into Abyssinia, but not a good one. The best in this direction, suitable for laden camels, passes about eight miles south of Ailat, from which it can be joined. It starts from the same place, Moncooloo, and through the same sort of country as the road to Ailat, but is less difficult, both in the first part and after entering the mountains. Water is more plentiful on it and is found at the following places, eight to ten miles apart, Zagu, Yamgous, Amba Tokan, Bamba, Ayderess, Kiaguor; Kiaguor is only sixty miles from Moncooloo, and once there you are on the plateau of Hamazeyn in Abyssinia. From Kiaguor to Gotafalasee (Koodovfelassy in the map) is only thirty miles of fair road. Gotafalasee is a very healthy place, dry and not feverish, it is where several roads converge, supplies naturally come to, and and could be easily reached from the coast, in nine marches by an advance force. From Gotafalasee to Adowa, is under fifty miles; the Mareb has to be crossed about midway, but there is no difficulty whatever in the dry, cold season, the depth of the water then

being only a few inches. From Adowa any road could be taken as required, but though it is a larger place than Gotafalasee and the capital of Tigré, the latter is the best place for first rendezvous, being most healthy.

8. I proceeded down Annesley Bay to the bottom, and landing at different places, inquired quietly, through M. Munzinger, about the different roads from that neighbourhood. There are two, one to Halai, taken by Dr. Beke last year, and which is not a good one for laden camels, the other, the old Greek caravan road, from Adoolis to Senafe; this last has not been frequented of late years, and is overgrown with jungle, but it was much used, when Adoolis was a Greek colony, and, I cannot help thinking, will on further inquiry prove as good as any, at any rate well worth examination hereafter, should entrance into Abyssinia become necessary. The country on the western side of Annesley Bay is richly green now, in consequence of the constant rain, and the plains are covered with herds of cattle from all parts. Wild elephants were found close to the sea-shore at the bottom of the Bay, feeding quietly in the plain. There is a party of 200 Egyptian troops here protecting the customs levied on the salt brought from an extensive salt plain, about twenty miles to the south.

9. There are three other routes into Abyssinia, which formerly were regularly used by caravans, but lately have not been much so. One from Amphilla Bay, direct to Adowa, another from Edd to Sokota, and the third from Tajourra by Lake Haik to Begemder. This last is the most direct to where the Emperor now is confined to, but from all I have been able to learn there are great difficulties on the score of water, none but very brackish being procurable. Further particulars about these will be gathered as soon as possible.

10. I returned from Annesley Bay yesterday, and found that messengers had arrived from Mr. Rassam the afternoon before. Mr. Rassam's letter bears date the 12th December, and strange to say up to that time he was still without any intelligence from Massowah as before shown. Messengers had been repeatedly despatched by M. Munzinger, and in most instances the very same who had brought packets from Mr. Rassam, none of these have succeeded in reaching their destination, and I have only authentic intelligence of one having been seized, plundered, and imprisoned by the rebels. I can only conclude therefore that the men find it more difficult to choose a safe passage back, and are still hanging about in safe spots waiting for an opportunity to get through the country held by the rebels. This would be the last part of their journey going back, and they probably would not be able to get such good information quickly, as they had at starting on their downward journey, when they had been living for some time in the immediate vicinity of the rebels, and could shape their course accordingly. The Emperor only holds Begemder now, and is surrounded on all sides by rebels. The messengers dispatched by Mr. Flad on the 31st October, do not appear to have been able to reach either. Adowa and a portion of Tigré in its neighbourhood is still held by one of the Emperor's partisans; a party of merchants who passed through it on their way from Gondar to the coast, and who reached Massowah on the 5th of January, said they had heard at Adowa, the report of Mr..Flad's return from England, and also that messengers from the English were waiting at Adowa, unable to proceed further: among these last will probably be one of the two parties sent by Mr. Flad with his letter to the King.

11. Mr. Rassam writes, "although the Emperor has not written to me for some time, yet he has not forgotten me altogether, he still sends me civil messages whenever any messenger comes here from his camp; he still calls me his friend. Nothing has been heard of Flad since the letter he wrote to his wife from London in July last. It may be when he arrived at Massowah and heard of our imprisonment, he was obliged to change his tactics. Thank God, we are all well; and trying to make ourselves happy under our present trying position. Abyssinia on the whole is a very healthy country, and the place where we are located now is one of the best spots in the country: we may say we have no other season but spring during the whole year. The nights are always cold, and fire is never an unpleasant object in the room; and a person may wear warm clothing all the year round, and may have nothing but Indian summer clothing, and yet he will not feel the worse for it. The mercury just goes down low enough to make the water very cold, but it does not freeze. In case we have to spend another rainy season in this country, kindly send as soon as possible a great quantity of vegetable seeds, in order that we might have some nice gardens cultivated. Send us of every variety that we may see what would grow best in this country. Please send some flower seeds too, in order that we might have sweet odour as well as nice eatables. In this country nothing is obtainable save meat and grain, and thanks to the Europeans at Gaffat, we have abundance of potatoes. This most useful vegetable has been introduce

by them, which grows very well in this climate. As I am allowed to have my Indian servants with me, we manage to live comfortably, and are not obliged to revert to Abyssinian food which Cameron and his party had to put up with before I came to this country. With the exception of our arms, which His Majesty has dispossessed us of (for fear of our committing suicide!) we have all our things with us, and consequently we are able to eat in the European style. With all the misery I have suffered in this country, I cannot but say the Abyssinians are an extremely kind and civil race, and are not cruel generally to foreigners, as other uncivilized people are. They make very good servants, and have a most estimable point of not deserting a master in the most adverse times. There are here about 400 prisoners most of whom are confined for political purposes, some of whom are the greatest men in the country; amongst the latter are the son of Sahela Selassie, the late King of Shoa, sons of Dejaj Oobeay, the late ruler of Tigré, and some relations of the late Ras Ali. The Metropolitan of Abyssinia is still confined, and is as strictly guarded as we are, barring the chains. The chief of the Abyssinian monks is also confined, but he has more liberty than the Bishop; the latter has been very kind, and as the head of the Abyssinian Church he can always render assistance excepting with the Sovereign of the country. We are confined in the Chief Minister's house adjoining the Royal residence, on the north-eastern side of the mountain, and the rest of the prisoners, natives, are kept in the common jail, on the opposite side. This mountain is situate in the Walloo Gallas country, about one mile in circumference. It is almost perpendicular on all sides, excepting the north-western point, which is connected to another eminence about a quarter of a mile distant. When we were brought here we were brought this way, but I am told that there is an easier road on the northern side leading to another entrance to the fortress. We have a garrison of 1,600 fighting men, 600 of whom are musqueteers, the rest are shield and sword bearers. All the families of the soldiers live up here, and there are water springs on the top which yield sufficient water for the general purposes of all the people. There are also a great number of cannon, but there is no one to work them properly. His Majesty is still busy casting guns at Gaffat, but they are so big it is expected they never could be moved, for any use in the field, to say nothing of the difficult mountain roads. We could not be further from the coast than we are now. It would take the best messenger at least twenty days to reach the sea, and he has to pass through rebel country soon after he leaves this place. I believe the distance is almost the same, as it is between the coast and this viâ Gondar. If I send through the latter route the messenger has to pass first the Royal camp at Debra Tabor, then through the capital, which is in the hands of the rebels of Wolkait, then through Tigré, which is mainly in the hands of the rebels of Lasta, and then through Hamazeyn, which is still faithful to the Emperor. But if I sent through Lasta the messenger has only to pass through the rebels under the Chief of that district, who is said to rule as far as Holai, where Dr. Beke was imprisoned for a few days. We are determined not to give way to melancholy, but bear every calamity with fortitude, and we will try and make ourselves as happy as possible. With this general anarchy there is no knowing what any day may bring forth."

12. Dr. Blanc also sends me a very interesting description of Magdala and their life, which I append for your Lordship's information. The messengers, three servants of Mr. Rassam, who brought these letters, leave again this evening on their return, taking with them letters, newspapers, a small stock of medicines, a few light useful things, and 100 dollars each. They will go by Lasta the same way that they came, and will I hope be successful in reaching Magdala. They expect to be from three weeks to a month on their journey, as they will have to proceed very carefully. Some servants of the Aboona will be leaving in a few days with stores for their master, which I procured for him at Aden; with these, stores, newspapers, medicines, and more money, will be sent for Mr. Rassam and his party. If all the messengers dispatched could only have reached the captives, they would have been very well off. There are stores, a large supply, and 3,000 dollars at Matemma; 2,000 of the latter left by Mr. Flad on his way to the coast in June last, while stores and other 1,000 dollars have been sent to Magdala by Lasta, Adowa, and Gondar, at different periods since August last; of these, one messenger only have we heard was intercepted, plundered, and imprisoned in Lasta.

13. From what Mr. Rassam writes and from all I have been able to gather from merchants and others during my stay at Massowah and its neighbourhood, it is clear that the Emperor's position is becoming most desperate, that his power is rapidly diminishing, and that unless he can manage to make some brilliant stroke worthy of his earlier career, his rule will come to an end within the next few months: of country

in which he can say his authority exists at all, the small province of Begemder and the little district of Hamazeyn remain, and the inhabitants of the former are only kept in awe by his actual presence among them. In the beginning of December he made a sudden descent on Gondar, caught a few insignificant rebels, and caused all the churches there to be burnt; but he did not dare to remain, and returned immediately to Gaffat, which he proclaimed by herald should be his future capital. Since then he has been attending only to the casting of guns, which can be of no use to him, while his troops are almost daily deserting him. Last March, Mr. Rassam accompanied the King, and saw his army to consist of 80,000 men, now he has not 15,000 with him. Shoa, under Menelek (the grandson of Sahela Selassee), who escaped from confinement at Magdala about fifteen months ago, has established its independence, and Menelek is half inclined to move against Theodore. Tadela Gwalu, in Godjam, can now hold his own, defies the King, and has lately ravaged again Medar and the next district, that supplies might not go to the King. Tissoo Gobazee, has an army of 20,000 men, and holds Walkait, and up to Gondar. Wakshun Gobazee, possesses nearly all Tigré and has a powerful army, while to the east and south in Lasta; the Walloo Gallas country are all in arms against, and hostile to the King. As long as he can maintain the appearance of royalty, and keep even a small army around him, there is a superstitious feeling attached to him, which prevents any of the powerful rebels moving to attack him; but distress and his tyrannical procedure are fast driving his troops from him; his former energy seems to have left him, and it is most probable that a sudden and violent death will before very long, terminate his career.

14. I had instructed Mr. Flad to be ready to leave for Matemma, should no letter from the King arrive before the 15th instant, to-day. Under the circumstances above-mentioned, and especially considering that Mr. Rassam has not been able to communicate with Matemma since August last, showing that road is also closed, I think it better Mr. Flad should remain here for the present at all events. Mr. Talbot and his party will likewise remain at Moncooloo, until matters are more cleared up. I do not think it likely now that there will be any chance of their going to Abyssinia with advantage to the cause on which account they came out. But to insure no reason arising for the Emperor, as long as he retains power, being able to say strict faith had not been kept with him, these people and all the presents should remain on the spot.

15. In the event of the result mentioned in the last part of the 13th paragraph of this letter, there is little doubt that the rebels nearest to Magdala, and who will have greatest local power, will be only too glad to assist in promoting the release and safe conduct of the British captives to the coast, and under these circumstances I should at once take the best steps to arrange this. But as long as King Theodorus remains Sovereign of Abyssinia, I cannot of course allow it to be thought possible for a moment that I or any other person could, on the part of the English Government, have any connection, or enter upon any communication whatever, with other than the nominal head, with whom Her Majesty's Government is treating. It has been hinted to me that proposals might be made by people at Massowah, but I have been careful to show that no one is acknowledged or understood excepting King Theodore. It is possible that the hints were thrown out by spies from the King's Court, but be this as it may, to act otherwise than has been done would be a gross breach of faith, and which, if the King heard of, would cause most fatal consequences to the captives now in his power.

16. I leave to-day for Aden, but shall return to Massowah next month, by which time something more should be known.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 700.

*Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, December* 10, 1866.

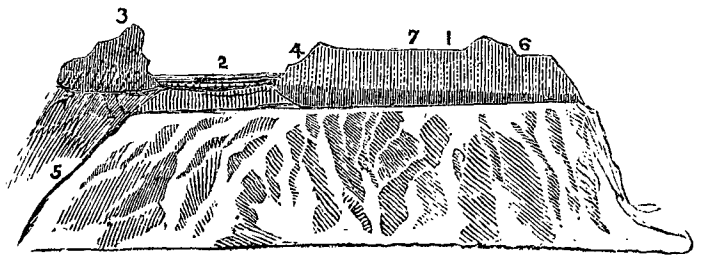
THERE is nothing new, except that Prideaux and myself have built a house, not elegant, but at least comfortable compared to our former little hut. If we were free from our chains and allowed to roam about the mountain, I would take our detention

* Laid before Parliament in 1867, with the exception of the Plan.

pretty quietly. The climate is very fine. We sometimes have the thermometer as low as 33 at sunrise, and during the last two months 65 has been the average at 2 P.M.; in the sun at that hour it varies from 95 to 102. Magdala is one of those small plateaux common in Abyssinia, and all more or less called "Ambas;" about a mile in length, north to south, and about half a mile in breadth. It is almost flat, except near the south-east extremity, where a few hillocks arise. Magdala is at the entrance of the Walloo Galla country, and separated from Lasta by Talaith and Wadela and other smaller districts. It is about fifty miles south-east of Debra Tabor, but from the River Jiddah (about half-way), the road is very bad. At that point of the road to Begemder, there is an almost perpendicular ascent of more than 3,000 feet, and an ascent of the same elevation and difficulty to gain the plateau which separates the Jiddah from the Rechalo, another stream, with tributaries of the Nile, both almost dry from 1st October to beginning of July; but during part of the three rainy months both rivers are quite impassable, except to a few expert swimmers. The plateau between the Jiddah and Rechalo is very beautiful, a day's march from one river to the other, and I believe of the same ascent from north-west to south. It is called Dohonte, is thickly populated, and is for its size one of the richest districts in Abyssinia in cattle and grain. It is the granary of the fort.

The descent and ascent of the Rechalo is even worse than the Jiddah is. It is also about 3,000 feet. The road at some places was so bad that we were obliged to dismount both going down and up. From the ascent on this side of the Rechalo, a gradual incline of about twelve miles extends to the Magdala Amba, and to a few other isolated mountains, all about 1,000 feet above the plateau, seemingly detached portions of the Great Galla country which extends from a few miles from Magdala up to the high land of Shoa. To the west, mountains arise between the Amba and the Rechalo; to the east, some distant ones are visible; to the south, one or two, smaller than our Amba, separate us from the high Galla plateau; but to the north, at about 1,500 yards from the fort, another mountain, of comparatively easy access, and separated from the Magdala Amba by a small intervening plateaux, called Latanigi, rises about 100 feet higher than the fort of Magdala.

All these plateaux, as well as our Amba, are formed of volcanic rocks, and the upper perpendicular wall-courts, testing essentially the strength of the place, is formed of beautiful columnar balsate, but the finest specimens I saw was at the extremity of the Begemder plateau at the descent of the Jiddeh.



1. Magdala fort, from the west.
2. Salonigi (residence of servants, market-place, &c.)
3. Summit of mountain North of Magi, and connected by Salonigi.
4. Northern entrance, the one we came through.
5. Road from plateau to Northern Gate and Salonigi.
6. Common jail.
7. King's houses and our jail.

The road through Talanta to Lasta and Socata is said to be much easier than the one from Debra Tabor, a large portion of the intervening tract between here and the Takazze being a low plain.

There are three gates at Magdala. I only saw one, at the northern extremity through which we came. The ascent through that entrance is not very difficult, as we did not dismount from our mules until we reached the inner gate. The entrance is defended by two wooden doors and a few insignificant earthworks. The garrison consists of about 1,000 men, about half armed with matchlocks. The whole population, including women and children and prisoners, amount to about 3,000. The greater portion of the plateau is covered with huts; a large open space, however, exists before the King's houses, and another smaller one at the southern extremity near the prison. Our houses are enclosed in a hedge near the King's houses, about ten in number. The Queen, daughter of Dejaj Oobeay, and her son, are amongst the fair inhabitants of the King's inclosure. Water is the great desideratum; it is already getting scarce, but from

February to July, hardly any is to be obtained on the Amba, and must be brought from the foot of the mountain, and there even it is far from being abundant. Of prisoners there are about 350 on the mountain, all except our party, the Bishop, and the family of Ras Ali, who, like us, have special quarters and guards, are heaped together in three houses. The majority are imprisoned on political grounds; only about sixty are imprisoned for murder or manslaughter; their crime not having been satisfactorily proved, they must wait until further witnesses should appear, either in their favour or to prove their crime. Thank God, we have up to now been spared the horrors of that place, where hunger, dirt, and misery reign supreme. All the prisoners, except ourselves and two or three of the other prisoners, are chained hand and feet, and many to this already awful torture have large poles of wood fixed round their necks, and are only allowed a piece of dirty cloth to cover their nakedness. The Bishop is not chained, only watched at night.

(Signed) H. BLANC.

No. 701.

Commander Manners to Lord Stanley.—(Received March 12.)*

My Lord, 4, *Felbrigg Terrace, Ealing, March* 11, 1867.

I BEG most respectfully to submit for your Lordship's consideration, a subject which I trust may be deemed of sufficient importance to warrant the attention of Her Majesty's Government, I allude, my Lord, to the unfortunate position of the British Consul and others in Abyssinia, and the steps which might be taken for their release.

I do not presume, my Lord, to submit the following remarks from personal interested motives, being forty-nine years of age, probably too old for such an important undertaking, but simply from a belief the course I am about to propose the best that could be adopted. I have this from the local knowledge I possess during a long term of service in command of various vessels of war on the Abyssinian coast, as well as having travelled in Abyssinia, and being associated with the natives, and acquainted with their habits, as also the trade of the country. I would most respectfully submit as follows:—

That an officer should be sent to Massowah to treat with the King of Abyssinia for the release of the prisoners, and having a steamer with presents on board, only to be given on his delivering up the unfortunate captives.

That this officer should have a knowledge of the country, natives, and trade. That he should have full discretionary power to act as the exigency of the case and the interests of Her Majesty's Government demanded, and select the most intelligent natives to convey despatches to or from the Abyssinian monarch.

Should my services be required, my Lord, I am ready to act under the order of Her Majesty's Government.

My testimonials are as follows:—

From the Government; from the Spanish Government, having been presented with an Order from the Queen of Spain; from the late Lieutenant-General Sir James Outram, G.C.B.; Admiral Sir H. Leeke, K.C.B.; Rear-Admiral Sir Stephen Lushington, K.C.B.; General Huvnell, Commodore Porter; and others.

A steamer could readily be obtained at Bombay, or Aden.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. E. MANNERS.

No. 702.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.—(Received March 14.)*

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 4, 1867.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch of the 29th December last,† I have the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch with which I have forwarded to Colonel Stanton a letter from the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople to King Theodore, exhorting him to set the British captives free. I inclose also a translation of the Patriarch's letter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 688.

Inclosure 1 in No. 702.

*Lord Lyons to Colonel Stanton.**

Sir, *Constantinople, March* 4, 1867.

HER Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh reported to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that an Armenian in that capital had suggested that the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople could give useful aid towards obtaining the release of the British captives in Abyssinia. The Secretary of State accordingly instructed me, if any convenient opportunity should occur, to place myself in communication with the Patriarch, and to enlist his good offices in favour of the captives if he were willing and able to be of service.

I immediately acted upon this instruction, and found the Patriarch extremely willing to give all the assistance in his power. He suggested that the most efficacious means of action which he possessed would be to write a letter to King Theodore, exhorting him, in the name of religion and humanity, to set the captives free. He has sent me a pastoral letter to this effect, in Armenian and Arabic, signed by him, and has desired that it be forwarded to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who has already, he informs me, been instructed to have it conveyed to King Theodore by a prelate.

I think it prudent, however, to send the letter to you in the first instance, and accordingly inclose it and a translation herewith. Your knowledge of all the details concerning the captives, and of the present state of the negotiation for their release, will enable you to determine whether or no it is advisable to make use of the letter. If you consider it to be advisable to use it, your best course will probably be to send it direct to Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, and request him to concert measures with the Armenian Patriarch at that place, so that it may be forwarded speedily in the mode pointed out by the Patriarch here.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 702.

*Boghos, Patriarch of the Armenians, to Theodore, King of Abyssinia.**

(Translation.) *February* 13, o.s., 1867.

BOGHOS, Chief of the Bishops, and Patriarch of the Armenians who inhabit Constantinople and the Ottoman dominions, sends Christian greetings to His Majesty Theodore, King of Abyssinia, and offers reiterated prayers to the throne of Almighty God that he may grant His Majesty long life and perfect happiness, defend his noble person and royal dignity, for the glory and honour of the Christian religion, and continue His favours to him and his royal lineage as long as the world endures.

I would beg leave to remark that however great may be the distance between the country of Abyssinia and Constantinople, yet the numerous and manifest virtues with which God has endowed His Majesty, and the justice and clemency of his exalted Government, added to the many virtues appertaining to the Christian religion, are well known to your humble servant. His Majesty's goodness to all Christians under the shadow of his protection, and especially to those of our sect whose Patriarch is their spiritual Shepherd, is also well known.

I have long been seeking an opportunity of offering my prayers and homage to your Majesty's throne. I, therefore, now venture to forward my present petition, and avail myself of the opportunity to solicit the pardon and liberation of your Majesty's slaves, the English Consul and his companions, who have been for some time past imprisoned in Abyssinia. Indeed I beg leave to observe that the said Consul and his companions have been for a very long period in confinement, and that they have no help or refuge save in the mercy and clemency of your Majesty.

Should your Majesty be pleased to pardon them, your doing so would afford much gratification to the whole of our Christian community, and also great satisfaction to the illustrious British Government whose efforts in the interest of Christianity are well known.

In consideration of the office held by me, your spiritual servant, and in remembrance of the saying of our Lord Jesus Christ (on whom be glory and praise), who said "Forgive those who trespass against you," who preached forgiveness and said, "Do

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

good to those who offend you," and for the sake also of His Mother the Virgin Mary, who teaches us to be compassionate, and who is the only intercessor for us all with Him, I humbly pray my Lord the great and merciful King to pardon and set free the said prisoners. This would be most gracious on the part of the King.

I also beg leave to offer in anticipation my thanks and obligations for the goodness of your Majesty's Government, which I do not doubt will be lavished on these prisoners, by washing away their offences, and giving to them to drink of the cup of pure forgiveness and freedom.

For the sake of mercy and charity your Majesty is supplicated to liberate the prisoners. My hope, and the hope of every Christian, is in the mercy and clemency of your Majesty.

I offer my prayers to Almighty God that he may grant your Majesty eternal happiness, and keep you on your Throne in glory, honour, and victory. May he also cause your Ministers, officers, soldiers, people, and subjects, to attain abundant prosperity, and the enjoyment of peace and tranquillity, as often as the new moon shines forth, and with the dawn of every day.

(L.S.) BOGHOS.

No. 703.

*Mr. Murray to Commander Manners.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 14, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant,† suggesting a plan, calculated, in your opinion, to effect the release of the captives in Abyssinia; and, in conveying to you his Lordship's thanks for your offer of assistance, I am to state to you that Her Majesty's Government have no occasion to avail themselves of your services.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 704.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received March 15.)*

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 1, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from Colonel Merewether, dated Aden, 15th February, that has just reached me under flying seal, transmitting a letter from Mr. Rassam to your Lordship, together with copies of the correspondence which has passed between the Emperor Theodore and that gentleman.

From this communication your Lordship will perceive that Colonel Merewether has arrived at the conclusion that there is now little or no prospect of the release of the captives being effected by conciliatory measures, and that he is of opinion a threatening attitude, to be followed if necessary by military operations, should be assumed by Her Majesty's Government.

The arguments advanced by Colonel Merewether in support of his views deserve serious consideration, though it is impossible to foresee exactly what may be the result, to the captives themselves, of following the course proposed by him.

The actual military operations would not, I apprehend, be attended with any great difficulty, provided care is taken to conciliate the inhabitants of Tigré and the other provinces in rebellion against the Emperor, but the force proposed by Colonel Merewether does not appear to me sufficient for the purpose. The country, so far as I can ascertain, presents serious natural obstacles to military movements, and it would be absolutely necessary to occupy the passes in the mountain with a sufficient force to ensure the line of communications with the sea as well as other strategic points in the country; and deduction being made for these necessary services, the force remaining for ulterior field operations would, I imagine, be too small for efficient action in the difficult country to which the Emperor would probably retreat.

It also appears to me, my Lord, that the greatest caution would be required in ascertaining the exact feelings of the inhabitants of Abyssinia on the subject of a

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 701.

foreign invasion before attempting to penetrate with a small force into the heart of so difficult a country.

Colonel Merewether's remark as to the inexpediency of an Egyptian force being employed as an auxiliary deserves serious consideration, as such a measure might undoubtedly not only prevent any assistance being rendered by the inhabitants to the British force, but might also rouse the whole country to resist the invasion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 705.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received March 15.)**

My Lord, *Aden, February 15, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a letter from Mr. Rassam to your Lordship forwarded to me under flying seal, also copies of the whole correspondence which has passed between the Emperor Theodorus and Mr. Rassam since the latter has been at the Abyssinian Court.

2. Judging from the contents of Mr. Rassam's letter to your Lordship, by the tone of the Emperor's letters 2 and 3 to that gentleman, and by the intelligence I have been able to gather from the other captives, and from those best informed as to the true state of feeling and the motives by which the Emperor is actuated, I feel it my duty to state my conviction,—and it is with great regret I have to do so,—that the last chance of effecting the object of releasing the captives by conciliatory measures has failed. There was the one chance left, that on the Emperor's learning and being gratified at the gracious and generous manner in which Her Majesty had acted in spite of the questionable acts committed by him, that he would have at once released Mr. Rassam, and, to show his sincere appreciation of the extreme forbearance extended towards him, would have, without delay or hesitation, acceded to the requirement of Her Majesty that Mr. Rassam, with all the British subjects detained in Abyssinia, should be sent in safety to the frontiers of the kingdom.

3. From the latter part of the Emperor's letter to Mr. Rassam, dated the 5th January, where he writes, "I wish you to get them" (the skilful artizans) "viâ Matemma, in order that they may teach me wisdom and show me clever arts; when this is done I shall make you glad and send you away;"—it is clear he has no intention of releasing and despatching Mr. Rassam with the others until the artizans and presents have reached him. To agree to this would be contrary to your Lordship's instructions; even did I consider that discretion in that matter was allowed me, it is a course I most certainly should not follow, for, after the experience gained of the Emperor's want of faith, especially latterly, and the capricious manner in which he acts on imaginary grievances, it may be reckoned a certainty that he would retain the whole with the idea of making use of them as a means of gaining other advantages from Her Majesty's Government.

4. Further concessions can only be productive of dangerous and unadvisable delay. Time being now of every importance, I have taken on myself to address His Majesty, pointing out in as plain terms as possible that the conditions in Her Majesty's letter, especially in the latter part, must be strictly adhered to, and that a ready and entire compliance with them was necessary before Her Majesty's orders with regard to the presents could be carried out. Copy of my letter is annexed.

5. In the present position of affairs it appears to me better and more just to Mr. Rassam that this remonstrance should come from me than from him. It will avoid the risk which such a measure originating from him might, perchance, cause, and at the same time will allow of his taking the opportunity, should it offer itself, of strengthening the remonstrance by adding his opinion that it will be strictly adhered to. I shall at the same time forward a letter to Mr. Rassam, carefully worded, giving the nature of the communication to the Emperor.

6. I am the more convinced that it is necessary now to assume a more decided tone with the Emperor, from the intelligence as to the changes that have taken place in Abyssinia since last summer. An account of those I had the honour of submitting on the 15th ultimo,† and everything since tends to confirm fully that account. When it was proposed that the Emperor's requests should be met in a liberal spirit, it was believed that he had the power, and might by such treatment be led to exert the will,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 700.

to fully reciprocate the friendly policy adopted towards him. He was then at the head of a large army moving about in different parts of his dominions. It was then also reasoned, that having the power he would be able to, and would always for his own sake carefully protect the artizans who were willing to enter his country and service.

7. That, however, has now gone from him. The large army seen by Mr. Rassam last March, which was supposed to be still with him in the summer, has dwindled down to 15,000 men, of whom, I have been recently told by a good authority, not more than one-third are well armed, and his rule is now confined to the one small province of Begemder. Mr. Rassam, in a private letter I have from him, dated the 10th of January, adds in cypher, "Emperor has scarcely any country left, so he is desperate." He is surrounded on every side by strong bodies of rebels, who are waiting till his authority tumbles to pieces of itself, only restrained from advancing against him, partly by a superstitious feeling which the Emperor himself has always sedulously fostered, that he has a particular mission to fulfil, and partly by dread of the prowess of his earlier days. In my last despatch I reported "that unless he can manage to make some brilliant stroke worthy of his earlier career, his rule will come to an end within the next few months." His followers continue to desert him, and directly the resources of the sole district left to him get exhausted, which they must shortly be from the surplusage which the presence of himself and army entails, the main portion of the residue will leave him to his fate.

He has added greatly to the unpopularity which his tyranny has caused, by the destruction of the churches at Gondar at the end of last year; and the expression used to me by the authority quoted above, amply conveys the nature of his present position,—"Abyssinia is wearied of him."

8. Under these circumstances it would be manifestly improper, and contrary to your Lordship's wishes, to attempt to effect the liberation of the captives by means of the artizans, and without the artizans the machinery would be useless. Feeling the desperate state of his affairs, the Emperor, if he ever had any intention of acting faithfully, has quite abandoned it now, and is only desirous to get more Englishmen in his power, in the hopes of their serving his ends in his direst extremity.

9. A reply to my letter to the Emperor cannot be expected to reach Massowah before the end of March or beginning of April. Should it be unfavourable,—and I fear there can be no doubt it will be, from the well-known pride and obstinacy of the Emperor,—I would beg your Lordship's instructions for my further guidance, respectfully suggesting, and earnestly urging, the following as the best course to be pursued under the change in the aspect of affairs which has taken place.

10. A communication to be forwarded to me for transmission to the Emperor, intimating that every possible means having failed to induce him to maintain those friendly relations which he professed himself so anxious should exist between Her Majesty and himself, that he had not only imprisoned Consul Cameron, a servant of Her Majesty, and other British subjects, but had violated the laws common between all nations by disregarding the sacredness of the person of an Ambassador, in that he had imprisoned and chained Mr. Rassam, who was the bearer of a letter from Her Majesty. That further allowances could not be made for one who had shown himself so regardless of the observances held necessary to be preserved among civilized nations. He was therefore told that the limits to the patience of a great Government had been reached, and he was now solemnly warned that he would be held as personally responsible for the safety of every British subject, and all persons serving them, who were at the present time in Abyssinia, and that only their immediate unconditional release and safe conduct to the coast, combined with a full apology for the gross insult which had been offered, could open the way to the re-establishment of friendly communication hereafter. At the same time a Proclamation might be forwarded, warning all the Chiefs and people of Abyssinia that certain punishment would reach all persons who were in any way concerned in any injury befalling the said subjects; while, on the other hand, those who assisted and protected them would be richly rewarded, and gain the favour of Her Majesty the Queen.

11. From all I have heard, and from my own experience of character, such as that of the Emperor Theodorus, I am certain no fears need be entertained of any injury happening to the captives, were such a course adopted as above proposed. Proud, self-willed, and vindictive, the Emperor undoubtedly is; but at the same time he is well aware that their existence is the fairest chance of safety left to him, and he will cling to that as his last resource. But even if risk did attend, I hold it is far better it should be run than that the unfortunate captives should be left to endure the miserable existence they are now subjected to, and which will become more and more

intolerable as means of subsistence in the neighbourhood of Magdala gets scarcer, and starvation threatens. The captives themselves urge some such course should be adopted.

12. My own conviction, and it is backed by others who know the country and people well, is, that directly it is clearly understood in Abyssinia that Her Majesty's Government will no longer bear with King Theodore's unjustifiable conduct, the last blow will be given to his power, and the "weariness" of the country be removed, while the release of the captives could be brought about by means of the successful rebels, with whom, under the altered circumstances, communications could at once be opened.

13. Although at the same time that stringent measures are determined on, I would also respectfully suggest that all necessary preliminary arrangements should be made for the dispatch of a force from India next summer, so as to be on the borders of Abyssinia by the commencement of the favourable season for operations, viz., the middle of October, in case it should be required. It is just possible that the desired end may be obtained without force having to be used, but it is as well that everything should be ready, and that it should be seen and known Her Majesty's Government was in earnest.

14. More extended knowledge of the country shows that the idea of there being any very great difficulty in carrying out a campaign is purely imaginary. A friendly narrow seaboard lines the easterly frontier of Abyssinia. The approaches to the high plateaus are numerous, and several of them presenting no greater obstacles than could be easily overcome by ordinary energy and good management. Once on the plateaus—and they are reached less than sixty miles from the coast at the north-eastern end,—a healthy climate is found, abundance of good water, forage, fuel, and the ordinary supplies of the country, meat and grain ("sowaree," a species of millet, sorghum), obtainable in any quantity. Of course it would be necessary, in the first instance, that full commissariat should accompany the force from Bombay. In the war with Persia in 1856-57 every supply was sent from Bombay to Bushire and the Euphrates, and never was an army so admirably furnished as that. If operations continued much would be procured in the country, especially for an army in which the native element chiefly predominated. The Egyptian market would also be close at hand. Camels in any number can be obtained along the sea-coast, also from Bogos and the Soudan.

15. If I was required to offer an opinion as to the nature and extent of the force to be employed, I should say that, taking into consideration the existing favourable state of affairs, the following would be ample :—One troop of Horse Artillery and two light field batteries, or two troops and one light field battery; a full company of Sappers and Miners, a select body; strong brigade of native Cavalry; with one European and six native regiments of Infantry, formed into two brigades; altogether making about 6,000 men. Such a force could be transported with comparative ease, and with less impedimenta than one having more European element. That such a force, under a good General, would do all that is required I am confident; but to ensure success it will be essential that the command and political powers be entrusted to one person, as was the case in the Persian war. He should be given full powers, authorized to entertain temporarily such Abyssinians as he may find necessary; in fact, left to act in the manner he finds best suited to bring the campaign to a rapid and successful conclusion.

16. On a previous occasion it was suggested that an auxiliary force should be moved from Egypt. This I now find would be a grave mistake. It would at once turn from us the rebels, who would otherwise be our greatest assistance. For however much the Emperor Theodorus is hated, the Moslem is hated ten times worse, and were it known that the Turkish Government (for so Egypt is styled) would be engaged in the operations, the whole of Abyssinia would band against us and join Theodore in resisting the detested enemy; not an Egyptian soldier, therefore, should be used, and, at first, too much care could not be taken to prevent the appearance even of employing them.

17. I am now only waiting the arrival of the Right Honourable S. Fitzgerald, who is daily expected *en route* to Bombay, to communicate to him personally the state of the Abyssinian question. Immediately after that I shall proceed to Massowah to dispatch the letter to the Emperor, or to act according to circumstances should any different intelligence have been received. I do not anticipate the latter will be the case.

18. Mr. Flad is still at Massowah, and I do not see that any advantage will be gained by his going to Matemma. After the Emperor's recent proceedings at Gondar,

the road through that place from Matemma to Debra Tabor will be more hazardous than ever, and not more practicable than through Tigré, and the road by the south of Lake Tsana is said to be closed. The Emperor's statement that he would send to Matemma for Mr. Rassam's stores was, I am sure, an untruth, and used to put off Mr. Rassam; he would not allow the latter's mules to make the attempt for fear they should fall into the hands of the rebels, and he could not dispatch his own without a strong force as guard, which he cannot spare; once away from him, too, the men composing it would probably not return. I would take this opportunity of correcting a mistake with regard to Mr. Flad, for which I am in a manner responsible. It was supposed in England, and I was under the same impression, that he was sent from Abyssinia as a messenger from the King; reference to the correspondence between Mr. Rassam and the King, letter No. 25, of 17th April, will show that Mr. Flad was really dispatched by Mr. Rassam to communicate to Her Majesty's Government what had occurred and what was required. I regret exceedingly that any misapprehension of the matter led to a misunderstanding in Mr. Flad's position.

19. I propose letting the artizans and presents remain for the present at Massowah, until an answer from the Emperor to my letter arrives. I do not see any likelihood of the party being able or required to enter Abyssinia, but it will be as well to show that strict faith was kept even to the last. I regret to say that Mr. Talbot, the Superintendent, was brought down in the "Victoria," suffering greatly from fever. He is, however, better, and I trust care and quiet will soon restore him to complete health.

20. Mr. Rassam writes in a private letter, copy of which I do not trouble your Lordship with, as it contains little beyond what he has given in his despatch, that the Emperor, though he professed personal friendship, latterly showed ill-will only to British subjects. For instance, Bardel and Makerer were released and taken into his employ, while Mr. Kerans, who also offered his services, was refused, "because he was an Englishman and a connection of Mr. Speedy, formerly Vice-Consul at Massowah." This is another proof of the King's determination to persevere in the outrageous course he has adopted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 705.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Emperor of Abyssinia.**

Most Gracious Sovereign, *Massowah,*

I TRUST that this will find your Majesty in perfect health. I have received the good tidings that your Majesty has been made acquainted with the contents of the letter from Her Majesty Queen Victoria, brought by the hand of Mr. Flad, and that they have proved gratifying to your Majesty. In the anticipation that the generous and most friendly feelings under the influence of which Her Majesty met in so liberal and complete a manner the wishes expressed by your Majesty in April last, will have given rise to a reciprocal emotion on your Majesty's part,—I approach with the deepest respect, and with the request that, complying with the wish expressed in the latter part of Her Majesty's letter, your Majesty will graciously cause the early dispatch of the officers deputed to conduct Mr. Rassam and the other Europeans to the frontier of your dominions, to whom I shall be ready to hand over the presents sent by Her Majesty in token of her friendship, at any spot on the frontier your Majesty may be pleased to appoint. To assist in perpetuating strong and lasting friendship between the two countries is, I would beg to assure your Majesty, my sincere desire, and that I may the more readily do so I would crave from your Majesty the favour of speedy arrangements being entered into whereby I may be enabled to carry out to the letter the instructions of my gracious Sovereign, as I am bound and prepared to do.

With the greatest respect, I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

No. 706.

*Mr. Rassam to Lord Stanley.—(Received March 15.)**

My Lord, *Magdala, January* 10, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of the correspondence which has taken place between the Emperor and myself regarding the letter of Her Majesty of the 4th of October, copy of which Mr. Flad had forwarded to him from Massowah.

2. On the 28th ultimo I received letter No. 1, wherein he inclosed to me the identical copy of the Queen's letter, in reference to which he said that he was coming hither to consult me as to the answer he intended to send.

3. From all I can make out it appears that the copy of the Royal letter reached the Emperor on the 19th ultimo, and on the 22nd he sent it to me for my perusal. It was reported that the Emperor did not seem displeased at the receipt of the communication above alluded to, but, on the contrary, he tried to show that it was favourable, He had said that he hoped he would still obtain his desired object, and when he was asked by one of his European workmen how, he replied that he would employ "bilhat," which word means either craft, cunning, skill, clever policy, or dodge. Some people thought that he would try to reconcile the British Government by releasing us from our chains, and would act the civil towards me, but others were afraid that he would try to intimidate me into getting me to write in his favour. His last correspondence shows that he has pursued a half-and-half course.

4. In order that Her Majesty's Government may not be deceived in what I communicate, I shall in future write my letters which I may be compelled to send against my will with folded margin. It would be useless to refuse, as I know it would be of no avail, and my declining to comply may endanger the safety of so many Europeans for whom I am responsible.

5. From all that has taken place, especially from the attitude His Majesty has assumed since the receipt of the Queen's letter, it is impossible to trust him any longer. Presents and artisans may be sent to him, but what security have we that he would let us leave Abyssinia?

6. He has forgiven Consul Cameron and his party no less than four times, and yet he talks as if he had not been reconciled to them; and although he was the one who gave them permission to depart by a sealed letter, and sent an officer named Lij Abetow to escort them, he accuses me of having sent them away without taking them to him. This is the fourth time that he has brought this unfounded charge against me, and although I proved to him by his own letter and the evidence of Lij Abetow that he was the one who sent them away, yet he still persists in recurring to this accusation whenever he wants to threaten me. He knows very well that I could no more send any of the Europeans out of the country than go out of Magdala myself. The fact is, he considers me a great prize, and believes that as he managed to get a small mission after imprisoning Consul Cameron, he may obtain a greater man than I am by confining me and my companions.

7. The tone of his letters above alluded to shows that he is determined not even to take us out of chains unless he obtains what he wants, and the assurance he gives in the latter part of his third letter has been repeatedly made. The first time it was communicated to me in his letter of the 4th of February, 1866, six days after I met him.

8. I have sent copies of all my correspondence with the Emperor to Colonel Merewether, the Resident at Aden, to keep for me until I depart from Abyssinia. The reason that I have not forwarded a copy of them to your Lordship is because they contain a great number of points upon which I cannot safely make any comments while I am in my present position. I have written, however, to ask him to send you extracts of what he thinks necessary for the information of Her Majesty's Government.

9. On the 3rd July last when he arrested Dr. Blanc and Mr. Rosenthal at Gaffat, and brought them to Debra Tabor, and afterwards confined us in the dark room, he made four charges against me; firstly, that I had read Mr. Stern's book, "Wanderings amongst the Falashas," which was published in England in 1861, wherein he made some comments upon the Emperor's mother; secondly, that I had sent away his enemies (the released European prisoners) without taking them to him; thirdly, that he had given Consul Cameron a letter to my Queen, and that he came back to him

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

without an answer; and fourthly, that the Turks had possession of Jerusalem, and that England and France allowed them to keep it. He demanded his patrimony (the Holy City, formerly the domains of Kings David and Solomon, his forefathers), and said, "I want Europe to restore to me the Holy Land." To this last I replied that in the present state of civilization Europe had no power to dispossess the Moslems of the birthplace of our Saviour, otherwise they would have done it before now.

10. Also, the day we were imprisoned at Debra Tabor, on the 25th of June, one of the charges which were brought against me was that my Government had laughed at him. The cause of this complaint is as follows:—When the missionaries' things were seized after their imprisonment at the end of 1863, a letter was found from Mr. Rosenthal to a friend of his in England, wherein he had mentioned that Mr. Barroni, the late British Consular Agent at Massowah, had written to Her Majesty's Government to say that he had received a letter from the Emperor of Abyssinia, wherein he had invited him to come and "get drunk" with him. This expression, it appears, had given birth to some merriment amongst the clerks in the Foreign Office.* Mr. Rosenthal had heard this story from a friend of his, and when the letter was translated the word "clerk" was rendered "government" in Amharic. I tried my best to dispossess him of the idea that my Government were in the habit of reading or laughing at such letters.

11. Having heard from Massowah that stores had been sent for us to Matemma, I was compelled to write to the Emperor for permission to send my mules to bring them hither, as it would have been quite impossible to smuggle them through. He has undertaken their transport hither through his people, as he has done on a former occasion; and sent me back the mules with a message that he would not allow them to be fatigued, when he had it in his power to get the things for me. This act of generosity on his part appears the more surprising when it is well known that he did so two days after he received the copy of Her Majesty's letter.

12. At the end of November he made a descent upon Gondar, the old capital of Abyssinia, to attack a small rebel who had been ruling there for some time under Tisso Gobazay; but when he arrived there and found the enemy had decamped, he revenged himself upon the inhabitants of the place by plundering them, and utterly destroying the town by fire, not even sparing the churches, of which there were no less than forty-four. He pretends that he was provoked to that act on account of the mischief the natives of the place had committed in having betrayed my messenger, Daftara Dasta, to the rebels, in consequence of which he had been seized and plundered by them. This man I had sent to the coast at the end of May last, to bring some things from Aden for the Emperor and ourselves, and it appears that while he was passing through Wagara with the Massowah kafilah, he was betrayed by some merchants within a day's journey of Gondar, and captured. I have heard of his safe arrival at Debra Tabor, but plundered of everything. I am trying to get back the letters, and some of the things lost, if possible, through the influence of the Bishop, who is still a prisoner on this mountain.

13. My Lord, I do not think it is within my province to draw out a line as to the future policy of Her Majesty's Government, because, unhappily, I have no more hope of conciliatory tactics having any beneficial effects in humouring the Sovereign of Abyssinia. Every European in the country can vouch for my guarded conduct, and the conciliatory policy which I have ever employed towards the Emperor. I have always been too cautious in my transactions with him, and although he tried very often to find me erring, in order that he might have a cause of complaint, yet I have no little consolation in believing that Her Majesty's Government will never have reason to disapprove of my conduct.

14. Her Majesty's Government may rest assured that I shall continue, though in chains, to pursue that conciliatory policy which I have always considered it my sacred duty to follow ever since I had the honour of entering Her Majesty's service. All my fellow-prisoners and myself will leave the grave settlement of this unhappy Abyssinian difficulty in the hands of Her Majesty's Government, and may Almighty God bless their endeavours to do what is right to obtain our speedy release.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. RASSAM.

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* There was no foundation whatever for this rumour.

Inclosure in No. 706.

*Translation of Letters received by Mr. Rassam from the Emperor of Abyssinia, after reaching him.**

1. *In Amharic and Arabic.*—(*Received January* 28, [1866], *on reaching the Royal Camp.*)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God. Amen.

From the King of Kings, Theodorus. By the power of God, may this reach our friend, who is wishing for our friendship, Hormuzd Rassam. It would have been better for you to have rested to-night, and to-morrow morning we should have had the meeting; but we have been staying in this country, which has been devastated, awaiting your arrival, and the troops are in want of food; consequently we have directed the interview to take place between you and me to-day. To-morrow morning we start on our journey. Now come to us.

(Without date.)

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2. *In Amharic.*†—(*Received February* 4, 1866.)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God. Amen.

The servant of God and his created being, the son of David, the King of Kings, Theodorus.

To the servant of her whom God has exalted above all Sovereigns and glorified above all Princes and people, and made the Defender of the Christian Faith and the succour of the poor and oppressed, Hormuzd Rassam, who is, by the power of God, endowed with wisdom and a benevolent heart.

Be it known to you that by your favour (*i.e.*, by the favour of the English) we have abundance of fire-arms. We send you one single-barrelled and four double-barrelled muskets, and five single-barrelled pistols, and if besides these you require more to give to persons who ask you for them, by the power of God, we will supply you with them. I am the Sovereign of my country and you are the servant of the Queen, my friend, and I should feel hurt if any one asked you for a thing and you refused it them. I do not do this because you cannot afford to make such presents, but having been sent in haste you have had no time to bring such things. When you arrive at your destination, whatever you require of arms or otherwise, Aito Samuel, the Agent appointed between you and ourselves will supply it. Between this and Korata, Aito Samuel will also provide you with 5,000 dollars to spend in any way you like, except in a manner unpleasing to God.

When the men (prisoners) shall be delivered to you, if God permit, we will come and wish you farewell; but if we are not able to come to you in person, we will give orders to have you sent to the frontier in safety and honour.

Dated the 4th February, 1866.

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3. *In Amharic.*—(*Received February* 15, 1866, *after our arrival at Korata.*)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

From the King of Kings, Theodorus. May it reach Aito Hormuzd Rassam. How have you passed the time? I, God be praised, am well. How have your brothers (Dr. Blanc and Lieutenant Prideaux) passed the time? Ask them from me. After we parted, by the power of God, we found two lion cubs and one young antelope, and we have sent them to you. I have come to Metcha expressly for the purpose of inquiring about your safe arrival at your destination. If God permit I shall see you, and will come to you in a boat.

(Without date.)

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† This is a translation of an Amharic letter which was sent by His Majesty, with a request that it should be returned to him after it was translated into English.

4. *In Amharic.*—(*Received February* 18, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

By the power of God, when I heard of your safe arrival at Korata I was extremely rejoiced. Be of good cheer; I have ordered Agafaru Golam to proceed at once to release the prisoners and bring them to you, in order that I might send you to your country.

With respect to the four double-barrelled fowling-pieces and eight double-barrelled pistols, with their moulds and appurtenances, which you have brought to me, M. Bourgard has written to me to say that he sent to his brother and obtained them for the purpose of presenting them to me. I have therefore ordered 4,000 dollars to be paid to him by the Ingada Ras of Tigré.

You told me that M. Munzinger entertained a sincere regard for me, and consequently when you go I wish to send him by you a token of my esteem. Let me know what will be acceptable, in order that I may prepare it.

(Without date.)

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5. *In Amharic.*

(After compliments.)

I wish to decorate these servants (messengers) of yours, who are present, with the Royal shirt. Be not angry with the servants who informed you of the release of Captain Cameron (at Massowah). I thought that you (*i. e.*, the English) hated me. Because I delayed in answering your letter, O sons of the English, and in order that you might not fear, but come to me from that great Queen, he tried in this way to bring about the interview between me and you, Aito Hormuzd Rassam, who are a great man and my friend. It is necessary that this man should be brought to the notice of the Queen, and you yourself must leave him for my sake. I, on my part, on hearing of what he had done, by the power of God, entertained great affection for him. If you had not come, who would have been able to release the prisoners? and, if I had not met you, how could I have obtained your (*i. e.*, the English) friendship? May our Creator from above love, for our sake, him who brought about our interview and made us friends, and those who are his creatures from below will love him also. Please God, I shall reward him. I have sent Lej Abitow to Debra Tabor to bring to you my European friends, in order that they might come and see you.

(Without date.)

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6. *In Amharic.*—(*Received February* 24, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

By the power of God I have been greatly rejoiced at hearing of your well-being.

Dated Friday, the 16th of Zakatul.

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7. *In Amharic.*—(*Received February* 27, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

I acted formerly erroneously, through the devil, without consideration; and now I have ordered Aito Samuel to see if there is any property (belonging to the prisoners) which he can bring to you; and if anything has been lost or spoilt, I shall make it good, not merely for the sake of my friendship for the great Queen, but for the friendship which I entertain for you there, and which is sufficient for me. If I can make compensation from my property to you at all, by the help of the Lord I will do it; if not, I offer my body. When the people (prisoners) reach you in safety, ask them if what they had done was not true; it will be proved to you from their mouth.

I apprehended that I had lost all hopes of your (the English) friendship; otherwise I would not have acted so badly.

Dated 16th of Zakatul.

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8. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 1, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

Tashallaka Walda Gahir has informed me that you wished me to give permission for you to make the messenger a present. You are the servant of her whom God has exalted and honoured, the Queen of England; and you are also, by the power of God,

my friend; consequently you are not unable to give remuneration. Except in a way unpleasing to God, do as you please.

Dated 22nd of Zakatul.

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9. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 4, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

The people (prisoners) whom you want, may the Lord bring to you, and may He cause you to reach your country in safety. May the Lord plant my friendship and goodwill in your hearts, and may He cause you to open my blind eyes.

Dated 24th of Zakatul.

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10. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 7, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

When the people (prisoners) reach you, we will consult. I have tried to find some nice silk amongst my property, and also in the market in this country, but did not succeed; but of the silks with which you presented I have sent three pieces, with their lining. If they will suit you, make shirts of them, and wear them for me; but if you thing they will bring any obloquy on me—because, what hurts my reputation hurts yours—send me an answer.

Dated 28th of Zakatul.

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11. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 11, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

Agafaru Golam has sent to inform me that our people (prisoners) had arrived, by the power of God (at Debra [illegible]abor). I have greatly rejoiced, and I wish you also to be glad. Walda Gahir informed me that you had wished the doctor to go to him (Consul Cameron). Very well; let Kato Samuel go with him at once. When they reach you safely, let me at once know of their arrival, by the power of God, in order that we may have a chat together.

Dated Friday, the 1st of Magabut.

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12. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 15, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

Your servant Dasta, who came from Massowah, has informed me of the re-establishment of order in Tigré, and other matters. By the power of God, I have rejoiced greatly. I am glad to hear of their (the prisoners) safe arrival, and of the good health of you all.

Dated Monday, the 4th of Magabut.

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13. *In Amharic.*

(After compliments.)

By the power of God, and the fortune of Queen Victoria and myself, those people (prisoners) whom my friend (the Queen) asked me to release have reached you safely; and when I heard of it I was glad. What my friend the Queen asked me to do I have, by the power of God, performed. In the letter which my friend the Queen sent, it is thus said: "We have sent to you Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, who was Governor at Aden, and whom we esteem and trust; consult with him concerning what you require of us, and he will do it for you."* She says, now I am blind, and what I require is a remedy,† to give light to my eyes. As I have gladdened your heart, I wish you to gladden mine, by sending and obtaining for me (such a remedy). Of the translation of the Queen's communication which you gave me,‡ I send you a copy, in order that you may hear it. I wish you to ask the people (prisoners) whom you have, by the power of God, released

* I do not know how this passage has crept into the translation. It was deemed inexpedient to discuss the matter.

† A scientific man.

‡ The translation was made at the request of His Majesty, with the assistance of Mr. Prideaux, the Royal Chief Scribe, Samuel, and one of my Abyssinian interpreters.

before your brother's and Mr. Waldmeier's party, whether it is true they had abused him (the King) or not.

Dated A.M. 7358, and A.D. 1858, in the year of St. Mark, on the 6th of Magabut.

Charges against the Prisoners.

(After compliments.)

The charges against Cameron, who calls himself Consul, are these:—This gentleman and his agent Bardel sent to tell me that they had come as messengers from the Queen, and wished me to receive them. By the power of God, I sent an escort to Massowah and brought him up. I was then at Debra Mai, in the district of Metcha. When he arrived, I sent my nobles to meet him, and had a salute fired for him. According to the custom of my country, I decorated my house for his reception, and welcomed him therein, by the power of God. He then gave me a letter, which he said was from the Queen; after I had read the letter, he presented me with a double-barrelled gun and a pair of double-barrelled pistols, which he said were presents from the Queen. I bowed on receiving them, and thanked Her Majesty for them. In the letter the Queen said that she wishes to be my friend and relation, and that she heard that I loved and befriended her on account of what I had done for Plowden and his party against the people of my country; that formerly England and Abyssinia had an interest; and now she wished that her Consul should remain with me, and that sportsmen and merchants should be allowed to follow their avocations. He (the Consul) said to me that a Consul from me should go to England, and my sportsmen and merchants also, and that, by the power of God, we (the English) would protect them. I was glad at hearing this, and said, "Very well."

In accordance with the rules of my country, I treated him and Bardel well.

I told the Consul that the Turks had taken my country, and were my enemies; nor had I a ship to do my work, by the power of God, and I said that I wished that the mission and presents which I intended to send to the Queen, should be conveyed safely. I gave him a friendly letter to the Queen, and sent him away. The letter which he brought me (from the Queen), and the consultation which we had together, he abandoned, and went to the Turks, who do not love me, and before whom he insulted and lowered me. He stayed with them some time, and returned to me. I asked him, "Where is the answer to the friendly letter I entrusted you with; what have you come for?" He said to me, "I do not know." So I said to him, "You are not the servant of my friend the Queen, as you had represented yourself to be," and, by the power of my Creator, I imprisoned him. Ask him if he can deny this.

The charge against Bardel is this: that he told me that he wished to make me acquainted with the Emperor of the French. I said to him, "Very well;" and sent him. He came back, and said that the Emperor refused to see him. I answered, "Never mind; I have my God." After keeping silence (for some months), he asked me to release Makerer as a Frenchman. I replied that he had formerly told me that he wished to make me acquainted with the Emperor of the French, and on his return (from France) he had told me that he had been ignored. I said then, "For whose sake shall I release him?" and I refused to do so. He was angry at what I said; and in my Court he ungirt himself and covered his head with the cloth.* I was annoyed at this, and, by the power of my Lord, I imprisoned him. Ask him if he can deny this.

Charges against the rest of the Prisoners.

The other prisoners have abused me, I am well aware. I used to love and honour them. A friend ought to be a shield to his friend, and they ought to have shielded me. Why did they not defend me? On this account I disliked them.

Now, by the power of God, for the sake of the Queen, and the British people, and yourselves, I cannot continue my dislike towards them. I wish you to make between us a reconciliation from the heart. If I am in fault, do you tell me, and I will requite them; but if you find that I am wronged, I wish you to get them to requite me.

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* A mark of insult in Abyssinia, especially before a Sovereign.

14. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 19, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

With regard to the affair of Cameron and his party, I used to reckon them as my friends and honoured them, and it has been proved to you that they have wronged me. For the sake of our Lord, and, below him, for the sake of the great Queen, my friend, Victoria, I have forgiven them. The contents of your letter have made me glad, by the power of God; I wish to bow my head and kiss your hand and foot. I want you to come to me, in order that we may consult together.

The relations of Cameron and his imprisoned companions have written to me in sorrow about them. By the power of God, and for the sake of my friend the great Queen Victoria, I have been reconciled to them, and by the power of our Creator we will consult on all matters when we meet.

Dated Sunday, the 10th of Magabut.

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15. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 20, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

Unavoidable business has called me hence, and I wish you to remain where you are until I return, when I will send for you.

Dated the 12th of Magabut.

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16. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 21, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

I have been desirous and anxious to have an interview with you, but now I intend to be absent from this place for a day or two. When I return, by the power of God, I will send for you, as I am longing for your friendship. May our Creator cause us to meet in peace, and may He give you and me health.

Dated Wednesday, the 13th of Magabut.

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17. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 23, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

By the power of God, I have returned in safety to my home. I had gone to escort my horses, which were coming to me, and now may He cause me to meet with you, my friend, in safety.

I used to pray to our Creator that the people (prisoners) whom I disliked and imprisoned might reach you in health and safety. Now, firstly, I pray that God may give peace and prosperity to my friend the Queen; and secondly, that He may give you, who are the flower of my gladness, health and long life. I also crave from our Creator that He will cause you to concede me your love. With regard to myself, whether I dislike you or love you, oh English! you can discover from my conduct in the affair of Plowden and Yahames (Mr. Bell). According to the rules of my country and my ability, I used to love and honour them (the English). My love and honour towards them was for the purpose of obtaining the regard of the Queen and yourselves. That love of yours which I was longing for, I feel convinced I have obtained, and, by the power of God, it has given me joy. I send you, by Alaka Engeda, boats. Come yourself and the party of Kantiba Hailo (the European artizans).

Dated Friday, the 15th of Magabut.

NOTE.—After the receipt of this letter, Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, and myself repaired to Zegay. His Majesty gave us a most magnificent reception. He consulted with all his nobles and his best advisers about our leaving Abyssinia, and it was determined that we should all depart hence.

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18. *In Amharic.*—(*Received March* 28, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

By the power of God, let me know quickly of your safe arrival (at Korata).

Dated Wednesday, the 20th of Magabut.

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19. *In Amharic.*

(After compliments.)

Before this I sent to inquire after your safe arrival, and afterwards Lij Abitow and his party came and informed me of it. By the power of God, I was greatly delighted. I had ordered the party of Kantiba Hailo (the European artizans) to do certain work (to make saddles, shields, &c.); if it is completed, I wish you to hold yourselves in readiness to start (for Europe), by the power of God.

Dated Friday, the 22nd of Magabut.

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20. *In Amharic.*

(After compliments.)

The shirts which you have sent me by Owna Mahomed have reached me, and I return you my thanks for them. Why do you give yourself such trouble and such thought for me? You are my guest, and it is for me to inconvenience myself for you. If God assist you, I wish you to trouble yourself about what I require, but do not incommode yourself by parting with your property, oh my brother!

At Amba Chara, in the Province of Waggara, my toll-keepers seized some messengers who were coming this way with letters.* They imprisoned them and sent the packet to me. I found it directed in an European language, and as I thought it might be your own, I send it to you unopened. If you should find it to be yours, I have directed that your messengers should be released; if not, return the packet to me, and I shall order the messengers to be brought to me.

I have ordered some cows to be given to you, in order that you may have a merry feast. I did not know that your Easter fell before ours, but thought that they corresponded in date, otherwise I would have sent them before. Why did you not inform me, since my house is yours, and the house of your brothers and friend?

Dated Monday, the 25th of Magabut.

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21. *In Amharic*—(*Received April* 5, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

I have been long fasting, and have abstained from eating meat, and I am anxious to see the light of Easter. Pray that I may see it in health. By the power of God, I will also offer up to Him the same supplication for you.

Dated Wednesday, the 27th of Magabut.

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22. *In Amharic.*—(*Received April* 8, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

May God grant me a meeting with you, my friends, after the light of Easter. The token of friendship, namely, the tin box, which you sent to me I have received with much pleasure, and I return you my best thanks for it.

I have ordered Lij Abitow to take your mules through Dembea, and Kantiba Hailo and Aito Samuel to bring you to me.

Dated 30th of Magabut.

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23. *In Amharic.*—(*Received April* 9, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

I send you good tidings of my having passed Easter. How have my friends passed it? Let me know if you have spent it happily and prosperously, by the power of God.

Dated Monday, the 2nd of Miazia.

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24. *In Amharic.*—(*Received April* 10, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

When I heard of your good health and prosperity, by the power of God, I was greatly delighted. Very well, as you say, Lij Abitow shall take them by the lower

* These letters were those I have sent down to the coast, containing communications from all my party. They were sent down again in the beginning of April.

road, and your baggage will cross to any spot which you may choose. I have directed Agafaru Goolam and the party of Aito Kasa to convey it for you.

Dated the 3rd of Miazia.

Note.—After the receipt of this letter, Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, and myself repaired to Zegay, according to appointment, on the 13th April, when we were all arrested on the pretence that we did not take the released prisoners with us.

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25. *In Amharic.*—(*Received April* 17, 1866.)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

From God's slave and his created being, the son of David, the son of Solomon, the King of Kings, Theodorus. To my friend and counsellor, the servant of the Queen of England, Hormuzd Rassam, Esquire.

My desire is that you should send to Her Majesty the Queen and obtain for me a man who can make cannons and muskets, and one who can smelt iron, and an instructor of artillery. I want these people to come here with their instruments and everything necessary for their work, and then they shall teach us and return. By the power of God, forward this our request to England.

(Without date.)

Note.—This letter was received on the 17th April, when His Majesty wished to send Mr. Flad to England to bring him artisans.

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26. *In Amharic.*

(Only contains compliments. Without date.)

Note.—This letter was received on the 9th August, after our imprisonment in chains at Magdala.

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27. *In Amharic.*—(*Received September* 15, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

Leh's party left in a hurry, and I could not answer you by them. How have you and your brothers (Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux) spent the rainy season? By the power of God, be of good cheer; I am coming to you shortly, and we will meet.

Since we separated, a large gun has been cast for me; when it is finished I shall let you know.

By the power of God, I shall not forsake you, so be of good cheer. Ask Consul Cameron, Mr. Stern, and their party, how they have passed the rainy season.

(Without date.)

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28. *In Amharic.*—(*Received October* 3, 1866.)

(After compliments.)

I send you your things by your messenger, who came from Matemma.

(Without date.)

Note.—On hearing that I was sending to Matemma for stores, His Majesty undertook the transportation of them thence to Magdala.

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29. *In Amharic.*—(*Received October* 19, 1866.)

(Only compliments. Without date.)

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*Copy of Correspondence between Mr. Rassam and the Emperor Theodore.**

(1.)

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God!

From the King of Kings, Theodorus. May this reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam. How have you passed the time? I, by the power of God, am well. Ask Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, Mr. Cameron, and his party, and Mr. Stern and his party, from me, how they have passed their time.

Your servant, whom you wished me to send to Matemma, I have sent for you. I have ordered your things to be brought to Walmee by camels, and thence I have ordered my people to bring them hither by the power of God.

Mr. Flad has returned to Massowah, and sent me the inclosed letter.† Peruse it, and wait till I arrive, as I am coming to you by the power of God. I will consult with you as to the answer I shall send.

(Without date.)—Received December 28, 1866.

(2.)

(After compliments.)

Mr. Flad has sent (written) to me as follows:—

"I had formerly sent to you Mr. Rassam in the affairs of Cameron and his party, and we heard that you had received him with favour and with friendship. We had also consented to all the things you required, and had given them over to Mr. Flad, but after that we heard that your friendship towards him had changed, but we hope that the friendship existing between us and yourself will not be changed."

This is what was sent to me, and I am going to reply as follows:—

"Formerly England and Ethiopia were on terms of friendship, and I also, having knowledge of this, used to love you exceedingly. But (since then) having heard that they (the English) have calumniated‡ and hated me with the Turks, I said to myself, Can this be true? and I felt some misgiving in my heart. However, I trust there is no enmity between Ethiopia and the English, but that there is friendship. We do not esteem those who calumniate and hate the English, and so should you, for our sake, not esteem those who calumniate and hate the people of Ethiopia. Mr. Rassam and his party, whom you sent to me, I have placed in my house, in my capital at Magdala, and I will treat them well, until I obtain a token of your friendship."

I shall write the above to Mr. Flad, and I wish you also, for the sake of obtaining for me their (the Queen's) friendship and love, to write at the same time to the proper authorities, and send the letter to me, by the power of God. It is necessary that you should send a man immediately to us, in order that he may bring us Mr. Flad quickly.

(Without date.)—Received January 7, 1867.

(3.)

(After compliments.)

Mr. Flad has written to me again, and the letter which he has inclosed,§ I send it to you herewith.

Now in order to prove the good relationship between me and yourself, let it be shown by your writing and getting the skilful artisans, and Mr. Flad to come viâ Matemma. This will be the sign of our friendship. When you hate my enemies and love my friends, and I shall prove wanting in my friendship towards you, leave me to God (as my Judge). Even Solomon, the son of David, the great King, God's created being and slave, when he wished to build the Temple in Jerusalem, was perplexed (about finding skilful artisans). Falling at the feet of King Hiram of Tyre, he begged him for carpenters and skilful artisans, who assisted in building the Temple. And now,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† Copy of Her Majesty's letter of October 4, 1866, No. 661.

‡ This may have a reference to his grievance against Captain Cameron for going to Kassala, when he went down to the coast with the letter to the Queen.—*Vide* His Majesty's letter of 6th Majabut (14th March, 1866), and charges attached thereto.

§ From Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.

when I used to fall girded at the feet of the great Queen, her nobles, peoples, and hosts, I found Mr. Stern and his party abused me and lowered me. Also when I sent a friendly letter to the great Queen of the English, the Defender of the Faith, the succour of the needy, the friend of God, the favourite of God, Victoria, Mr. Cameron refused me an answer. Also you, Mr. Rassam, said that you were coming from the Queen, and came to me. Consenting to this, I received you in a friendly manner, and treated you to the best of my ability. When I read the letter* which you brought me, which asked me to release and pardon† all the Europeans, whom I had hated and imprisoned, I consented, and sent and had them released at once, by the power of our Creator, before I passed the night. Before they came to me I gave them over to you, in order that the Queen and her Government might be pleased. But you, before you asked them as to the crime which they had committed, and which caused their imprisonment,‡ and without finding whether I was wrong, in order that I might compensate them, or if they were guilty, in order that I might obtain a favour§ from the Queen before you brought them to me, you sent them away.‖

I had also heard that the English and the Turks had entered into an alliance. I kept my vexation to myself and said nothing.¶

Now Mr. Flad has sent me a most friendly and pleasing letter.** As Solomon fell at the feet of Hiram, so I, beneath God, fall at the feet of the Queen and her Government and her friends. I wish you to get them (the skilful artizans) viâ Matemma, in order that they may teach me wisdom, and show me clever arts. When this is done I shall make you glad, and send you away by the power of God.

Written in the year of St. Luke, on Saturday the 28th day of the month Tahsas (answering to January 5, 1867).

Received January 8, 1867.

Copies of Letters from Mr. Rassam to the Emperor of Abyssinia.††

(1.)

To His Most Gracious Excellent Majesty Theodorus, Emperor of Ethiopia.

Most Gracious Sovereign. *Magdala, November* 29, 1866.

I have the honour to inform your Majesty that I am necessitated to write to Matemma for stores, as those provisions you kindly sent me some time ago are nearly finished.

I am sending for this purpose Sarankail, with a few mules, and I beg that your Majesty will give him permission to go, and will extend to him your protection thither and back.

I have heard with regret that Daftara Dasta whom I had sent to Massowah a few months back, for the purpose of bringing for your Majesty some books for showing the mode of casting guns and shot, and for teaching artillery practice, and other things has been seized and imprisoned by the rebels while passing through Wajara.

As I am anxious to know the facts of the case, I am sending one of my servants to the house of Dasta at Gondar, to inquire about him, and the things he brought with him; and I trust that your Majesty will grant him leave to proceed on his duty.

I hope your Majesty will pardon me for the liberty I am taking in sending Hailo to convey to you this letter, and in troubling you with the above matters, as I have no one in his country except your Majesty, on whom I can rely for assistance.

My companions, Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux, Captain Cameron and his party, and Mr. Stern and his party, beg to send their respectful compliments to your Majesty.

* Her Majesty's letter, No. 661.

† This is another interpolation.

‡ These questions were asked, as will be seen from my correspondence with His Majesty, dated 16th March, 1866.

§ The favours which he is now asking from Government.

‖ The King gave them permission to go away, as will be seen from His Majesty's letter dated 3rd Mazia; and moreover he appointed an officer to escort them named Lij Abitow. I never did anything without consulting his Baldaraba (Agent), whom His Majesty told me "he esteemed and trusted." The prisoners were forgiven on the 29th January, and again on the 10th Majabut (17th March, 1866), and for the third time, in presence of all, on the 17th April, 1866, when he said, "For Christ's sake let us forgive each other;" and asked all the prisoners to be grateful to Mr. Rassam for their release.

¶ This has reference to the charges which he trumped up on the 25th June, as mentioned in my note of that date.

** Copy of Her Majesty's letter of October 4, 1866, No. 661.

†† Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Hoping that this letter will find you in perfect health and prosperity, I remain &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

(2.)

Most Gracious Sovereign, *Magdala, January* 7, 1867.

I have had the honour of receiving your Majesty's two letters; the first by my servant Hailo, and the second by Ras Ingada, together with a copy of my Queen's letter to you, which was forwarded to your Majesty from Massowah by Mr. Flad.

Agreeably to your Majesty's desire, I have written to my Government about what you have communicated, and I hope that your request will be complied with. I send Mahomed Saeed, one of my servants, with the letter, which I have given to him open in order that your Majesty might have it read if you desire it. Allow me to return you my best thanks for your Majesty's kindness for having sent to Matemma for the stores I required, and I trust that our Heavenly Father will reward you for your acts of friendship. Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, Captain Cameron and his party, Mr. Stern and his party, desire to present your Majesty with their respectful compliments.

I remain, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

(3.)

Most Gracious Sovereign, *Magdala, January* 8, 1867.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Majesty's letter of the 28th Tahsas, which reached me this morning.

I return you my best thanks for the letter you have kindly inclosed me from Massowah. It is from Colonel Merewether, the Resident at Aden, who it appears has been entrusted with the management of what my Queen wrote to you about.

He writes to say that he is anxiously awaiting your Majesty's reply to Mr. Flad's communication.

I have already written regarding Mr. Flad and the articles which my Queen had ordered for your Majesty as a token of her friendship, and that they are to be sent at once to Matemma.

I must take this opportunity of reiterating to your Majesty my assurances that up to this time I have always deemed it my sacred duty, though in chains, to do everything towards cementing the friendship between Ethiopia and England.

It is no little consolation to me to find, from my Queen's letter to your Majesty, how anxious she is to continue her friendship with you.

I pray our Heavenly Father to grant that the friendship which I have been anxious to cultivate between my Queen and your Majesty will be completed to the satisfaction of all.

Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, Captain Cameron and his party, Mr. Stern and his party, beg to send their respectful compliments to your Majesty.

I remain, &c.

(Signed) H. RASSAM.

No. 707.

*Lord Stanley to Lord Lyons.**

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March* 15, 1867.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 4th instant,† I have to instruct your Excellency to convey to the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople, the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for the kind manner in which he responded to your request to lend his assistance with the view of inducing the King of Abyssinia to set at liberty the British captives detained in that country.

I am, &c.

(Signed) STANLEY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 702.

No. 708.

*Major-General Coghlan to Lord Stanley.**

My Lord, *United Service Club, March* 20, 1867.

HAVING acquired considerable knowledge of Abyssinian affairs during my long tenure of office as Political Resident and Commandant at Aden, and having had the honour of being repeatedly consulted by Her Majesty's Government respecting our unfortunate captives in that country, whose release seems as far off as ever, I judged that I might, without presumption, suggest a plan of proceedings which may prove of some service should the persistent obstinacy of King Theodorus eventually lead to hostilities against him.

Encouraged by your Lordship to submit the said draft to your consideration, I left it in the hands of Mr. Murray yesterday.

At the same time, I feel bound to state that in the preparation of this scheme of operations I have availed myself largely of the assistance of the Rev. Mr. Badger. The valuable services rendered by that gentleman in connection with the Persian expeditionary force, the frequent mention made of those services in the official despatches of the late Sir James Outram, and their recognition by the Governments of India and Bombay, as also by Sir Edward Lugard, G.C.B., the present Under-Secretary at War, would be a sufficient warrant for my recurring to his aid on a question of this nature; but in addition to such recommendations I beg to mention that on several occasions of political importance I have personally learned to set a high value on his abilities in all matters relating to the East.

I am unable to form even an approximate estimate of the probable expense of the suggested expedition, but am of opinion that it would fall considerably short of that entailed by the last Persian campaign, the cost of which must be known at the India Office.

I am not without some hope, however, as already stated in the draft submitted, that such a demonstration as would be made by the preliminary arrangements proposed, if diplomatically conducted with a view to that result, might induce King Theodorus to come to terms, and thereby render actual hostilities unnecessary.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. M. COGHLAN.

Inclosure in No. 708.

*Scheme for an Abyssinian Expeditionary Force, by Major-General Coghlan.**

IN the event of hostilities against Theodorus, King of Abyssinia, in order to avenge his gross outrages upon British subjects, and his repeated insults to the Government in the persons of Her Majesty's Representatives in that country, it is of the first importance to estimate beforehand the gravity of the enterprise, and to consider the measures best adapted to secure prompt and complete success.

When once such a coercive policy has been decided upon, Her Majesty's Government must be prepared for one of the following contingencies, On hearing of the projected expedition, King Theodorus may—as he is known to have declared—sacrifice every British subject within his grasp; or, on the other hand, he may liberate the captives, offer every satisfaction in his power, and sue for pardon.

A year ago the royal army was estimated at 50,000 fighting men. It is now conjectured not to amount to a fourth of that number, said to be restricted to the Province of Begemder, while several of the other provinces, notably those of Woggera, Wolkait, and Tigré on the north and north-east, Gojam and Shoa on the south, and Lasta on the east, are in open rebellion against him. Further, it is imagined that some of the insurgent Chiefs are capable of coping with Theodorus single-handed, but that one and all shrink from the attempt owing to a superstitious belief in his invulnerability.

Whether such hesitation is to be attributed to that motive or not, it is clear that no great reliance can be placed on those statements which represent the power of Theodorus as tottering to its fall. Similar prognostications have been made for years past, and, thus far, have not been verified by the result.

In order, therefore, not to run the risk of under-estimating the possible resistance of

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Theodorus, the more prudent course would be to organize a force capable of meeting any army which he may be able to bring into the field.

Consul Plowden, who may be regarded as the best authority on all matters connected with the military resources of the different chieftains, was of opinion that 5,000 disciplined troops would beat their combined forces, and that 10,000 would suffice for a permanent occupation of the country.

But that statement was made in 1854, one year prior to a later despatch which reported the brilliant achievements of Kasai, the future Theodorus, who had already "united the whole of Northern Abyssinia under his sway," and inaugurated a variety of measures calculated to consolidate his authority, and greatly to increase his military power.

It would be well-advised, therefore, to assume, in estimating the probable means of resistance on the part of Theodorus to a foreign invasion, that the defection of some of the prominent feudal Chiefs has been counterbalanced by the strenuous efforts which he has made for years past to equip his soldiers with superior weapons, to have them better drilled and disciplined, and to add to the number and efficiency of his artillery.

Taking this view of the case, the British expedition should not consist of less than 10,000 men of all arms.

A smaller force would probably suffice if full advantage were taken of the actual unsettled state of parties in the country, to enlist one or more of the insurgent Chiefs on our side; but whatever use may be made of native co-operation, it would be highly undesirable that the commander of the British army should not be in a position to dispense with it, or to avail himself thereof on his own terms, or, in case of need, to punish any treachery on the part of such auxiliaries.

Besides, it would seriously detract from the moral effect which may be assumed to form one of the primary objects of the expedition, to afford the Abyssinians any ground for believing that Great Britain could not obtain the desired satisfaction without their concurrence.

Another consideration which should not be overlooked is that most of these insurgent Chiefs have separate interests, and the greatest discretion will be required to avoid exciting a jealousy between them which might induce the discontented to side with Theodorus rather than with rivals whose co-operation had been preferred to theirs by the invaders.

The same reflection should be borne in mind under another aspect. It can scarcely be doubted that the gloomy anticipations of Consul Plowden twelve years ago would be intensified in their fulfilment at the present time in the event of the overthrow of Theodorus by the British arms. Writing of the King at that period, he remarks: "Should he now or at any time fail in his designs, or fall in battle, the misrule and anarchy that must ensue will baffle all human calculation, and render peaceful interference impossible. Abyssinia must then be left to her destinies, until some European Power shall think it worth while to conquer and instruct the most fertile of the African provinces."

Taking for granted that the Government entertains no such designs as those indicated in the latter clause of the above quotation, and that we should retire from Abyssinia as soon as our legitimate objects were secured, it would be most undesirable in every way to aggravate the intestine strife which would be certain to follow upon the departure of the British force, by fomenting fresh rivalries, or by specially favouring one or more Chiefs who might, owing to their temporary alliance with us, secure a predominance in the country to the prejudice of more rightful competitors. Of course, this subject would assume a different phase should it be intended to establish order prior to our departure. But that supposition gives rise to a variety of considerations which need not be discussed here. One precautionary remark, however, seems called for—namely, that the abandonment of Abyssinia to anarchy will, in all probability, precipitate an attack by the Egyptians from the north, and from Massowah, at which latter place there is a much larger garrison than there has been for many years past.

It is by no means intended by the foregoing remarks that native co-operation is to be dispensed with altogether. It will be advisable on the contrary, to take every advantage of the friendly overtures of the principal Chiefs occupying the line of march, and, if need be, to secure the neutrality of others during the operations of the British army, whenever those objects can be secured without compromise. They may be made useful as convoys in collecting supplies, keeping the roads open, obtaining intelligence, and in many other subordinate ways most serviceable to an invading army in a foreign country. The selection of such auxiliaries, and their employment, must be left to the discretion of the officer in command of the expedition.

The next subject of importance is the route to be adopted, in order to reach the high tableland of Abyssinia. Of these there are several:—

First, that by Tajourra (opposite to Aden) to Shoa, which has been recommended by

Dr. Krapf. But the road is rough, desolate, and barren, and in several parts almost destitute of water. The French traveller, M. Rochet, who traversed it four times, describes it thus:—"Je crois pouvoir dire . . . . il y a peu de voyages plus fatigants pour l'esprit et pour le corps, plus périlleux à la fois et plus monotone, que de parcourir les déserts des Adels." Moreover, it is by no means the nearest route to Begemder, the head-quarters of Theodorus, and although the Shoa people would undoubtedly be ready to co-operate with the British, and might furnish a respectable contingent, nevertheless as a wide extent of country interposes betwixt them and Begemder, inhabited by warlike Gallas, who would be as jealous of Shoa ascendancy as they may be disaffected towards Theodorus, by contracting any alliance with the Shoans we may run the risk of evoking the antagonism of their Galla rivals, and thereby dispose the latter to gravitate towards the Royal party.

The nearest route is unquestionably by Amphila (Hanfila), situated on the western shore of the Red Sea, opposite to Hodeida; but Moresby describes it as "one of the most wretched places on the coast. The village, which hardly deserves the name, consists of six miserable huts close to the sea, on the verge of a sandy plain, and does not appear capable of furnishing any supplies." Consul Plowden calls it "a bad roadstead and a worse landscape; very unfavourable to the shipment of goods, with little water, and that of a bad quality." Another drawback, which he mentions, is the fierce tribe of the Taltals, who occupy the intermediate region between the coast and the highlands in the interior, and of whom we know scarcely anything beyond their treachery and barbarity. The sole advantage of vicinity, therefore, is quite neutralized by the difficulties attending that route.

Of the remaining, two only called for notice, as any others that might be suggested are comparatively unknown, and therefore inexpedient on an occasion like that under consideration, when our object should be less to explore new lines of access, than to take advantage of those which long experience has proved to be the most eligible.

The two routes above referred to are—that by Zulla, in Annesley Bay, to Halai, and that towards the same point from Massowah. The former is undoubtedly the nearer road, and was in ancient times the principal approach to Tigré, the first Abyssinian province on the high tableland. It is but very little frequented at present; hence it is not likely to furnish supplies in any considerable quantity. Another drawback is the scarcity of water in the level country around Zulla. Still, the route is so much nearer to Tigré that it would be desirable to obtain, if possible, more detailed and reliable information respecting its eligibility for an invading army.

Unless that route, however, is found to possess some peculiar advantages, the other, viâ Massowah will probably be found the most eligible. It is the ordinary cafilah road to and from the interior, and Consul Plowden calls it "the most practicable" and "the only one desirable." The country for fifty or sixty miles inland is inhabited by the Shihos, who are accustomed to furnish guides to all travellers, and are nominally under the jurisdiction of the Governor of Massowah. The lofty mountains and narrow defiles within the above-named district are in their undisputed possession, and as the passage is regularly traversed by heavily-laden mules, it cannot present any serious obstacles to the impedimenta of an army. The Shihos, though a powerful tribe, have no fire-arms; but instead of opposing, there is every reason to believe that, for adequate remuneration, they would be most ready to facilitate the march of our troops through their territory.

Massowah has a good harbour, and being the principal emporium of trade in that quarter offers facilities for obtaining supplies which would be looked for in vain at any other point on the coast. The existence, moreover, of a regular government on the island and adjoining mainland is another important consideration, presenting as it does perfect security for disembarkation, for the establishment of a depôt, and for co-operating with the movements of the expedition generally.

As Massowah and the neigbourhood form a part of the Turkish dominions, subject to the immediate jurisdiction of the Viceroy of Egypt, it would be requisite to procure the Imperial sanction for the passage of our army through the neutral territory, and for the use proposed to be made of the aforesaid district. It would be politically unadvisable either to ask for or to accept any further concession beyond a general order to the local authorities to afford such succour as may be consistent with a Sovereign's rights and the maintenance of Ottoman neutrality.

The suggested Abyssinian expeditionary force of 10,000 men should be composed as follows:—

Two regiments of Irregular Cavalry, Scind or Sikh.

Three batteries of Light Field Artillery, Armstrongs, all of one calibre for convenience

in respect of ammunition; and, if the roads are found practicable, add four eight-inch mortars in park, and a supply of rockets.

Two companies of Sappers.

Three regiments of European Infantry.

Four regiments of Native Infantry, one or two of which to be Sikh.

The constitution of the Staff, and the brigading of the force, are matters of detail which need not be discussed here.

Of Departmental Stores there would be the following;—

Ordnance Park.

Engineer Stores.

Commissariat Stores.

Medical Stores.

Quartermaster-General's Stores.

As an unusually large number of baggage animals will be required, owing to the comparatively small size of the Abyssinian mules, and the difficulty of some of the passes, it would be desirable that a Land Transport Corps should be organized for that special service.

A competent officer on the Head-Quarter Staff might be placed in charge of an Intelligence Department, to include a line of electric telegraph to be erected as the force advances into the interior, in order to keep up rapid communication with the coast.

The officer in charge of the Commissariat will make arrangements for provisioning the troops on the estimates prepared by the several departments. He will decide, in concert with the Political Officer, what supplies may be procurable on the spot and in the enemy's territory.

A good supply of rice from India and compressed vegetables from France should be provided. Bags and packages generally should not exceed fifty pounds in weight; two of which to be carried by a mule. In the event of camels being available, double that quantity would form a load. The same department should be provided with a liberal supply of "mussacks" of various sizes.

The officer in charge of the Land Transport Corps would make similar arrangements with the different departments for the number of animals severally required by them. It would further be his duty to provide muleteers and forage, pack-saddles and other harness for the baggage mules and camels, as well as suitable equipage for sick carriage. It is conceived that the roads are impracticable for ambulances, and dooly-bearers from India would scarcely be available in sufficient numbers. Our chief reliance in this respect must be on the camels and mules of the country. A "kachava," similar to that used in Affghanistan, but much lighter, would be the equipage best adapted to the purpose, if camels are procurable, and a pad with stirrups for mules. This subject should receive early consideration by the Medical Superintendent in communication with the Quartermaster-General's department.

Austrian Maria Theresa dollars of A.D 1708 are at present the only coin current in Abyssinia, and bricks of salt, brought from the district of Taltals, the only small change. Rupees, though refused at first, were eventually received both in Affghanistan and Persia; both those countries already possessed a silver currency of their own, and were therefore better acquainted with the value of our coin. As a similar result may not follow in Abyssinia, the attention of the Paymaster, in conjunction with the Political Officer, should be specially directed to this important subject.

Commanding officers, both of cavalry and infantry, should take care to provide a good supply of boots for their men, and shoes for the horses, and should be reminded that the climate of the highlands, though temperate, is cold enough to necessitate woollen clothing.

The most rigid economy will be requisite in respect of camp equipage, owing to the inferiority of the mules and camels of the country and the ruggedness of the mountain passes. With the exception of a few tents for durbar and other public purposes, none should exceed the Indian-pattern soldier's tent. Officers' must double up.

As the roads into the interior are generally difficult, and would occasionally require to be made for the passage of light artillery and heavy baggage, an ample supply of the requisite tools should accompany the expedition.

As the place of debarkation is presumed to be on friendly territory, the camp equipage and much of the heavy stores might be sent on in advance, and located at an eligible point for a camp, at some distance from the coast, where water is abundant. On the arrival of the troops, they could be marched thither at once, and there prepared to advance into the interior.

It is also supposed that prior to such advance the Political Officer will have entered

into amicable relations with some of the insurgent Chiefs on the line of march, to secure their neutrality or co-operation. A judicious proclamation might also be issued, setting forth the cause and object of the expedition; that we should discriminate between friends and foes; that all supplies of provisions, labour, and carriage would be liberally paid for; and that no interference with the different religions of the people was intended.

As regards the quarter from which the European troops should be drawn, it might be urged that as Malta was about the same distance from Massowah as Bombay, it would be preferable to send them from the former garrison; but there are solid reasons for preferring the dispatch of an expedition of this sort from India. In the latter case, the Artillery would have to embark and disembark once only—a matter of great importance with respect to that arm of the Service. It is true that European Infantry might be moved without much difficulty through Egypt, and re-embarked at Suez; still regiments from India are to be preferred, because they would carry with them a portion of their native followers—a class on whom the efficiency of a force on an Eastern campaign very materially depends. Moreover, troops with officers and staff of Indian experience would be more at home in Abyssinia than any that could be dispatched from Europe; they would have less to learn.

The foregoing remark regarding followers applies particularly to hospital establishments, which, it is believed, would in that respect be started more complete from India than from the European side, and the probable course of operations renders it important that the medical arrangements should be so efficient as to provide separate establishments for such depôts as may be expected to be left by the force as it moves into the interior, say, in the neighbourhood of Massowah, at Halai, Adowa, or other places of communication between the coast and the head-quarters of the advanced army.

Finally, for the avoidance of those differences and complications which a divided authority is calculated to engender, it is desirable that the military command and the diplomatic functions should be united in one person.

Preliminary Arrangements.

It will be seen, that several important preliminary inquiries are imperatively called for in order to the efficient execution of the foregoing scheme of operations. To institute those inquiries, and to carry out the precursory arrangements, it is suggested that an experienced Political Officer, with an Assistant, should proceed to Massowah, accompanied by the following staff:—

1. An officer of the Quartermaster-General's Department.
2. An officer of Engineers.
3. An officer of Artillery.
4. An officer of the Paymaster's Department.
5. An officer of the Commissariat Department, with his gomastas.
6. An officer of Land Transport.
7. A Medical Officer.

The duties of the Political Agent would be to enter into communication with the Egyptian authorities at Massowah; to sound the temper of the insurgent Chiefs of Tigré; to acquire all possible information respecting the interior; the state of parties, the position and strength of the enemy; to secure, if practicable, a body of native interpreters, and generally to act in concert with the subordinate staff in their respective investigations.

The Officer of the Quartermaster-General's Department would be charged with selecting the best points for disembarkation, acquiring all available information of the different routes into the interior, the most eligible spots for halts on the line of march, and, in conjunction with the Medical Officer, with choosing the site for the first camp in the vicinity of Massowah.

It would be the duty of the two officers representing the Engineers and Artillery to inspect the roads and passes within the limits of the neutral and friendly territory, in order to suggest what measures would be requisite to ensure their perfect practicability.

The officer of the Paymaster's Department would be directed to confer with the merchants and other traders at Massowah regarding the money current in the interior, the best means of obtaining supplies of the requisite kind or kinds, and how far local resources will be available for the sundry requirements of the expedition.

The Commissariat officer will be called upon to institute inquiries into the different provisions procurable in the country, to what extent they are likely to be forthcoming,

and what supplies it would be necessary to take from India. In concert with the officer of the Quartermaster-General's Department, he would also select appropriate depôts for stores in the vicinity of the camp near Massowah.

To the officer of the Land Transport Corps would be confided the task of inquiring what baggage animals are available in and about Massowah; from what adjoining districts others may be procured, and to what extent; what trappings would be required to equip them for the service of the expedition; how forage would have to be provided; and how far local resources could be relied on for an adequate supply of native muleteers and cameleers.

The foregoing officers severally to draw up a full report for the Political Officer in charge, who will submit the same, together with the result of his own inquiries and proceedings, for the consideration of Government.

In order to take advantage of the most favourable season for operations in Abyssinia, the force should advance inland from Massowah about the beginning of October. Between this and then there would not be more than adequate time to institute the foregoing preliminary investigations, and to thoroughly equip the expedition prior to its departure from Bombay.

As the arrangements thus indicated could not be satisfactorily carried out without the cognizance and concurrence of the local authorities, it would be necessary to obtain the prior sanction of the Viceroy or of the Porte, together with the instructions to the Governor of Massowah to render to the officer charged with superintending them every proper support and assistance.

In addition to materially promoting the efficiency and success of the expedition, it is just possible, as was remarked at the outset, that these preliminary arrangements, on coming to the knowledge of King Theodorus, might induce him, through fear of the impending consequences, to liberate the captives, unconditionally, and to sue for an amnesty. In such a case, it would be for Her Majesty's Government to decide whether the further progress of the expedition might not be countermanded.

(Signed) W. M. COGHLAN, *Major-General.*

United Service Club, March 19, 1867.

No. 709.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received March 21.)*

My Lord, *Red Sea, March* 4, 1867.

I AM sending you by this mail, officially, further intelligence from Abyssinia, but will take the liberty of adding the following demi-officially.

The King will not release Rassam and the others unless forced to do so.

This is the opinion of all the captives themselves, and of everyone who knows Theodorus. He might have done it at first on learning the results of Flad's journey, but he never will now. He hopes to get more people into his power, so as to have greater hold on the English Government in his extremity, and then, as he believes, to get anything he chooses to ask for. If he had the opportunity he would seize and imprison a first-class Embassy without the least compunction.

The truth is, he is desperate; his enemies are closing round him; his power is daily getting less and less; and his health is destroyed by long-existing syphilitic disease.

He cannot last much longer, either politically or physically, and if the season had only allowed of it, this would of all others have been the time for a prompt and vigorous display of force.

Everything is in our favour. The country is wearied of this capricious tyrant, for such he has become. Disgusted with him as the people were before, they are ten times more so since his desecration of the churches at Gondar, and that act has gone far to take from him the superstitious awe he has hitherto commanded.

Once proclaimed that we entered this country solely for the purpose of punishing this tyrant, removing him from his throne, and releasing the British subjects held captive by him, and, that done, that we should leave the country to be ruled after its own devices, we should have almost every man ready heart and soul to assist us. All they want is be quit of him, and could they count surely on his destruction or removal, they would close in on him to-morrow.

The season being so far advanced, the only thing that can be done is to watch events

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

during the summer (or winter they call it in Abyssinia), and to be ready to use the rebel power if reason or opportunity should see the advisability of doing so. It is for that reason I ask to be able authoritatively to announce, should opportunity offer, to the rebels and to the country generally, that Her Majesty's Government assuredly intend to punish Theodorus directly the season opens.

The release of the captives might be effected without the need of a blow being struck after all by us. At any rate it would help towards the security of the captives, rewards being promised to those who protect them, and severest punishment to all involved should a hair of their heads be injured. M. Messajah, the Missionary Archbishop of the Gallas, a very intelligent old man, who has lived for twenty-five years in the Galla and Abyssinian countries, and knows Theodorus well, assures me he felt convinced Theodorus would carefully preserve the captives to the very last, as his last resource. I put it,—Might not Theodorus, driven to a stand in Magdala, in a fit of desperate intoxication, cause to be murdered, or even murder with his own hand, the whole of the captives. He replied, No; the order, in the first instance, would not be attended to; in the second, he would be restrained, and even killed sooner. There are many friends in Magdala even, he added.

The above is the only condition under which it would be advisable that your intentions should be publicly made known. It would of course be better if the declaration of war and landing of the troops could be synchronous. But it appears to me an impossibility now-a-days to keep the preparation of the force, which would be going on in Bombay, a secret. The press would be sure to get hold of it, and though Theodorus does not see Bombay dailies, there are Bombay merchants at Massowah who would not fail to hear from their friends what was going on, and get instructions to prepare to profit by the coming campaign. There is also a Roman Catholic Missionary Establishment which receives papers from Europe, Turkey, and Egypt, one at least of whose members I know corresponds with the arch intriguer Bardel, and who would be sure to send him tidings of what was intended. The one blow must therefore, I think, anticipate the other.

With regard to the force to be employed, I consider 6,000 men ample to enter Abyssinia with, composed as recommended. Too many Europeans would only trammel, owing to the larger commissariat required, and native troops will be excellent against such enemies as we should encounter. The horse artillery and cavalry will be the most useful and important part of the force. The latter should only be native.

As a precautionary measure, another brigade of native infantry might be prepared, and sent to the coast as a reserve, and to help, if required, in keeping open communication, but not more than the 6,000 mentioned should be ordered for the force to enter the highlands at first.

If I might be allowed to make the suggestion, it would be an important point if it could be arranged with Lord Cranbourne that the formation and management of the expedition should be left entirely to the Bombay Government, as being nearest to the scene of action. It could not be in better hands than Sir Robert Napier's, with Mr. Fitzgerald at the head of the Government. The only aid required from the Supreme Government would be in providing troops to garrison the stations temporarily denuded of Bombay troops. Sir Bartle Frere, who will shortly be in England, will, I have little doubt, say the same.

That the war will be a popular measure with the nation I have not the least doubt; and in connection with foreign, European, opinion, I cannot disguise from your Lordship that it has been a matter of astonishment that Her Majesty's Government have borne with Theodorus so long. Our Arab neighbours think the same; and I trust I may be excused when I add that, though it will entail expensive outlay, the money will be well spent in restoring easily, and at comparatively small cost, the prestige of our name, which is reckoned lower than it should be.

In respect to the artizans, they had better be sent home at once. There is no chance now of their having to go into the interior; and, having nothing to do, they would soon lose health, beside being an unnecessary expense. I would have brought them back with me this time, but the messengers from the King might arrive at Massowah any day, and it would be as well not to show even the least change until those messengers had received their answer, or it was clear they could not reach Massowah.

I regret to say the leader of the party, Mr. Talbot, is [? only] a little better. The illness has affected his head very much, and it is feared the affection may become chronic unless he is quickly removed to a cold climate. He will be sent home at once. The attempt to utilise them has unfortunately failed. Had it succeeded, it would have been a cheap way of arranging the business. As it is, a good deal of the original expenditure

on them will be returned by the sale of the machinery and most of the other presents which were to have accompanied them to the King.

I considered Mr. Flad bound in honour, as well as for the safety of his family, to return to Gaffat directly means showed; but I have doubts myself whether he will be able to get beyond Matemma. The road is said to be open now, but it is very questionable how long it will remain so.

Apologising for troubling your Lordship at this length, I remain, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 710.

Mr. Murray to Sir W. Coghlan.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 22, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th instant,* and to express to you his Lordship's best thanks for the paper which you have communicated to him respecting a military expedition to Abyssinia, and the contents of which will be most valuable to Her Majesty's Government, in considering the question, which, however, Lord Stanley earnestly hopes, may not arise, of employing force to release the captives.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 711.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received March 27.)†

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 15, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from Colonel Merewether dated Massowah, 28th of February, which has just reached me under flying seal, and which contains intelligence from Mr. Rassam, dated the 29th of January.

At that date the prisoners were all in good health, but with apparently little prospect of being sent out of the country.

The Emperor had desired Mr. Flad to come to him viâ Matemma, and Colonel Merewether was making all the necessary arrangements for his joining without further delay.

Mr. Flad takes with him Colonel Merewether's letter to the Emperor,‡ a copy of which was lately forwarded to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 712.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.†

My Lord, *Massowah, February* 28, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I left Aden on the 23rd instant, and arrived here on the 26th.

2. I found Mr. Flad had received letters from his wife and from Mr. Staiger, one of the German missionaries at Gaffat, despatched on the 15th of February. The former writes as follows, commencing on the 8th :—

" You can't imagine in what great anxiety I am, that there is such a long delay till I can send you a messenger. I should have sent to you long ago, but I am not allowed so to do, until the King has made up his mind to send you an answer. How must you feel all this time to be without any news from us, and how I feel being day and night in suspense about the result of the King's negotiations with Mr. Rassam, and about our future, which will be according to the results, perhaps very bad. I am unable to describe to you. Literally, I can say that tears are my food day and night. You will receive letters from

* No. 708. † Laid before Parliament, 1867. ‡ Inclosure in No. 705.

Captain Cameron and Mr. Stern. Both fear that Mr. Rassam will admit the King again to humbug him. Mr. Rassam sends you his compliments, and says that he is very sorry that he did not receive a letter from you; he fears to write to you by the King's messengers, but he will send you a letter by another road. If it would not be too great a risk, I should try to run away, but with three little children this is quite impossible. All your messengers arrived safe. The first two reached Gaffat in six weeks (13th December), the second two in eight weeks (25th December), and the third two, who left Massowah on the 11th December, and by whom you inform the King of the arrival of the machinery, reached us on the 5th January. These latter two had been for five days imprisoned on their road by rebels; fortunately they could save the letters.

"On the 3rd instant, the King sent a second time his Ras Gabie with new and many questions to Mr. Rassam. From this I see that his sending to you will be postponed for another week. The Europeans at Gaffat assured me yesterday that the King is very sorry for keeping you waiting so long without an answer. I told them that I won't believe them, much less the King, as I fear that the very thoughts of his heart are false. The last rainy season the King made me sew shirts for him, for which he gave me 50 dollars. After he had plundered Gondar he gave me another 50. I would not have accepted these latter, which literally is unjust mammon, if I could not daily have many opportunities of giving it away amongst the poor Gondar people, who wander about here without a home or food, or even clothing—nothing but misery. Mr. Rassam gave me an order for 160 dollars, money taken from us by the King last year at Korata. I have to buy yearly everything, and as provisions and clothing are very dear, it cost me a great deal of money. I have left only a few dollars, but I can get money at Gaffat.

"The 14th. At last the moment has come that I can send you a private messenger. I trust this man will reach you before the King's messengers. One of the King's messengers is Mahomed Sayed, a servant of Mr. Rassam's and a confidant of Samuel's. Yesterday the King said he was going to send, that in case the English Government did not pay your expenses to Matemma, you are to sell the articles you brought for him with his 2,000 dollars and pay your expenses." [A report had got about at Gaffat that Mr. Flad was remaining here because he had no money to pay his expenses up-country. This was untrue; he remained here by my orders.] "But it will be better if you do without his money, else he will call you thief afterwards; better rather borrow the money you want and bring him his articles." [I have supplied Mr. Flad with camels and all he needs to reach Matemma, that the King may not use this as a cause of offence.] "About his negotiations with Mr. Rassam he is very silent. Mr. Staiger will inform you of everything he knows. The King is full of distrust, or rather, I should say, pretends distrust. He says he received last rainy season a letter from an European at Massowah, who informed him that the intentions of the English towards him were bad." [I find that a spy of the King's was here at the end of April and beginning of May last year; he visited the Catholic (French) Mission, and saw there an intriguing priest named Delamonté, who had a copy of Earl Russell's despatch to Colonel Stanton.* This Delamonté corresponds, I know, with Bardel, and most probably communicated the essence of that despatch, which was used by Bardel to promote his views.] "And he imprisoned Mr. Rassam because an European would not tell him a lie. He would not trust Englishmen" [a distinction appears to be drawn between an European and an Englishman], "because they would only coax and flatter him until they have their people out of his hands, then they would take them on their steamer and laugh at him. He also said he had not seen Her Majesty's letter, only a copy of it. From this you will see what kind of confidence he has in you, and that all the things you announced to him in your letters were really at Massowah, he would not believe till he sees them. He said it was like the story of a certain woman who informed her guests that she gave them in two covered vessels the 'talàk and the tamash' (the two favourite pieces of raw beef in Abyssinia), but uncovering the vessels, the guests found themselves deceived, the one contained the liver, the other the lungs" [only poor people eat the liver in Abyssinia, and the lungs are only given to cats and dogs]. I mention this to make you understand what is in his mind. And I tell you, yea even I entreat you, don't trust, don't trust, don't trust! Even though showing his distrust so openly, he believes that he will coax in more Englishmen. For God's sake keep your hands clean. Don't give any advice, for it will terminate bad. If Colonel Merewether brings the workmen before the King fulfils Her Majesty's conditions, not one single soul will be allowed to leave this country; and the workmen, after their arrival here, might reproach you for having brought them into such circumstances. Why should more people be sent to share in these our miseries? If we shall perish and die, let us do it with honour, submitting ourselves to the Divine will of God. I beg you, I entreat you before the face of God, keep

your hands out of the matter. The King's intention is to play a very bad trick. He said to Mr. Waldemeier, 'Call me a woman, if I shall not get them in with all the articles; you don't know our character.' He thinks, I have Mr. Rassam in my hands, and he must assist me to get the things, else I can force him to do so. Oh! gracious God! what may come on us and the poor sufferers at Magdala! If only the English Government would act quickly, they could play him a good trick. They could take his fortress Magdala before he hears of it. But it is not necessary for me to enter into this matter; perhaps they have learned wisdom by experience, and the lessons the King has given them to learn, that neither by the King's threatenings nor by his flattering phrases will they be tempted to come in again" [meaning, I conclude, 'send other people']. "I am most anxious for you, fearing that you trust this man too much. The King is, since last week, ill; he uses hot baths; a good many of his concubines also have to use hot baths" [by this I am told to understand he suffers from a dire disease unnecessary to particularize].

"Our three little children are pretty well; they long very much for your speedy return. I must always keep them near me, as our place is surrounded with huts occupied by soldiers, most likely that we should not run away. Yesterday we and all our people were counted" [as if some move were intended, most probably to send them all to Magdala to join the others], by order of the King. This reminded me of Korata [?] before we left for Europe last year. And now I commend you, myself, our little ones to Him who graciously watches over us. He has counted our days, and our time is in His hands, and not in the King's."

I have given the above *in extenso* and literally, that your Lordship may judge of what is the real state of affairs, and see how a brave woman views it.

3. Mr. Staiger writes, commencing on the 2nd January, "Your letters from London and from Massowah surprised every one here. All of us, and I believe even the King himself, is astonished that your mission to England was crowned with such success, as no one believed that the English Government would grant the extraordinary demands and conditions of the King. Even the King himself had not the least hope, as we now see from his proceedings. Her Majesty's letter to the King made every sincere and sensible man here rejoice; the letter was cordial, but in no way flattering; full of excellent truths, which were well understood by the King. The King sent Her Majesty's letter, soon after its arrival, to Mr. Rassam, who is still in Magdala, in chains. (5th.) To-day we received letters from our friends at Magdala. All mention the arrival of Her Majesty's letter, and the very friendly letter of the King to Mr. Rassam; but none of them, except Mr. Rassam, who still clings very fast to the best expectations of things, trusts in the King's flattering letter. We (the prisoners at large at Gaffat) are of the same opinion, as from many experiences we have lost all confidence in the King. His intentions towards us are not good ones. Up to this day he is friendly towards us at Gaffat, especially towards our wives and children, but we see now and then something like the lightning out of a black cloud. Whether the thundercloud will empty on us with storm and hailstones, or whether it will pass away in mere thunder and lightning, the Lord, who directs everything, alone knows. We are prepared for the worst. It seems to us that the King will not enter into any conditions. He believes that he alone has to make conditions. By the distrust the English Government shows to have in his conduct, his ambition seems to be greatly wounded. This morning, he said, 'The English ought to trust me and send me the articles and men I want from them.' But of releasing or sending away the prisoners he will hear nothing. Ras Ingada and Ras Gabru are just now at Magdala to negociate with Mr. Rassam on the business. As soon as the King receives an answer he will send you word. Day and night the work is going on at Gaffat. He is in a great hurry to finish his guns, mortars, and waggons." [These will be of no use to him, as he has no skilled gunners.] "The sacrilege committed on Gondar has brought upon him the hatred of the whole nation." [The Aboona excommunicated him for this, but, after three days, removed the ban.] "His soldiers are discontented with him; every day some run away from him and join the rebels. The revolution in the provinces is increasing. This week he plundered Andabeit and Goomu. The inhabitants of those places at first fought with his soldiers, but in the end gave way and fled to Godjam. (The 13th.) At the Royal Court to-day a great consultation took place, the result of which you will learn from the King's letter to you, which was written by him, I am told, in great excitement, and handed over by him to the messengers. You have to come by the way of Matemma. His friendship with England has reached its end. He neither wants now machinery nor workmen; everything you will bring for him is indifferent to him—war or peace. So he is reported to have said, only he wants you to come soon. His messengers for you will leave this to-morrow. From these, his proceedings, you will see the whole affair has come to a decided termination; our friendly attempts have hitherto been useless, and will be so in future. He is determined

not to give way, but to resist. First, he thinks himself to be in the right; and, secondly, because he doubts that England will make use of her force against him. You know the old proverb they have here, 'that it is impossible mountainous Abyssinia can be conquered by Europeans.'" [A force of less than 2,000 Portuguese, with cannon, entered Abyssinia by the Kiaguor road in the middle of the seventeenth century; they were not supported afterwards, so remained and founded a colony, descendants of which are to be found to this day.] "The King firmly believes in this, but we hope England will soon teach him something better. But England should not make the least delay. If it wishes to do anything it should be done at once, and it should not threaten him before it acts. If this last be omitted, all Europeans he has in his hands will have to pay for it with their lives; a declaration of war and the soldiers should reach Abyssinia at the same time. The best they could do would be if they would send some thousand men by Tajourra." [The route from Tajourra is the shortest and most direct to Magdala, but the inhabitants of the country between Tajourra and Angoba, pagan Danakil, are of the worst description the most inveterate thieves and murderers on the face of the earth. The distance from Tajourra to Done, near Lake Haik, in Ardoba, is about 220 miles. For the first 100 there is scarcely any water, and that brackish. Until Abyssinia is reached, that is Angoba, there are no supplies.] "From thence they could go with camels to Angoba, which is only a few days' journey from Magdala. In this way they could take Magdala and release the captives even before the King could hear of it. But this should be done with great precaution and speedily, before any hostile movement is made from Massowah. The Roman missionaries at Massowah have added much to the present difficulty and critical circumstances between the English and Abyssinian Governments. The King said this morning that last rainy season he received a letter from one of the Europeans at Massowah, who informed him that the English Government wants nothing but his utter ruin, on which he puts Mr. Rassam into chains. We can only think that this European at Massowah must be a Roman missionary. God only knows how many childish influences have contributed to the present gloomy and sad state of affairs here. You will be astonished at the great alteration of things which has taken place since you left us last year at Zegay. How much now would I like to write to you if there were 'liberty of the press,' but you know there exists nothing of that kind in this country, and I fear that I have already said too much. If my letter should fall into bad hands it would turn out bad for us.—Dispatched from Gaffat, 15th January."

4. Yesterday evening messengers arrived from Mr. Rassam with news up to the 29th of January; he requests to add as a postscript to his letter to your Lordship of the 10th of January the following:—

"P.S.—Magdala, 29th January, 1867.—Since the date of the above (letter of the 10th) I have received a number of polite messages from the Emperor, but he has not written to me again. I have heard that he has sent on messages to Massowah, viâ Matemma, with an answer to Her Majesty's letter. From all I can make out he wishes Colonel Merewether to come up with the artizans and things sent from England. He is still at Debra Tabor (Debra Tabor and Gaffat may be called the same, they are only about two miles apart); but it is rumoured that he is going to Godjam to punish the rebel there. However, I do not place any faith in this report, as this plan was often spoken of before, but never achieved.

"I am glad to inform your Lordship that both my party and myself are well."

In a letter to me he says, "On the 10th instant I sent you a long letter wherein I gave you all the news. As the messengers who carried it promised to reach Massowah in a fortnight" [they arrived in seventeen days], "I hope that by this time you are acquainted with the attitude the Emperor has assumed since his receipt of the copy of Her Majesty's letter. The men promised to return in thirty-five days, and if everything has gone well with them I hope to hear from you about the middle of next month, and know what your future movements are." [Intimation has been sent to Mr. Rassam of all that is being done.] "His Majesty sent back your messengers to Massowah on the 14th instant. One of my men, whom I sent with them, named Mahomed Sayeed, was appointed their leader by the Emperor. He ordered them to return from Massowah with an answer in a month and a-half." [They have not come yet, February 28th.] "If they manage to reach the coast in that time, it will be as much as they could do. I believe he has written to you to come up with the artizans to Matemma. If you are ordered to meet him" [not in the way he expects] "I hope that you will make haste. I believe he feels that he has done wrong, but that he has gone too far to retract.

"I wish I could have lots of money here, as I might find it very useful one day. Please try and send me up cash whenever you can, if possible, through Lasta, otherwise by Matemma." [Money has been sent through Lasta, and more will now be sent by Mr. Flad

to Matemma. Messengers dispatched from Massowah on 25th October reached Magdala on 25th January; others were dispatched in December, January, and this month, who will doubtless reach in time.] "I suppose his Majesty will leave us quiet until he gets a definite answer from the coast, when our fate will be decided. He may get into a towering rage or succumb. Anything is better than this wretched existence, and we have all come to the conclusion that the sooner the crisis comes the better for us. Thank God, we are all well and (considering our position) happy."

On a separate slip of paper, which he charged the messenger only to deliver into my hands, Mr. Rassam adds: "It is generally supposed that the refusal of the Emperor to liberate us will be followed by a declaration of war; if so, the following hints may prove useful. Have nothing to do with the Turks, because alliance with the unbelievers will bring on a religious war. Try and obtain the friendship of Wakshum Gobazye, the chief rebel of Lasta and Tigré, and Tissoo Gobazye, the chief rebel on the road between Adowa and Gondar. They can be very useful in stopping communication between the coast and his Majesty, and in transporting baggage, &c. If the Bishop's assistance be required, I can get him to write to all the rebels to render assistance. There is no respectable man in Abyssinia who approves of his Majesty's conduct, but no one has the pluck to speak plainly to him. He now has scarcely any country left, and yet he brays as if he were Alexander the Great. His power is only now acknowledged wherever he is, and he is so afraid of his troops deserting that he dare not attack any of the great rebels. At Court or here, there is no lack of friends, but, as I said before, they are too much cowed to be of any use to us, without knowing what may happen afterwards. If Her Majesty's Government intend to chastise him, there is no use sending an ultimatum before the troops land. A mere letter containing threats will endanger our lives.

5. "Dr. Blanc, who is always able to pick up intelligence on the hill, says, in reference to the dispatch of the messenger, viâ Matemma, to Massowah, 'It appears that the King expects that all, yourself included, will come up to Matemma, and then he intends to try your friendship by asking you to come to him; he must have strong confidence in the gullibility of the English. I know nothing of the kind will take place, but should some chivalrous feeling induce any one to come up, he or they will be boned, and added to the company now staying at Magdala. Various reports are afloat, but little credit can be given to any. Some say that at first our friend was displeased when he heard that the messenger selected was a Mussulman, but on the man stating that he had been serving him since several years, and had been employed in inducing us to come into his power, the King smiled and chuckled, treated him well, and presented him with a couple of mules.

"A further report is, that His Majesty, on receiving Rassam's letter, wrote to have us three put out of chains, and that Mahomed Saeed himself was to have come, so as to have been able to report to you that we had been freed of our fetters; but having called before him all the Europeans of Gaffat to read to them Rassam's letter, he got angry on remembering his grievances against Messrs. Stern, Rosenthal, and Cameron, and decided on leaving us as we were. There is great despondency amongst the people of Gaffat.

"The cannon mania is at an end; the big guns and remainder of the copper have been buried in the ground, the lighter guns taken to the camp at Debra Tabor. This looks like a move somewhere; Godjam is mentioned, but not believed in. A few days ago the King sent some odds and ends by a Ras, and some money for the soldiers and chiefs here. These have never been so well treated as lately. There is some talk of all prisoners, including ourselves, being taken to the camp, so that the King may look after us himself; I hope not. We are all of us of the same and but one opinion, and pray from all our hearts that business in earnest will shortly begin."

6. The above all goes to confirm the conviction expressed in my despatch of the 13th instant, that any further attempts to win the Emperor over by friendly treatment will be useless. Had he at once released Mr. Rassam and his companions from their fetters, there would have been some hope, and my going to Matemma might then have been considered advisable as a nearer point from which to try and negotiate. But under the present circumstances the latter is undoubtedly out of the question, and the only answer I can give to the messengers of the King of the 14th January, when they do arrive, is that as he has not attempted to show even that he is disposed to act as requested by Her Majesty, I am precluded from taking any steps towards moving from the coast, and that I shall certainly remain until I receive intimation from the King that Mr. Rassam and all the British subjects have been released, and have actually started on their downward journey to meet me.

7. As your Lordship will observe, Mr. Rassam even, who has invariably done his utmost to conciliate the King, has given up all idea of its practicability. His companions

in confinement coincide. The German missionaries at Gaffat, who know the King's character well, and have had the best opportunities of watching events, are of the same opinion. My judgment tells me the same.

8. From the very first I ventured to point out that there were but two courses open for adoption in regard to King Theodorus,—most friendly liberal treatment, or forcible measures in punishment of his breach of faith. The first has been fairly tried, and everything possible been done to make it successful, but through the obstinacy of the King it has failed. The second only remains, and I would most respectfully but earnestly urge that now not only is the safety of our countrymen at stake, but the honour of the country is deeply concerned; for the idea of misapprehension on the part of the King, which might have been admitted before, can now no longer be entertained. By his continued retention of Mr. Rassam in confinement he proclaims that he knowingly and purposely imprisons the bearer of a letter from another Sovereign, the Queen of England.

9. Unfortunately, owing to the near approach of the hot season, which renders the country between Abyssinia and the sea almost impassable by troops, active operations cannot well be entered upon before October next, but I trust that on Her Majesty's Government deciding on vigorous measures being adopted, preparations for the organization of the necessary force may be taken into immediate consideration, so that the troops may be ready to move at the earliest possible moment

10. While quite agreeing with Mr. Rassam and the others who have expressed an opinion on the subject, that the threat and display of force should be synchronous, I would also venture to recommend strongly that the course suggested by me in the tenth paragraph of my despatch of the 15th instant* should be entirely foregone. The position of the Emperor is now so hazardous that any day information may be received of his authority having come to an end. It would then be of the greatest value that I should have it in my power to announce authoritatively to the people of the country that Her Majesty's Government had determined on punishing King Theodore for his treacherous conduct, and to call on all well-wishers to the British Government to assist in protecting its subjects in Abyssinia, warning every one that the King will be held strictly responsible with his throne and life that not the slightest injury reaches Her Majesty's subjects; while all who may assist in any harm which may come to them will assuredly meet with the severest punishment; while, on the other hand, those who aided and protected them will be honoured and most liberally rewarded by Her Majesty.

11. It may possibly be that the opportunity for using this may not arise; but it is very probable at the same time that it will. The intelligence now forwarded shows that the King's position is getting daily worse and more desperate. The patience of the country, well nigh exhausted before, was further heavily tried on the occasion of the desecration of the churches at Gondar. It is wonderful the King is still borne with. His health is very bad, his sufferings great from a hopeless disease, and that made worse by excessive intemperance. Provisions in Begemder are nearly exhausted, and there is no where else to look for more. His army is fast leaving him; and though he is said to have given out that he is going against Tadela Guiáloo, the rebel chief in Godjam, every one knows he connot attempt it. First, he has not sufficient troops left with him to ensure success, and, next, if he went out of Begemder, it would be occupied by the rebels of Lasta and Walkeit, and he would lose his stronghold Magdala. It would be most fortunate for us if he could be induced to make the attempt; but he is too cunning to risk it. It would seem strange to those unacquainted with the people how these rebels, who have such strong forces at their disposal and who defy his authority, should not close with him and attack him now he is so weakened. But the best informed assure me that as long as there is any chance of Theodorus rising again, such is the dread of him personally, none of the rebels will advance on him, or attempt to find him. Were they positively assured his course had come to an end, they might then be induced to act, and be found most useful.

12. As Mr. Rassam writes "At Court and here, there is no lack of friends" to the British. One curious thing, and I don't know whether it may be taken as symptomatic of the desperate condition of the stateship, but the Chamberlain Samuel, the man who, with Bardel, was supposed to be at the bottom of all evil towards the captors, whatever may have been his views and intentions formerly, has completely turned round. Mr. Rassam now writes about him: "Samuel has lost the greater part of the Royal favour, because it has been proved that he favoured the English. The fact is, there is no man in the country who is so faithful to his liege as this Samuel; and because he has being trying all he could to benefit his Royal master, by getting him to be on good terms with us, he is distrusted. Some of the released prisoners used to think that he was implicated in their

* No. 705.

former trials. However that may have been, his honest friendly feeling towards the British has been proved to me beyond doubt. That he is anything but unfriendly towards us, though he considers himself bound to love and obey his Sovereign, I have lately been able to prove to both Cameron and Stern." Those two gentlemen have written to me they are quite convinced of Samuel's probity now, and Dr. Blanc says the same.

13. I hear that the road from Matemma to Debra Tabor is open. How long it will remain so is a question. But I consider it right now that Mr. Flad should leave at once for Matemma, taking with him the articles he purchased for the King in England, and he will start directly the camels required have come in. In the present critical state of affairs, and to provide as far as possible against the King having any pretext for ill-treating the captives in his power, either at Gaffat or Magdala, I have paid all Mr. Flad's expenses to Matemma. He has written to the King announcing his departure from this, and requesting an escort may be sent to meet him at Matemma. By Mr. Flad I have sent my letter to the King (copy of which was forwarded to your Lordship) unaltered, saving the word "ask" for "crave" has been substituted in the latter part. I am afraid it will have no effect on the King, to induce him to change his tactics: but it will show him no further friendly advances can be made until the prisoners are received by me free, Mr. Flad's further stay at Matemma might have jeopardized the safety of his wife and children, I did not think it necessary he should await the arrival of the messengers now *en route*. Had nothing detained them, they should have been here ere this; but there are some disturbances on the Egyptian frontier which they would not like to face, and they may, therefore, be still at Kassala, where Mr. Flad would meet them. The disturbances are not of an extensive nature, and would not affect Mr. Flad's progress, as I have given him firmans and letters to all the Egyptian authorities *en route*, who will furnish him with sufficient guards. Should the messengers arrive even a fortnight after his departure, I could easily send a speedy camel-post after him with fresh instructions and other letters if necessary. Mr. Flad, marching with laden camels, should reach Matemma in about twenty-five days; he will probably be detained there a short time for the escort.

14. On my way up from Aden I called in at Amphilla Bay and found it admirably suited for the debarkation of troops, good anchorage; water good and plentiful; and one of the easiest and best roads comes down from Abyssinia to it—a road constantly used by caravans (camel), who take backwards and forwards the salt obtained near Amphilla. The people in the country are simple and friendly disposed, and there are no Egyptian troops there. M. Munzinger, the very zealous Consul here, has made an excellent survey of the road from Massowah to Kiaguor and Gotafalasee, formerly mentioned by me. This will be forwarded to your Lordship separately. As soon as M. Munzinger has dispatched Mr. Flad he will proceed to Tokonder, and return viâ Amphilla, to survey and map correctly those two routes to the plateau of Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 713.

Captain Desborough to Lord Stanley.—(*Received March* 29.)

My Lord, *Reading, March* 27, 1867.

WITH reference to the interview your Lordship was so good as to grant me yesterday morning, I beg to forward a copy of the letter from my relation, Consul Cameron, which upon that occasion you kindly perused. There are some parts of the letter which are irrelevant, but I think it better to place the whole in your Lordship's hands. I have now the honour to request that in justification of Captain Cameron's conduct, and to clear him from the charge of having visited the frontier of Abyssinia contrary to orders, that you will kindly permit the accompanying document to be filed amongst the archives of the Foreign Office.

I have, &c.
(Signed) L. DESBOROUGH.

Inclosure in No. 713.

Consul Cameron to Captain Desborough.

My dear Desborough, *Magdala Fortress, November* 13, 1866.

I FIND my affair has excited a good deal of attention in England.

It may be well to put you in possession of the following facts:—

At Bogos I got a letter from the Foreign Office,* directing me to report on the comparative merits of Souakin and Massowah as the seat of a Consulate. Also to report on the trade of Souakin.

It was this which led me to go to the trading stations of Kassala and Matemma. I don't think I exceeded my duty in doing this—at least, I hope not. A report would have been worthless without it.

His Gracious Majesty of Abyssinia was kind enough to give me permission to return to his country. I wrote for permission on the score of health.

I have never reported this, but it may be well, in case anything happens to me, that you should know it.

There were other reasons, as the presence of an Egyptian army on the Abyssinian frontier, which induced me to go to Matemma, but the one above-mentioned was the principal.

My presence in this country materially facilitated the exit of my colleague and his companion, who were in imminent peril. This I trust will count as a direct service to English interests, to take no other ground.

Kindly lay these facts before the head of the Foreign Office, and convey my sincere thanks to Lord Clarendon for his sympathy with my sufferings.

Do the same to Lord Chelmsford, and write to the Duke of Saxe Coburg, thanking him for his letter in my behalf.

Let Prince Hohenlohe know that I wrote a letter to him a few days ago, but I have thought it best to destroy it, together with one to the Duke.

We are all well, waiting for news from Flad. God bless you.

Ever yours,

(Signed) C. D. CAMERON.

No. 714.

Mr. Murray to Captain Desborough.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 2, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo,† inclosing a copy of a letter addressed to you by Consul Cameron, under date of the 13th November, 1866.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 715.

Lord Lyons to Lord Stanley.—(*Received April* 5.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 26, 1867.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 4th instant,‡ I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Colonel Stanton, stating that he has sent the Armenian Patriarch's letter, in favour of the captives in Abyssinia, to Jerusalem, in order that it may be forwarded thence to King Theodore, in the manner pointed out by the Patriarch.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

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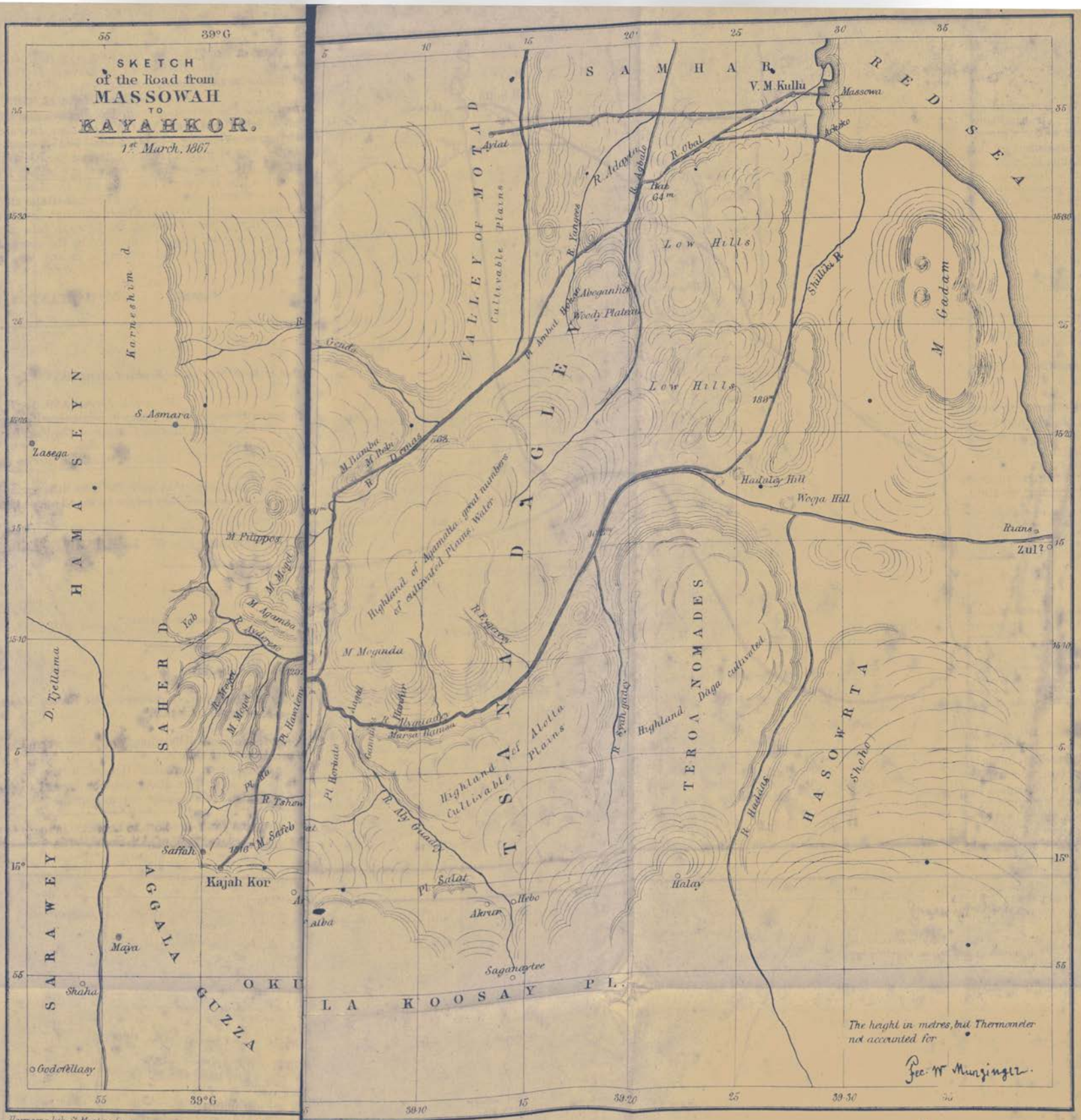
* No. 371. † No. 713. ‡ No. 702.


SKETCH
of the Road from
MASSOWAH
TO
KAYAHKOR.
1st March, 1867
SAMHAR
RED SEA
V. M. Kullu
Massowa
Arkeko
Aylat
VALLEY OF MOTAD
Cultivable Plains
R. Adayta
R. Agbalo
R. Obal
Bat 64m
R. Yangees
Low Hills
Aboganha
Woody Plateau
Shilliki R.
M. Gadam
Low Hills
Gendo
Pl. Ambat Bokso
HAMASEYN
Karneshim d.
S. Asmara
Zasega
M. Bamba
M. Beln
R. Dirmas
Hadaley Hill
Wooja Hill
Ruins
Zul?
M. Filippos
M. Mogot
M. Agamba
R. Ayderoso
Yab
Highland of Agamatta great numbers of cultivated Plains Water
R. Eygerrey
M. Moginda
SAHERD
D. Tjellama
R. Mogot
M. Mogot
Pl. Hawiteny
Aagal
R. Ilyguadey
Marsa Hamsa
Pl. Horbato
Pl. Ra
R. Tshow
M. Safeb
Saffah
Kajah Kor
AGGALA
GUZZA
SARAWEY
Maya
Shaha
Godofellasy
OKU
LA KOOSAY PL.
Highland of Alotta Cultivable Plains
R. Aly Guadey
Pl. Salat
Akrur
Hebo
Saganaytee
TSANA DAGLEY
TEROA NOMADES
Highland Daga cultivated
R. Syahgadey
R. Haddas
HASOWRTA
Shoho
Halay
The height in metres, but Thermometer not accounted for
Rec. W. Munzinger.
Harrisons, lith. St. Martins Lane

Inclosure in No. 715.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Lyons.

My Lord, *Cairo, March* 17, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 4th instant, transmitting me a letter addressed by the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople to the King of Abyssinia, exhorting him to set the British captives free, as also a translation of the letter, and as your Excellency desired me, should I consider it advisable, to make use of the letter in question, to forward it direct to Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, and request him to concert measures with the Armenian Patriarch at that place, so that it may be forwarded speedily to Abyssinia in the mode pointed out, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that, although far from feeling sanguine of the success of the attempt, I have forwarded the letter to Jerusalem for transmission, as it is certainly possible the King may be influenced by the appeal of the Patriarch, and as I imagine that, even if unsuccessful, it cannot in any way be prejudicial to the captives themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 716.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 10.)*

My Lord, *Massowah, February* 28, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith rough sketch map in original, with copy of itinerary and observations made by M. Munzinger, Acting Consul of the road from Massowah to Kiaguor, on the plateau of Abyssinia.

2. M. Munzinger deserves credit for the prompt manner in which he carried out my wishes in this respect.

3. I would venture to suggest to your Lordship, that were the map lithographed, and some copies prepared, as also the itinerary printed, they might be found very useful hereafter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 716.

*Sketch of the Road from Massowah to Kiaguor.**

Inclosure 2 in No. 716.

*Notes and Route Observations supplied by M. Munzinger, to accompany his Survey Map of the Roads from Massowah to Kiaguor.**

THERE are only two roads leading to Northern Abyssinia, which are worth close examination, because they alone are practicable for camels.

One is by Tokonda,† following the well-known torrent of Heedas, to the foot of the Taranta Mountain, where it turns to the left, then along another torrent to the ascent to Tokonda, which could easily be made practicable for any carriage.

The other is to Kiaguor.

This last was the object of my excursion from the 28th to the 30th January. I went up by the way of Dasuas, and returned by that of Ali Gady. The former is somewhat the shortest, crossing the mountains by two steep ascents. The direction is almost south-west till longitude 39° 5′ and latitude 15° 10′, where it joins the other road of Ali Gady. It has been followed by several travellers, but from its comparative difficulty need not be described here.

The latter, by which I returned, is the best road, and is as follows:—

It starts from Arkeeko, and is divided into three parts—

* Laid before Parliament, with Map, 1867.

† "Degonta" in Keith Johnston's map.

I. The open low country.
II. Following the torrent Ali Gady.
III. The ascent and plain to Kiaguor.
The distances are indicated in hours.

Part I.—From Massowah.

No. of Stations.	Name of Station.	Direction.	Distance in Hours.*	Remarks.
			H. M.	
1	Arkeeko	S.	2 0	Road over hard open plain. Large village. Detachment of Egyptian troops here. Water plentiful.
2	Entrance of Shilliki Pass	S.	3 20	Road over plain. Flat open country. Many gum trees (Babul), Acaria Arabica. Water obtained by digging a few feet in bed of torrent.
3	Pass of Shilliki ..	S. 10 W.	1 25	This pass is a large smooth dry bed of a torrent; in rainy season carries water off to the sea. Water obtained by digging.
4	Hill Hadaley	S. 20 W.	1 25	Road level at first, but hilly towards Hadaley. Water obtainable by digging. There is water in wells at Saheto, 30 m. East; and plenty at Wooja, 1 h. E. 10m. S.; and at Zoola, 4 h. E. At Wooja the Ali Gady and Hadas torrents unite, and form one to Zoola. The road to Halai and Tokonda is up the Hadas.
5	In the torrent Ali Gady.	W.	1 0	Road open and level; rather woody; small hills about.
	Total of I ..	..	9 10	

Part II.—Road along the Ali Gady Torrent

No. of Stations.	Name of Station.	Direction.	Distance in Hours.	Remarks.
			H. M.	
1	First halting place ..	W.	1 20	Torrent broad and tolerably level; partly wooded (Babul); low hills on either side.
2	Second halting place ..	W. S. W.	1 0	Torrent broad; running water.
3	Off Eygerrey... ..	S. W.	4 25	The torrent winds much, and has some narrow rocky places, but without difficulty. The narrowest places are after 1 hour, where is running water; after 2 h. 40 m., and close to Eygerrey, the hills on both sides get nearer and higher.
4	Marsa Hamsa ..	W. S. W.	2 0	Winds much, but no narrower.
5	Haufur . ..	W.	1 0	One narrow road, more difficult from boulders, but can be easily made good.
6	Gannaloo	W.	0 45	Road more open.
7	Augal	N. W.	0 50	Road good. A large torrent joins here from the left, bringing down the waters of all the country between Halai and Kiaguor, especially those of the torrent Tshoat, which offers a very fine smooth but longer road to Kiaguor. I had no time to examine it.
8	Torrent changes here, becomes Aydereso	N. W.	1 0	Here joins the first-mentioned road from Arkeeko. Water above and below. Many Babul trees. Torrent large and country more open.
9	.. .. ..	..	0 15	To the upper water and to the foot of ascent where the torrent is left.
	Total of II ..	..	12 35	

Part III.

No. of Stations.	Name of Station.	Direction.	Distance in Hours.	Remarks.
			H. M.	
1	Ascent	S. 30 W.	1 0	Not very steep; no obstacle for camels; round stones in road, but no narrow passage; road could easily be made very good.
2	From top of ascent to hill 1 h. from Kiaguor	S. 20 W.	3 20	For 1 h. 50 m. road is open, very bare, dry, woodless, and strewn with round stones. The last 1 h. 30 m. pass through a large forest to the torrent Tshoat. Half-an-hour from the road there is running water. Hills on right and left.
3	From the hill to Kiaguor	S. 30 W.	1 0	Plain open country; plenty of cultivation. Kiaguor surrounded by a hill.
				I did not go beyond the Hill Station No. 2.
	Total of III ..	..	5 20	

From Kiaguor to Gotafalasee is eight hours' journey (22 miles). Behind Kiaguor, the road ascends the hill, not practicable at present for camels, but can be easily made so.

Once on the top the road passes over level plateau to the village of Woga, four hours, there descends, crosses the Mareb, and ascends again the other side, no difficulty whatever to the village of Shaha, two hours, and on to Gotafalasee, in two hours more.

The Mareb is passable at all times.

Gotafalasee is the great market-place for Northern Abyssinia, and lies in the midst of the fertile plain of Saramey. It is only about nine hours' journey from Tsazaga, the residence of Dejaj Hailoo, the King's Governor of Hamasein.

General Observations.

As will be seen, there is no want of running water anywhere except in the first part of the journey; but even there it may be got by digging, and at Wooja, one hour east from Hadaley, there is plenty of good water.

From Arkeeko to Hadaley, is six hours ten minutes' march, less than twenty miles.

From the commencement of Part II, from the torrent the whole way up, there is plenty of water.

These are styled torrents, but they are dry water-courses, becoming torrents in the heavy rains.

Wood is to be found at all places.

Few or no supplies in the shape of grain, excepting at Kiaguor and Gotafalasee. Beef and mutton plentiful everywhere. Grass to be found at all the places, from October to May.

The tropical rain line is at Aygarrey.

The country, till the Ali Gady torrent is reached, belongs to any one.

On the left of the torrent upwards to Hadass, belongs to the Tora nomades, nominally Egyptian subjects; Mussulmans, 700 or 800 spears.

The country on the right of the Ali Gady belongs to the Catholic tribe of Zana-Fagley, which has fixed settlements on the highlands near Halai. Eight small villages, of which the largest are Akrom and Saganaytee. These people have extensive land, but only muster 800 spears.

The Tora and the Zana-Fagley, in the winter months, bring their flocks and herds down to the lowland near the coast, to graze. During the tropical rains, from June till September, they remain on the highlands to cultivate. On the right and left of the Ali Gady torrents are fine plateaus, 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the level of the sea, large plains, well cultivated, water plentiful. The one named Agamatta, is only about eighteen miles from Massowah, and would make an excellent encamping place.

From Aydereso upwards, the ground belongs to the tribe Angana, having five villages, one of which is Kiaguor.

The Angana are subject to a larger tribe, the Aggala Goora, having seventeen villages. The Chief of these two tribes is the son of Ande Mikael, who does homage to Wakshum Gobazye, the rebel leader of Lasta and Tigré.

On the right of Kiaguor are the tribes Laber and Wagerthec, having eight and

four villages respectively. They are subject to Dejaj Hailoo, as is all the land beyond the Mareb.

The heights are given from observation of the boiling-point.

(Signed) W. MUNZINGER, *Acting Consul.*

No. 717.

*Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 15.)**

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, April 12, 1867.*

THE refusal of the Emperor Theodore of Abyssinia to comply with Her Majesty's demand for the liberation of the British subjects and other persons under British protection whom he has so long held in captivity, cannot but cause Her Majesty's Government to feel much difficulty as to the course now to be pursued for ensuring the freedom of those unfortunate individuals, without involving the British nation in a war with that Monarch, which, even if successful, as it could not fail to be eventually, would, under any circumstances, be exposed to many risks, and must inevitably occasion an outlay from the national Treasury far exceeding the heavy expenses that have already been incurred, besides leading to complications the nature and extent of which it is not possible to foresee.

Under these circumstances, I trust your Lordship will not take it amiss if I respectfully venture to submit for your consideration the following suggestions, which my special knowledge of the subject enables me to make.

It is necessary to premise that a short time before I left England for Abyssinia in November 1865, the Earl of Malmesbury did me the honour to consult me as to the best road into that country in the event of its becoming necessary for a British army to invade it. In reply, I explained to his Lordship that the readiest access is from the west coast of Annesley Bay, south of Massowah, where the edge of the table land, at an elevation of upwards of 8,000 feet, approaches within twenty miles of the sea-shore, as I had already pointed out to your Lordship's predecessor in office, Lord John Russell, in a letter addressed to him from Mauritius on December 26, 1859, accompanied by a map.

After my arrival out in Abyssinia, I wrote several letters to Lord Malmesbury, giving him an account of my journey to the edge of the table land, up the valley of the River Hadas, and of my discovery that this river falls into Annesley Bay, near the site of the ancient city and port of Adulis; thus establishing, from actual observation, the correctness of the opinion I had long entertained as to the facility of entering Abyssinia in that direction.

Being anxious that the knowledge thus acquired should be at the service of Her Majesty's Government, I lost no time in communicating it to Colonel Merewether, Her Majesty's Political Resident at Aden, to Colonel Stanton, Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, and to Captain Robert A. Parr, of Her Majesty's ship "Lyra."

Some time after I had made these several communications, I learned that there is a far preferable road by way of Senafé, either from the head of Annesley Bay or from Harena in Hawakil Bay, which road I have reason to believe was made known to your Lordship's Department by Mr. Salt many years ago.

Since my return to England I have been given to understand that the approaches to north-eastern Abyssinia have been examined by Colonel Merewether, and reported on by him to Her Majesty's Government; and I take for granted that this road by Senafé has received that officer's special attention.

But though it is now incontrovertibly established that, for the general purposes of invasion or occupation Abyssinia may be easily and best entered from the north-east, still, if the object were to intimidate the Emperor Theodore by at once seizing on his strongholds, or if it were desired to liberate the British captives at Amba Magdala by a *coup de main*, another road altogether different might be taken in preference, namely, one running westwards from the sea coast at Raheita, just within the Straits of Babelmandeb.

This road formed the subject of a letter addressed by me to Lord Malmesbury on March 28, 1866, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose. And I may be allowed to repeat here, as stated in that letter, that as long ago as December 9, 1843, this road was pointed out by me to the Earl of Aberdeen, then Foreign Secretary, in a Memoir

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

on the Commerce of Abyssinia, and that it likewise formed the subject of a Report which I drew up at the instance of Sir William M. Coghlan, and which was sent in by him to the India Office on December 17, 1864.*

Subsequently to the date of my communication to Lord Malmesbury of March 28, 1866, and whilst I was still in Abyssinia, I addressed letters to his Lordship on three several occasions, namely, on April 3rd, 9th, and 27th of the same year.

The first two of those letters related to the progress of Mr. Rassam's Mission and do not now require further notice. Of the third, namely, that of April 27th, I beg leave to inclose a copy.

It will be perceived in this letter, which was written after I had received intelligence of the liberation and approaching departure of the captors, I predicted that even if they were allowed to depart, Mr. Rassam himself would be detained by the Emperor; and I suggested a course of action upon the assumption that such would be the case. Unfortunately the result turned out much more unfavourably than I had anticipated, and subsequent events have proved even more calamitous.

When I had the honour to wait on your Lordship in July and August last, Mr. Flad had just arrived in England with certain proposals on the part of the Emperor Theodore to the British Government; and your Lordship had already in contemplation a definite course of action with reference to those proposals. Though at the time I entertained doubts as to the result, it would, under the circumstances, have been ill-timed and injudicious on my part had I attempted to thwart the proposed course. I therefore waited till the time should come when the failure of the plan then entertained would render some other course necessary.

That time having now arrived, I beg leave to solicit your Lordship's serious attention to the contents of my two letters to Lord Malmesbury of March 28 and April 27, 1866, and especially to the letter as forming the basis of the plan which I would venture to propose for adoption; and as supplementary thereto I would beg leave to add the following observations.

It is presumed that whatever may be the intentions of Her Majesty's Government as regards future political or commercial relations with Abyssinia, they have no special desire to cultivate the personal friendship of the present reigning Sovereign, or to support him or his dynasty on the Throne in preference to any other pretender.

Consequently, there is no objection to the principle laid down in my letter of April 27, 1866, that Waagshum Gobazye, the hereditary Prince of Lasta, and the actual possessor and ruler of Tigré and North-Eastern Abyssinia has a *primâ facie* right to the sovereignty of the entire Empire, nor to the proposal that, with a view to the liberation of the captives at Magdala, the British Government should afford that Prince a certain amount of encouragement and support.

As stated in that letter, a few hundred muskets, with an ample supply of ammunition, and a number of Congreve rockets, transportable where artillery could not be, are better suited for the purpose; and in addition to these a moderate subsidy in money are all that would be requisite. Perhaps a few European soldiers might at the same time be introduced to fire the rockets and drill the natives in the proper use of the muskets; but this would depend upon circumstances.

But in addition to this material support it would be necessary to exert certain moral influences. The Roman Catholic Mission, long established at Massowah, and in North-Eastern Abyssinia, is in friendly, if not intimate and confidential, relations with the Waagshum, or with some of the principal chiefs acknowledging his supremacy; and it is essential to the well-being and success of any negotiations that may be entered into with that Prince or his partisans, that the Members of that Mission should not merely be friendly-disposed, but should be induced to co-operate with the Agents of the British Government.

The sympathies of the Roman Catholic missionaries being naturally with France, as the leading power of their religion, it might perhaps be deemed expedient to act upon them through the French Government, in which case the recognition of Waagshum Gobazye as Emperor of Abyssinia might be made by the Governments of France and England concurrently; otherwise, some other means of influencing the Members of the Roman Catholic Mission would doubtless present themselves to Her Majesty's Government.

If, as I believe to be the case, there are several Frenchmen in the employ of the Waagshum, or some of his chiefs, their services might possibly be rendered available, and so might render unnecessary the employment of Englishmen; and indeed, unless there should be any political objections to such a course, it might possibly be deemed

* See Inclosure 2 in No. 717.

more prudent, in order to obviate the risk of Theodore's attempting the lives of the British captives, that in the first instance, France and Frenchmen should alone show themselves openly.

The Waagshum, thus aided and supported, should be induced to march at once upon Amba Magdala, through the upper country, along the eastern edge of the table-land—the summit of the "ghauts." The distance of Magdala from the southern extremity of Annesley Bay, in a direct line, by the way of Senafe, is about 250 geographical miles.

In mentioning this road, it is right to explain that there are three ways of penetrating into central and southern Abyssinia from Massowah or its vicinity, viz., (1) the lower road, north-westward, through Bogos, Kassala and Matemma; (2) the middle road, south-westward, through Hamaseyn and Tigré, crossing the river Takkazze; and (3) the upper road, southwards, by Halai, Tokunda, and Senafé, along the high land in which are the sources of the Takkazze and its tributaries. These three roads are marked approximatively on the inclosed map of Abyssinia.

From the peculiar physical character of the Abyssinian table-land, the third of these roads is by far preferable to the other two, the selection of either of which latter for the march of an invading army would be attended with considerable loss of time, might occasion the illness or even the death of a large number of men, and might even place in jeopardy the success of a campaign. In may not be irrelevant to mention that the upper road was taken by Don Cristopher de Gama, when he entered Abyssinia in 1541, at the head of 500 Portuguese, to assist the Emperor against the Mahometans.

In a lecture on "Abyssinia and the Abyssinians," delivered by me in the Theatre of the London Institution, on January 16, 1867, I explained fully the peculiar physical character of the country. Inclosed is an extract from that lecture, which is highly deserving of consideration as bearing on this important subject. It will also serve to correct the erroneous notions entertained generally, and even by the captives themselves, respecting Amba Magdala, which Mr. Rassam describes as being "situated on a mountain in the Wollo Galla country," whereas it is in truth an isolated spur of the table-land, by which it is commanded from on high.

By occupying Tanta, at the extreme point of the plateau of Warrahemano, where the high land begins to break down to form Amba Magdala, which is distant from it probably not more than a quarter of a mile, the Waagshum would have that fortress completely at command; and as Magdala has no artificial fortifications beyond a few wooden stockades, and the houses and erections on it are principally, if not entirely, of wattles covered with mud and are all thatched, a few well-directed rockets would soon destroy the whole place. In this I speak on the report of others and from my acquaintance with several similar fortresses, not from my own personal knowledge of Amba Magdala itself.

It may, however, be not unreasonable to suppose that the garrison, said to consist of only 600 musketeers and 1,000 spearmen, might be induced to capitulate. Indeed, if the fact be, as stated, that during four months of the year the place is without water, which has to be brought from the plain below; it would seem that by cutting off the supply—that is to say, preventing the women from fetching the water—the garrison might be reduced to extremities and forced to surrender at discretion.

Still, it would not be sufficient to leave matters to take this course alone. Negotiations might be entered into with the garrison, with the captives themselves, and especially with the Aboona or Coptic Bishop, who is confined there, but (as I am informed) not imprisoned; and means might doubtless be devised for inducing the natives to abjure their allegiance to Theodore and to espouse the cause of Gobazye.

For this purpose, however, it is essential to secure the partisanship of the Abuna; as it is on his consenting to anoint and crown Gobazye as Emperor, and on his actually performing that ceremony, that the final success of the whole enterprise would depend. As long as no rival of his is anointed and crowned, Theodore possesses a prestige which no reverses can absolutely annihilate. He is, and must continue to be "Emperor by the Election of God." "[The] chosen of God, King of Kings, Theodore, of Ethiopia," as he styles himself in his letter to Her Majesty the Queen of England. But the moment the Aboona takes it on himself to anoint another Emperor, the crown falls, as it were, from Theodore's head on to that of his substitute; and although he may retain or regain the throne, if he has the power to do so, still his exclusive right and prestige are gone. It is to prevent such an occurrence that Theodore keeps the Abuna near his person when they are friends, and places him in confinement when they are enemies.

The present Aboona was formerly a teacher in the school of the Church missionaries at Cairo, and was consecrated by the Coptic Patriarch at their instance; and he has

always been considered as devoted to the English and Protestant cause in Abyssinia. It may, however, be questioned whether his own personal interest is not most regarded by him. Be this as it may, I apprehend there would be no difficulty in the way of securing the co-operation of this prelate, through the Coptic Patriarch and the British Church Missionaries, as well as by making it worth his while. Whether it would not be practicable to effectuate his escape from Amba Magdala in the first instance, would be matter for consideration on the spot.

The foregoing suggestions are made on the assumption that the Emperor Theodore will not be at Magdala, but absent in Godjam in his customary campaign against Tadela Gwalu. Should it happen that he is at Magdala, or that he should return thither before the captives have been liberated by the one method or the other, then it is to be considered whether the aid of a small British force might not be necessary.

In this case, however, I would presume to recommend that an army should not be landed in north-eastern Abyssinia, so as to have to march through a considerable extent of country, even though the districts traversed may be under the rule of Waagshum Gobazye, and their inhabitants well-disposed towards the invaders. It would be showing the game too plainly to Theodore.

To me it appears—though on strategical operations it becomes me to speak with great diffidence—that a small body of troops, consisting principally, if not entirely, of cavalry, should be landed at Raheita, and should proceed by rapid marches direct on Magdala. The distance between the two points is 240 geographical miles, of which about 200 are through the low country occupied by various Dankali tribes, described in my report of December 17, 1864, already referred to, and the remaining forty miles are over the high table-land of Abyssinia. The road is marked approximatively on the map.

The greater portion of this road would be along the northern side of the River Hawash and at no great distance from that river, where water would be plentiful, and I apprehend there would be no difficulty in obtaining sufficient supplies.

Raheita is chosen as the place of landing in preference to Tadjurrah, because the country to be traversed is occupied by tribes of the Modaitos, the Assa-himera or Red House of the Danákil, with whom the people of Raheita are more intimately connected than are those of Tadjurrah, who are a subtribe of the Debeni-k-Weema (the Ado-himera or White House).

These tribes are not numerous; they have no military discipline and are armed only with spear and knife. Consequently they could not, if so disposed, offer any serious opposition to a well-armed and well-disciplined European force, however small. Besides, their friendship and co-operation might be easily secured, as in the case of Major Harris's mission to Shoa in 1841, which went from Tadjurrah to Alin Amba with an escort of about only a dozen soldiers. It is true that when at a short distance from Tadjurrah two of the party were assassinated, but this was proved to have been the result of treachery, and partly also from a sufficient guard not having been kept during the night.

The foregoing suggestions are respectfully offered, subject to the disadvantages of my not being acquainted with all that has occurred since I left Abyssinia near a twelve-month ago. The change of circumstances may naturally occasion a modification of the details. I cannot, however, but retain the conviction that, with a view to the liberation of the captives and to the safety of their lives in the meanwhile, my plan is in substance preferable either to a formal invasion by a hostile army or the dispatch of a diplomatic mission accompanied by a powerful escort, which would in fact be only another form of an invading army.

This plan would possess the further advantage that Her Majesty's Government would not be pledged to an alliance with a potentate who is manifestly unable "to keep open the avenues of approach between the sea-coast and the interior," but would on the contrary be left clear to enter into such other arrangements as would tend to promote friendly commercial intercourse with a portion of the globe, the importance of which has too long been lost sight of, both as regards the advantages which it offers in itself and yet more so on account of its being the natural highway into the interior of the vast Continent of Africa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 717.

*Dr. Beke to the Earl of Malmesbury.**

My Lord, *Halai, March* 28, 1866.

WHEN directing your Lordship's attention to the Bay of Adulis, as affording the readiest access to the Abyssinian table-land, I ought not to have omitted to remark that the point at which that table-land would thus be reached is at its north-eastern extremity, and that, consequently, a considerable portion of it would have to be traversed by an invading army before the central and most important provinces of the empire could be reached.

If the occupation of the country, whether permanently or temporarily, were contemplated, this would, without doubt, be always the best mode of approach, as a secure and inviolable base of operations would be established in the Bay of Adulis itself. But if it were intended to strike terror into the mind of the Emperor Theodore by at once seizing on his strongholds, or it might be even liberating the captives at Amba Magdala, whilst he was at a distance and before he could approach for the purpose of removing them or of ordering their execution, then there is another road, which is deserving of the serious consideration of the authorities at home.

During my residence in Abyssinia I became acquainted with this road, and was impressed with its natural advantages, which I did not fail to point out in a Memoir on the Commerce of Abyssinia, which I addressed, on the 9th December, 1843, to the Earl of Aberdeen, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and which Memoir is referred to in my letter to Earl Russell of the 19th May, 1865,† printed in the papers laid before Parliament (on Lord Chelmsford's motion) on the 23rd of the same month.

After an interval of so many years, my attention has been again specially directed to this road under the following circumstances. Towards the end of 1864, Mr. W. Desborough Cooley, a well-known geographer (though no traveller), submitted to the Board of Trade a paper on the best means to develop the traffic of Abyssinia.‡ From that Department this paper passed in succession to the Foreign Office and the India Office, and from the latter it was given to Major-General Sir William M. Coghlan to report thereon. By that officer Mr. Cooley's paper was handed over to me, and at his request I drew up a report, which I forwarded to him to use as he might think best.

Inclosed, I beg leave to submit to your Lordship a duplicate, in Sir William's own hand-writing, of the Memorandum which he sent in to the India Office on the 17th December, 1864, together with my original Report.

If I understand Sir William Coghlan rightly, my Report itself was not forwarded from the India Office to the Foreign Office, but merely a general summary of its contents; neither am I aware that it was considered necessary to state that Mr. Cooley's paper had been submitted to me.

But its production could be obtained from the India Office by a motion in either House of Parliament, or otherwise, as might be deemed advisable.§

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 717.

*Memorandum by Major-General Sir William Coghlan, K.C.B., on Mr. Cooley's Paper on the best means of developing a Traffic with Abyssinia.**

THIS subject is so little understood in England, that my first thought in receiving Mr. Cooley's Paper was how I might best supplement his observations by reference to those of other writers who have either studied Abyssinia or have actually travelled or resided in that country.

My own personal acquaintance with Eastern Africa is limited to the sea-coast. I have visited almost every Port from Massowah in the Red Sea, down to Zanzibar, 6° south of the Equator, including Adulis (the ancient Port of Abyssinia by way of Hallai and Tigré) but all that I know of the interior was acquired during my long residence at Aden, by means of official connexion with the Consuls and Agents, and from personal

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 484. ‡ No. 431.

§ This was written during Lord Russell's Administration, when Lord Malmesbury was in opposition.—C.B.

acquaintance with travellers and natives of the country, from whom I necessarily learned something of its social, its political, and its commercial condition and capabilities.

It appears to me, however, that in England, or I might say in all Europe, there is only one man who has a very intimate personal knowledge of Abyssinia. The learned Dr. Beke stands quite alone. He is at once a profound scholar, an enterprising traveller, a skilful geographer. His journey to Shoa, his long residence in Abyssinia, his accurate map of the country, and his numerous letters on its Commerce and Politics, all testify of the ability and the zeal which he has, for more than a quarter of a century past, applied to questions which have excited only a faint interest in England, and which now owe their importance as much to the accident which has befallen our Consul as to any concern which the authorities and the public here take in the remote region in which an accomplished author and traveller has expended so much learning and energy.

Having Dr. Beke's works at hand I naturally referred to them, and from them I was led to a personal communication with Dr. Beke himself, the result of which is a Memorandum so complete that I cannot reconcile myself to mutilate it by Extracts. I therefore give it entire.

"Apart from historical questions, that which most concerns us is, How we can now best establish commercial relations with a country which undoubtedly possesses great commercial capabilities? It appears to me that this can be brought about only by establishing friendly relations with the King Theodorus: by sending an Embassy which should include the scientific as well as the commercial element: or, by a preliminary communication of a purely diplomatic character. The position of our Consul, now a prisoner at Gondar, presents a difficulty towards the immediate carrying out of either of these proposals, but it may be hoped that Mr. Rassam's visit may remove it, and enable Her Majesty's Government, without loss of dignity, to open communications and confirm a friendship which could not fail gradually to foster the traffic so desirable for both parties; obviously, however, the result of Mr. Rassam's mission must be known before any such steps can be adopted."

Ramsgate, December 17, 1864. (Signed) W. M. COGHLAN.

Inclosure 3 in No. 717.

Observations by Dr Beke on Mr. Cooley's Memorandum as to the most secure Passage into the Interior of Abyssinia for the purposes of Trade.*

December 16, 1864.

FROM the great learning and extensive research of the veteran geographer, whose memoir I have had the good fortune to peruse, everything from his pen is deserving of attention; and at the present moment, when the British Government has been brought by circumstances into intimate relations with the powerful ruler of the country which forms the subject of Mr. Cooley's paper, the means suggested by him for securing a passage into the interior of Abyssinia for the purposes of trade are more especially deserving of consideration.

In proceeding to discuss the contents of Mr. Cooley's paper, I would remark in the first place—and the remark is not confined to Abyssinia alone—that the commercial and, indeed, the general relations of a country with foreign parts, materially depend on its geographical situation and on its political condition.

As regards the former point, the physical features of the country being permanent, they will necessarily establish certain natural highways, which will be used by the natives in all ages.

Owing to political circumstances, such as wars, whether foreign or civil, these natural highways may for a time be closed and others opened. But those circumstances being accidental and temporary, though they may be of long duration, on their cessation the natural circumstances will again preponderate, and the old natural and permanent commercial roads will be re-opened.

The most important question, therefore, is to ascertain what is the real character of the approaches to Abyssinia from without; and in considering the subject with a view to its commercial relations with European nations, and especially with Great Britain, it is unnecessary to discuss the nature of the countries surrounding Abyssinia towards the north-west and south, as it is solely on the east side that it is approachable by those nations.

With reference to this point, I am compelled to say at the outset that it is altogether

* No. 431.

a mistake to suppose, as Mr. Cooley does, that "on the east side Abyssinia is separated from the shores of the Red Sea by mountains 8,000 feet high, over which the carriage of merchandize is troublesome and expensive;" and that "when these barriers have been passed, the trader has still to ascend a second and still loftier range of mountains before he reaches the heart of the kingdom."

This mistake, which is merely a modification of that of the celebrated geographer Carl Ritter, who regarded the Abyssinian plateau as consisting of a succession of terraces rising one above the other, was pointed out by me as long ago as the year 1846 in a paper "On the Nile and its Tributaries," printed in the seventeenth volume of the Royal Geographical Society's Journal, at page 77 of which I showed that, "so far from the high country rising in terraces as it recedes from the coast, its summit-line is towards the coast itself, and that from thence the land falls gradually towards the interior."

This general view of the physical character of the Abyssinian plateau is not the conclusion of a mere speculative geographer, but is derived from my own personal exploration of the country between about 36° and 43° east longitude, and 9° and 16° north latitude, sections of which extent of country are given in the fourteenth volume of the Geographical Society's Journal.

From those sections it will plainly be seen that the eastern edge of the Abyssinian table-land resembles, in a general way, the Western Ghauts of the Indian Peninsula, and consequently the merchant and traveller, when once they have surmounted the steep ascent from the hot and unhealthy lowlands on the sea-coast, find themselves on an elevated, temperate, and healthy plateau, which, though in parts containing mountainous districts of greater elevation, has a gradual inclination westward towards the valley of the Nile, into which the waters from the extreme eastern edge of the table-land take their course, in like manner as the head-streams of the Godavery and Kistna find their way across the Peninsula of India into the Bay of Bengal.

These "Eastern Ghauts" of Africa have been crossed by me at two points in about 15° and 9° 30′ north latitude, and at the former point the extreme eastern edge is in about 39° 30′, and at the latter in about 40° east longitude. From this latter point I further traced the water parting northwards through nearly a degree of latitude; and thus from my own personal observation, and also from that of Dr. Krapf and Lieutenant Lefebvre along parts of the intervening space not visited by me, it may be positively affirmed that the edge of the table-land, like the Western Ghauts of India, extends in a continuous line between the two extremes, that is to say, it runs from north to south on a line nearly coincident with the fortieth meridian of east longitude.

There is, however this marked difference between the two ranges: the western coast of India runs in a general direction close and parellel to the Ghauts, whereas the east coast of Africa, though close to the edge of the table-land towards the north, recedes from it as it proceeds southwards, till, in about the tenth parallel of north latitude the distance between the two exceeds 200 geographical miles.

Under powerful rulers and in times of peace, the lowlands between the sea-coast and the edge of the Abyssinian plateau may have once possessed a numerous population addicted to commerce; but weakened by wars with the people of the upper country, aided by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, and since then subject to the inroads of wild and warlike Galla tribes from the south, these regions have become what Mr. Cooley describes as a rugged desert, through which a few Europeans, as Harris, Rochet, Beke, &c., have travelled from Tajurrah to Shoa.

It is, therefore, manifest that the chief, if not the only certain, natural, and consequently permanent approach from the Red Sea to the Abyssinian table-land is at that point where the edge of that table-land is nearest to the coast; and this "rugged desert" is the narrowest, namely, in about 15° north latitude. Here the distance between the two is no more than fifteen geographical miles, Halai (the Coloe of the Ptolemy), the Abyssinian frontier station, on the extreme edge of the plateau, and at an elevation of 8,427 feet above the sea, being only that short distance from the Bay of Adulis, the famous emporium and naval port of the once rich and powerful Kingdom of the Axumites, the modern Province of Tigré.

Since the occupation of the ports of the Red Sea by the Turks in about the middle of the sixteenth century, the Island of Massowah, situate about twenty-five geographical miles to the north of Adulis, has assumed the place of the latter as the commercial port of Abyssinia, the Ottoman Porte keeping there a small garrison, and exacting Customs duties on merchandize passing to and from the high land.

In consequence, however, of the internal discords which, since the time of the traveller Bruce, have prevailed throughout Abyssinia, and which appear only to increase

in intensity from year to year, this natural road to the coast through the north-east of Abyssinia is gradually being abandoned, the native merchants preferring to take the longer and more circuitous but safer route to the sea-coast at Sawakin in about 19° north latitude.

In two papers, the one dated November 12th, 1862, and entitled "Memorandum on the Means of Developing British Commerce within the Red Sea, and of Securing the Communication between England and India;" and the other dated December 22nd of the same year, and entitled "Reasons for the Proposed Establishment of a British Consulate at Sawakin, in the Red Sea," copies of which two papers are enclosed, I have pointed out the great importance of Sawakin in former ages as a commercial port, and the likelihood of its resuming its pristine greatness. But as this importance is caused mainly by its connection with the dominions of the Viceroy of Egypt, the subject does not require further notice in the present remarks, of which the special object is the communication between the sea-coast and Abyssinia. It is, however, proper to repeat here, in order to avoid misunderstanding, that were Abyssinia to become internally peaceful and powerful, the trade which is now being deflected from Massowah to Sawakin would not be long in returning into its natural channel.

Though it has thus been shown that Adulis, or its modern degenerate representative, Massowah, is the only obvious natural and therefore permanent point of communication between the high land of Abyssinia and foreign countries desirous of approaching it by sea, it must not be overlooked that along the seaboard there are several other places through which a communication of some sort is held with the interior.

These are Hanfila, in 14° 40′ north latitude; Edh, in 14° north latitude; and Raheita, in 12° 40′ north latitude; all within the Red Sea, in addition to Tajurrah and Zeilah, outside the Straits of Babelmandel. Ianfila and Edh may be left out of consideration as insignificent, and as apparently never having been of any great importance.

Raheita, Tajurrah, and Zeilah require to be more particularly noticed, as being the ports through which a communication, more or less intimate and extensive, with the central and southern provinces of Abyssinia, has always been maintained.

Mr. Cooley has briefly alluded to the road between Tajurrah and Shoa. He might have added that this road is not a natural and consequently permanent commercial route, but rather one which the force of circumstances caused to be adopted, and which, so long as the rulers of Shoa maintained their independence, was kept open, though not so much by their physical as by their moral power, and their prudent management of the wild Dankali or Adal tribes occupying the low country intervening between Shoa and the coast. But even in the time of myself (1840) and Major Harris (1841) this road was perilous, as was proved by the assassination of three of his party on their way to Ankober; and now that Shoa, with its tributary provinces, has again become merged in the Abyssinian empire under Theodorus, it may be reasonably concluded that the commercial value of the road in question is restricted to the transport of salt from Lake Assal into the interior, and to the bringing of slaves down to the coast in payment for the salt, and that for Europeans it has become absolutely impracticable.

Previously to my arrival in Abyssinia in 1840 I was not aware of the real character of this road to Shoa, my impression having been, as stated in a "Memoir on the Commerce of Abyssinia," addressed, on December 9th, 1843, to the Earl of Aberdeen, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that "the trade might be diverted from the road by Massowah and Gondar into that by Tajurrah and Shoa, by which means the advantages of it would be thrown into British hands exclusively." But, as I proceeded to state, "a residence of nearly three years in that country, though it would not make me abandon the idea that the trade of Tajurrah might eventually be increased largely at the expense of Massowah, had shown me that this would not be by making Shoa the road through which it should be carried, but rather the country of the Wollo and Yedju (Edgio) Gallas, lying to the north of that kingdom." And I explained, that "the reason why Shoa is not suited to become the highroad between the coast and the interior, is that that country is for the most part within the basin of the river Djamma, being intersected by numerous branches of that river, which branches from the peculiar character of all Abyssinian streams (being violent torrents running in deep fissures in the high table land), present physical obstructions which are almost insurmountable in the way of this being ever made a grand commercial road. On the other hand, the route through the country of the Wollo and Yedju Gallas is along the high table land itself, forming the water-parting between the basin of the Djamma to

the south, and that of the Bashilo to the north. And that this is and always was the natural road from the interior to the coast near the Straits of Bab-el-Mandel is evident from the fact that, notwithstanding the great political changes which have taken place all over Abyssinia within the last three centuries,—changes which have gone far to annihilate Christianity, commerce, and every other species of culture among the inhabitants—this road, which I regard as having been in ancient times the main one communicating with Azab (Saba ?) just within the Straits of Bab-el-Mandel and thence with Mokha, almost directly opposite, is still kept open, considerable portions of the coffee at Baso being purchased for the consumption of the Mohammedans inhabiting the countries along this road as far as the coast, and a large share of the rock-salt from the salt plains of Tigré coming by the same way, whilst the slave merchants of Tajurrah and Raheita are in direct communication with Baso by means of the markets of Ancháro and Dowe, situate at the edge of the Abyssinian table-land to the east. And I added that, "as to this latter fact, I could speak positively from having at Baso met with people of Dowe who were purchasing slaves for merchants of Tajurrah, in whose company I had travelled from that place to Shoa, and who (as I was told) were awaiting at Dowe the arrival of the slaves so purchased, in order to take them down to Tajurrah."

I concluded therefore that "when the political condition of Abyssinia shall become more settled, which it may reasonably be expected to become, seeing that the savage Gallas, whose inroads caused the devastation of the country, are every generation becoming more civilized, those who have not amalgamated with the Christian Abyssinians having adopted the Mohammedan religion and formed several independent states in the very heart of the country, namely, that portion of it through which the road in question leads, we shall doubtless see this road resume its pristine importance, and the commerce from the coast to the interior in great part pass by this channel."

Accompanying the Memoir from which the foregoing extracts have been made was a map of the caravan roads from the coast to the interior, on which map was marked the road in question, and a copy of that map is contained in the pamphlet entitled "Letters on the Commerce and Politics of Abyssinia, addressed to the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade," which accompanies the present observations, and in which my Memoir of December 9th, 1843, is printed *in extenso*.

By comparing the map which accompanies Mr. Cooley's Memorandum with mine of 1843, it will be seen that the route recommended by him is precisely that which was thus pointed out and laid down by me one and twenty years ago.

But though Mr. Cooley has correctly delineated this important commercial road, he has fallen into material error with respect to various circumstances connected with it.

In the first place, when commenting on the great prosperity and commercial wealth attributed by Arabian writers of an early age to that part of Abyssinia which faces the Gulf of Aden, he says that "in the country of Jabart or Gabart, they say, were ninety-nine (that is to say a great multitude of) kings, with large towns, all enriched by commerce;" adding that "from the name Gabart is derived the denomition of Gabarty or Gibberty, now given in Abyssinia to merchants in general."

Now, without questioning the statements of the Arabian writers alluded to, it may be doubted whether Mr. Cooley has rightly interpreted those statements. On the authority of Abulfeda and Makrisi, as cited by the Rev. G. C. Renouard, formerly Foreign Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, in a note in page 60 of my paper, in the 17th volume of the Society's journal already referred to, Jiberah is nothing more than another name of the well-known province of Efat, or Ifat, of which our late ally, Sahela Selassie, was king, his official title having been "King of Shoa, Efat, and the Gallas," and he himself having been better known to the Danakil and Arabs of the coast as Sultan of Efat than as King of Shoa.

In Bruce's time, the Jiberatis, or natives of Jiberah—contracted to Jiberti by the modern Egyptians—appear to have been the principal traders of Abyssinia;* and thus in a certain sense Mr. Cooley is right in saying that (Gibberty) means (or used to mean) a merchant, but only in the same sense that in India a Parsee, an Armenian, or a Jew might be understood to signify a merchant, a trader; and neither in Jiberah—that is to say, Efat—itself, nor in any other part of Abyssinia, did I meet with the name of Jiberti in that sense, or indeed in any other, it having apparently become obsolete. It is not found in the dictionaries or other books of reference.

The conclusion which Mr. Cooley draws from this view of the case is, "that the country of Gabart facing the Gulf of Aden owed its former commercial eminence to

* "Travels," 3rd edition, vol, iii, p. 46.

its accessibility, with no great mountains nor extensive deserts intervening between it and the sea. The river Hawash (he adds), descending from Shoa till lost in the sands at a distance of forty or fifty miles from the coast, separates it on the east and south from the utterly inhospitable maritime tract. The river Anazo, on the north, flowing through Angote, and absorbed in like manner before it reaches the sea, divides it from the mountains of Tigré." Mr. Cooley admits that "respecting the course of the latter river there is little known," but he nevertheless says that "it seems likely that along the common watershed of these rivers may be found a gradual ascent to Efat and Yejow, and thence a comparatively direct and easy road to Amhara."

When, however, the facts are considered that the country of Jiberah—Mr. Cooley's Gabart—is in truth Efat, the road to which country is so well-known; and that the entire intervening regions between the Red Sea and the edge of the table-land in about 40° east longitude, possess the same physical character generally as those through which the road to Efat passes; it will be manifest that Mr. Cooley has formed but an imperfect idea of the nature of that country as a means of approach to the highlands.

As to the river Anazo, to which that gentlemen alludes as a separate river, distinct from the Hawash, its supposed existence has arisen from the position erroneously attributed to the town of Auça or Anca Gurele, in all maps previously to the year 1848. When the true position of Aussa was absolutely determined by myself and others, together with that of the river Hawash on which it is situate, it was found that this river coincided with the Anazo of the maps, and it became apparent that the latter name was simply a misspelling of the Portuguese Auaxo (Hawash), which by some means or other had got marked in its true position, though regarded as a different river.

Still, notwithstanding these objections to the various chorographical details of Mr. Cooley's paper, there can be no doubt of the road to which he has directed attention. Indeed, it appears to me that there are more important and pressing reasons than those adduced by that gentleman why this road by Tajurrah and Aussa should receive the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

The Kingdom of Abyssinia is at the present moment in the hands of a Sovereign, who, whatever may be his faults, and however uncertain the duration of his despotic sway, may nevertheless have it in his power to maintain his supremacy throughout the various provinces of that extensive and once most powerful State.

Owing to circumstances which need not be more particularly alluded to, Her Britannic Majesty has been brought into immediate communication with King Theodore, and the result may possibly be the establishment of friendly and intimate relations between the two Governments; in which case there can be no doubt an opening would present itself for a vast extension of the commercial intercourse between England and Abyssinia.

On reference to the map it will be seen that the entire low country, stretching between the edge of the Abyssinian table-land and the sea, is nowhere traversed by any river with the single exception of the Hawash; which river, having its rise at some distance in the interior regions to the south of Shoa, falls from the table-land in about 9° north latitude, and thence pursues its course northwards along the foot of the Ghauts as far as about 11° north latitude, where it is deflected eastward towards the Indian Ocean; and in times before those great volcanic convulsions, which formed the Gubbat-el-Kharab at the head of the Bay of Tajurrah and the Salt Lake Assal, between Gubbat-el-Kharab and Aussa, the river may perhaps have discharged its waters through that Bay into the Indian Ocean.

At the present day the Hawash forms an inland lake known as Lake Abhebbad, just below Aussa, and in stating this I may be permitted to mention that the knowledge of the existence of this lake, as well as of the remarkable fact that Lake Assal, like the Dead Sea, lies at a considerable depression below the Ocean, was first made public by me in the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society.

On its northern or left bank the Hawash receives several streams, of which the principal one is the "Milli;" of the existence of which river, and of its junction with the Hawash, I obtained very specific information when in Abyssinia. The "Milli" appears to run from north to south along the foot of the Ghauts, much in the same way that the upper Hawash skirts them from south to north.

Had the Hawash continued its course into the Bay of Tajurrah, the existence of a high road up its valley into the heart of Abyssinia would have been patent to the world. As it is, the brief interval of desert and barren country between the river and the ocean, has been sufficient to keep the existence of this road hidden, except from those few persons whose research has led them to the study of the works of ancient

writers presenting little interest to the world at large, or who, without possessing so thorough an acquaintance with those writings, have rendered the knowledge so acquired more accurate by personal investigations on this spot.

At the point where I crossed the Hawash, in about 9° 10′ north latitude, on my way to Shoa, I found the bed of the river to be 2,200 feet above the sea-level at Tajurrah. At an earlier part of my journey, without absolutely approaching the river, but at a distance probably of not more than thirty miles from Lake Abhebbar, I crossed the valley-plain of Gobad, the rain waters from which find their way into that lake; and the elevation of which plain I made to be 970 feet. This would give 900 feet as about the maximum elevation of the lake itself; and I should conclude it to be considerably less, as the general fall of the land is in that direction.

It is clear, then, that so far from there being on this road a gradual ascent from the sea-coast to the interior, there is at once an abrupt leap of 5,000 or 6,000 feet from the valley of the Hawash to the edge of the table-land of Amhara, similar to that which is met with after crossing that river on the way to Shoa. And this was, in fact, the result of my direct inquiries when in the country; as appears from the following statement in the 14th volume of the "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society," page 71: "Dowe lies eastward of Ain Amba (the capital of the Galla State of Warrahallu), being below it on the edge of the high land, which there falls rapidly towards the country of the Adal or Danakil, in the same way as it does from Ifat."

Important as this entrance into Abyssinia is as a commercial road, it is not the less so as the means of access to a portion of the low country; which, from its naturally fertile character, might easily be made most productive, and which likewise possesses mineral treasures of incalculable value.

Within the valleys of the Hawash and the rivers joining it from the north, and in a region watered by the tropical rains, there cannot but be extensive tracts of land quite as well suited to the growth of cotton as those of Taka and Northern Abyssinia, to which I directed attention in my letter of March 31st, 1852, to Lord Colchester, then Vice-President of the Board of Trade, being the last of my printed "Letters on the Commerce and Politics of Abyssinia;" and the remarks made on that occasion are consequently entirely applicable to the districts now under consideration.

Of the mineral productions of the regions lying to the north of the Hawash, between the Abyssinian highland and the Red Sea, the first is fossil salt, of which article extensive deposits are found at no great distance from the coast, in about 13° north latitude. This article, cut into small blocks, in shape much resembling a mower's whetstone, and weighing about 1¼lb. avoirdupois each, serves as the principal circulating medium throughout central and southern Abyssinia, and it also finds its way far into the interior of Africa, where it increases in value the further it goes, till at length it is said to be exchanged against gold, weight for weight. It has often been suggested that this salt plain near the coast should be seized by the Egyptians or Turks as a means of bringing Abyssinia into subjection.

Sulphur is an article of frequent occurrence in the mountains of igneous origin, extending along the whole eastern flank of Abyssinia. It occurs in a pure state, and is used by the natives generally in the manufacture of gunpowder. There are no regular works, the quantity to be picked up on the surface being more than sufficient for the actual demand. It cannot be doubted that, under a powerful Government, this sulphur might be made an important article of export.

Large deposits of pyrites are known to exist along various parts of the coast, coming down in fact to the very sea-shore.

Iron of the finest quality, and so pure as to require little more than rolling out, abounds throughout Abyssinia; it being used by the native smiths in the manufacture of weapons and of agricultural and domestic implements. Since King Theodore has had a number of European workmen in his employ, and coal has also been discovered within his dominions, he has established iron foundries on a large scale.

An article of still greater importance as regards the material development and prosperity of Abyssinia is coal, which is now known to exist plentifully in various parts of the country, and especially in the low districts between the coast of the Red Sea and the edge of the table-land.

A quarter of a century has now elapsed since the Rev. Messrs. Isenberg and Krapf, on their way from Tajurrah to Ankober, heard of the existence of coal at a short distance in the interior, to the north-west of the former place. In the month of November 1840, when I was at Tajurrah, I received similar information, and made special inquiries on the subject. My desire to obtain samples had however the only

result of causing some pieces of the basaltic rocks of the neighbourhood to be brought to me as coal, which I transmitted to Captain Haines, of the Indian navy, then Political Agent at Aden, with a Report.

About ten or twelve years later, Dr. Krapf heard likewise of the existence of coal in the interior of the country, near Gondar.

Nothing positive appears however to have been known respecting the Abyssinian coal till within the last few years, when the coal-field in the interior near Gondar has been visited by several Europeans. It has been briefly described by the Rev. J. H. Stern, in his published work "Wanderings among the Falashas," and also by M. Lejean, Consul of France at Massowah, who describes the coal as being of good quality and existing in large quantities, and who has made a detailed report to the French Government, which has not yet been made public. For the last year or more King Theodore has employed 150 or 200 men in digging this coal for the use of his European smiths and armourers.

On the other hand, the coal which Messrs. Isenberg and Krapf, and afterwards myself heard of at Tajurrah in 1839 and 1840, has recently been ascertained positively to exist, and (as would seem) in immense quantities along the whole western or Abyssinian shores of the Red Sea, and at no great distance from the coast, between 12° and 15° of north latitude; its northern extremity being at a distance of three or four days' journey in a south-easterly direction from Massowah, and its southern extremity (assuming it to be continuous) lying to the westward or south-westward of Raheita, near the entrance of the Red Sea, whilst its distance from the sea-coast is (in parts at least) not more than three or four hours.

The discovery of the northern portion of this second coal-field near the coast is attributed to Dr. Schönfeld, a German naturalist, who is said to have reported on the subject to Captain Cameron, Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah; but owing to the long absence of that officer from his post and the unfortunate position in which he is placed, there is reason to believe that he has not communicated this important information to Her Majesty's Government; if indeed the report in question has ever reached his hands.

Respecting the southern portion of this coast coal-field, information was (if I am not mistaken) communicated about two years ago to the Political Resident at Aden by Padre Giuseppe Sapeto, a Roman Catholic missionary, who went out to Northern Abyssinia in 1837, and remained there several years. As far as I am aware, Padre Giuseppe was never in Southern Abyssinia, so that his knowledge of the coal there would appear to have been derived from other travellers, whom it is not in my power to say. I have seen a sample of this coal, which is of good quality and fit for the use of steamers.

There is yet one other article that requires to be mentioned as forming a portion of the mineral wealth of Abyssinia. This is gold. Mr. Cooley has directed attention to the account given by Cosmas Indicopleustes of the trade in gold-dust between the country of the Agaus, near the source of the Nile, and Adulis; but in doing so he has repeated his well-known error of supposing the Nile of Cosmas to be the Blue River, the Nile of Bruce; whereas from the Adulitic inscription and other authorities it is evident, that the river intended by Cosmas is the Takhazie, which really has its origin in the country of the Agaus, the primitive inhabitants of Abyssinia, who still inhabit the mountainous country of Lasta, in which that river rises.

The subject of the trade in gold, as brought from the interior, is treated of in my "Memoir on the Commerce of Abyssinia." My object in adverting to it here, is to repeat the opinion expressed by me nearly thirteen years ago, that the entire eastern side of the basin of the Nile from Berenice Pauchrysos (the all-golden Berenice) in the north, to Sofalat-edh-Dhahab (the Gold Coast) in the south, is auriferous; the gold discovered in various portions of it since the earliest ages, being brought down by the tributaries of that river from the great mountain range of Eastern Africa, of which the high table-land of Abyssinia forms a part, and which there is regard as a meridional metalliferous cordillera, similar in its general characters to the Ural Mountains and those of America and Australia.

When I was in Shoa in 1841, I heard of gold having been found there, but as this was long before the discoveries of the precious metal in California and Australia, I was incredulous on the subject. I am now firmly persuaded that gold will ere long be discovered in these eastern ghauts of Africa, like as within the last few days news has arrived of its presence in the Andes of South America. Should this discovery take place anywhere between the sources of the Takhazie (Nile), where Cosmas Indicopleustes records its existence twelve centuries ago, and those of the Djamma, where I

heard of it in 1841, it would in its immediate effects doubtless exercise a more powerful influence over the destinies of Abyssinia than any other event that could possibly occur.

On a review then of all the circumstances connected with the road of Central Abyssinia by the way of Tajurrah and Aussa, and the regions through which that road passes, and with which it communicates, there can be no question as to its very great importance.

Unfortunately the social and political condition of the inhabitants of those regions is such, that until a radical change for the better takes place amongst them, there can be little hope of this road being rendered available to British enterprise and commerce.

For, notwithstanding that the physical character of the way to Amhara along the northern bank of the Hawash may be superior to that of the way to Shoa on the other side of the river, it is much to be questioned whether the Dankali and other tribes who occupy or infest it, are at all preferable to those on the latter road.

Mr. Cooley, after remarking that "on the coast where the proposed route starts, the English now exercise considerable influence," adds that "the ruler of Auca Gurele (Aussa) is not so far inland as to think of defying the masters of the sea, and indeed it is not likely that he would reject advances obviously made with a view to trade."

From this remark it is manifest that that writer's Auca is not the Aussa of the present day, for whatever may have been the importance of the rulers of that place in former times, their power has long since been annihilated; and Aussa itself, which was formerly an important town, and less than a century ago, the principal seat of the united tribes of the Mudaito Danakil, is now only "an extensive encampment, at which is held a perpetual fair, frequented by all the tribes of Danakil, Eesah, Somanli, and Mudaito."*

But the difficulties of this road into the heart of Abyssinia are far from being restricted to the passage through the tribes occupying the lowlands; and it may be questioned whether the obstacles in the way of an advance on the capital would not be even greater after the high table-land should have been reached.

During the last three centuries the central portion of the ancient Empire of Ethiopia, the Kingdom of Amhara, which gave its national language and customs to the other provinces of Abyssinia, has been in the possession of numerous and powerful Galla tribes of the two great families of Wollo and Yedju (Edjow), who have divided it into several independent States, and who are almost exclusively bigoted Mahometans. Until the rise of the present usurper of the Throne, the actual sovereignty of Abyssinia had for nearly a century been hereditary in the family of Ras Guksa, of Galla extraction, whose lineal descendant, Ras Ali, acting in the name of the titular Emperor, entered into a Treaty of friendship and commerce with Her Britannic Majesty on November 2, 1849; and the cause of Ras Guksa's family is (not unnaturally) warmly espoused by the whole of these Mahometan Galla tribes.

On the other hand, King Theodore has vowed to extirpate Mahometanism from Ethiopia, and indeed, from the face of the earth; so that, both on religious as well as on political grounds, these Gallas of Amhara are the inveterate enemies of that Monarch, who about three years ago invaded their country at the head of a large army, and is said to have slaughtered 100,000 persons of both sexes and of all ages.

Seeing the distracted state of the entire empire, it is not to be imagined that the subjection of these Mahometan Gallas is anything but nominal and temporary; and it may consequently be expected that they will avail themselves of every and any opportunity to throw off his yoke, just as the other provinces have done and continue doing; Tigré, according to the latest intelligence, having again raised the standard of rebellion under Deresu Gobazye; that is to say, Deresu, the son of Gobazye, and as Godjam did last year under Tzadala Gwalu-Tzadala, the son of Dedjatch Gwalu.

Easy then as it might be for a military force hostile to King Theodore to pass through Amhara unmolested, or, perhaps, even assisted by the inhabitants, it is very doubtful whether any Europeans wishing to proceed to that Monarch's capital for the purposes of trade or with other friendly intentions, would be allowed to do so, even though furnished with a safe-conduct from him. At all events their passage with immunity would probably depend far more on their own physical means of enforcing it, than on any support that could be afforded them by King Theodore.

In the present state of affairs it is consequently hopeless to look for any material benefit to be derived from this road from Tajurrah, through Aussa to Central Abyssinia. But whenever the political condition of that country shall have become more settled, we shall as I have already expressed the opinion in my Memoir of 1843) "doubtless

* Harris's "Highlands of Æthiopia" (2nd Edition), vol. i, p. 175.

see this road resume its pristine importance, and the commerce from the coast to the interior in great part pass by this channel."

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

Bekesbourne, December 16, 1864.

Inclosure 4 in No. 717.

*Dr. Beke to the Earl of Malmesbury.**

My Lord, *Halai, April* 27, 1866.

I HAD the honour to address your Lordship on March 28th and April 3rd (under one envelope), and again on April 9th. These letters were sent down to Mr. Munzinger, in charge of the British Consulate at Massowah, to be forwarded by the "Victoria," which steamer arrived there on April 16th, and returned next day to Aden. To my exceeding annoyance Mr. Munzinger informs me that, through an oversight on his part, the packet containing the earlier two of my letters to your Lordship was not delivered to the captain of the "Victoria." They will, therefore, only reach your Lordship's hands at the same time as the present communication.

The delay in the arrival of these letters is, however, not very important, as the necessity for the consideration of the best way of entering Abyssinia has fortunately not occurred, and, it is to be hoped, will not arise. The reports of Mr. Rassam's proceedings are most favourable, and, if only they are to be depended on, we may expect soon to witness the arrival at Massowah of Her Majesty's Consul and the rest of the unfortunate Europeans who have so long been in chains.

But, even supposing the Emperor to have thus promptly responded to Her Majesty's letter, there is a contingency which may yet arise. Mr. Rassam will doubtless have entered into some engagements on behalf of Her Majesty, and the Abyssinian Monarch may be suspicious as to the nonfulfilment of these engagements when once Mr. Rassam and the rest of the prisoners are beyond his reach. He may therefore insist on retaining a hostage for the fulfilment of these engagements, and, if so, whom so likely as Mr. Rassam himself? Without discussing the rights of the matter, I will merely say that native Abyssinians of intelligence, who know Theodore's character well, assure me that nothing is more probable.

The fact, therefore, shall simply be assumed, and the question then is, what would Her Majesty's Government do in such a case? They might adopt one of three courses which have already been suggested with a view to the liberation of Consul Cameron and his companions.

1. Send an Embsssy on a more extensive scale.
2. Declare war against Theodore and invade his country.
3. Induce the Egyptian Government in their stead to invade Abyssinia.

The first would now be out of the question: the other two might, and doubtless would, lead to the imprisonment, torture, and cruel death of the unfortunate "hostage."

As, however, something must be done, it remains to be seen whether there might not be a fair prospect of securing his safety by some indirect means. And the following plan has suggested itself to me, which I beg leave to submit for your Lordship's consideration:—

The natives of Abyssinia, from one end of the country to the other, are so thoroughly disgusted with Theodore that they would gladly hail the accession to the throne of any one who would dare to place himself on it. Now there are several "rebel" Chiefs, each of whom might be inclined to declare himself Emperor, if he saw the way at all clear.

The grandson of Sahela Selassie, King of Shoa, whose dominions were completely conquered by Theodore and himself taken prisoner, escaped last year, and has re-asserted his independence. His dominions lie in the south-east of Abyssinia—Tadela Gwalu, of Godjam, is the representative of a line of illustrious ancestors, and possesses great power and influence in the south-west. Tessu Gobazye, a *nouveau né*, has acquired considerable power in the north-west: and, lastly, the Waagshum Gobazye, whose hereditary dominions are in Lasta, has, since the death of Agau Negusye, acquired possession of Tigré in the north-east. The absolute power of each of these Chiefs may perhaps be regarded as about equal; and any one of them, if backed, or even encouraged, by a foreign Power, would be able to compete with Theodore, whose power, and yet more his prestige, have long been on the wane, and who only keeps

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

together a strong army by leading them from province to province to plunder and destroy.

Of these four pretenders there can be no question that Waagshum Gobazye has the greatest claim to the sympathy and support of an European Power, as being the Ruler of the most important division of the Empire, on account of its proximity to the sea-coast.

The arguments adduced in the letter which I addressed in 1848 to the late Viscount Palmerston, when Foreign Secretary, and which is given in my printed "Letters on the Commerce and Politics of Abyssinia," remain unaltered, being as applicable to the state of affairs at the present day as they were at the time when they were written.

The present Ruler of Tigré has, however, peculiar personal advantages possessed neither by any of his rivals nor by any of his predecessors in the government of that province. This is shown in the accompanying Memorandum, to which I beg leave to refer. There can be no question that if the Waagshum were to announce publicly the resumption of the Throne of his ancestors, all the inhabitants of the Empire would flock to his standard, and he would soon put an end to the tyranny and life of the usurper Theodore, and silence the claims of all other pretenders.

I would, therefore, respectfully suggest that the British Government should afford to Waagshum Gobazye such material assistance and support as should enable him to declare himself Emperor of Abyssinia and to maintain himself afterwards on the Throne. For this purpose it might not be necessary; and, with a view to the safety of the assumed "hostage," it would hardly be advisable for such support to be afforded openly. A few hundred muskets, with an ample supply of ammunition and a number of Congreve rockets (transportable where Artillery could not be, and better suited to the object in view), and, in addition to them, a moderate subsidy in money, are all that would be requisite. These might easily be introduced from the head of the Bay of Adulis (Annesley Bay); or, if the susceptibilities of the Egyptian Government should have to be considered, they might be "run" from Harena, in Hawakil Bay, which is in about the same latitude (15° N.) as the head of Annesley Bay only in the main sea and altogether away from Massowah. Perhaps a few European soldiers might at the same time be introduced to fire the rockets and to drill the natives in the proper use of the muskets; but this would depend on circumstances.

I should be quite ready to undertake the suitable negociations and arrangements with Waagshum Gobazye. I am not aware that I am known to him personally, but I was at his father's Court at Sokota in 1843, on my way home, and was well-treated by him during my short stay there.

According to all accounts Gobazye is of considerable talent, brave, of good character and amiable disposition. He is about 30 years of age.

This recognition and support of Gobazye might be undertaken either by England alone or in conjunction with France.

To continue on terms of any sort with Theodore would be loss of time, and even worse. He cannot last much longer under any circumstances; and it might be hoped his defeat or death would, without more [? word omitted], leave the "British hostage" free to quit the country, and Her Majesty's Government free from all engagements with him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

P.S. *Massowah, May 12th*, 1866.—Intelligence has just been received that the captives have started on their way to the coast and may be shortly expected either here or at Souakim. Notwithstanding this good news I still retain the opinion expressed in my letter, and, therefore, send it on.

C. B.

Inclosure 5 in No. 717.

*Memorandum by Dr. Beke, showing the right of Waagshum Gobazye to the Throne of Abyssinic.**

THE antiquity and former rank, wealth, and power of the Empire of Ethiopia or Abyssinia, are matters of history.

Its inhabitants received Christianity in the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

and intimate relations continued to subsist between the Byzantine Empire and Ethiopia till the rise and advance of Mahometanism shut the latter out from the western world.

Without dwelling on the details of the internal history of Abyssinia, it will be sufficient to state that about 1,000 years ago the line of Christian sovereigns claiming descent from Menelek, the son of Solomon, King of Israel, and the Queen of Sheba, was violently set aside by a female Falasha (Israelitish) usurper, who massacred all the members, save one, of the Imperial family, and whose descendants occupied the throne for nearly 200 years.

About the time of the Norman conquest of England, this intrusive dynasty was superseded by a Christian Sovereign of the House of Zagye, whose origin was in the Kingdom of Lasta, and which continued to reign till the year 1268; when one of the most remarkable events in the history of any nation is said to have occurred.

The reigning Emperor, Nakwetolaab, at the instance of the famous native saint, Aboona Tekla Haimanot, voluntarily abdicated the throne of Ethiopia in favour of Yekweno Amlak, who claimed to be descended from the sole survivor of the family of Menilek. In return for this abdication, Nakwetolaab and his descendants were recognized as independant sovereigns in Waag, the chief province of Lasta, subject only to the suzerainty of the Emperors, and with the agreement that if the line of Yekweno Amlak should ever fail, that of Nakwetolaab should resume the throne. The latter had further the following personal privileges conferred on them: they might enter the inner court of the palace with their drums beating; might come before the Emperor without uncovering the upper part of the body and rolling their robe round their waist; might be seated at meals before the tables are served (all other persons standing); and might occupy a chair of state at the side of the Emperor's throne, according to the Abyssinian saying:—

"Negus la Wanbar
Waagshum la Manbar."

These privileges were retained inviolate by the Waagshums, or Princes of Waag, till the time of the present usurper Theodore, who barbarously mutilated and then hanged Waag-shum Gebra Medbrin, the father of the present Gobazze, and annulled all his rights and privileges.

For 600 years from the time of Yekweno Amlak, the throne of Ethiopia was occupied by the lineal descendants of that monarch, whose power and authority kept however gradually on the wane; till at length, towards the close of the eighteenth century, the once absolute and independent Emperors of Ethiopia, like the last Merovingian Kings of France, became mere tools in the hands of their *Maires du Palais*, who bore the title of Ras, a dignity which for more than half a century was hereditary in the family of Ras Guksa.

The form of placing a puppet Emperor on the throne was continued till Ras Ali, Guksa's grandson, was conquered by his son-in-law, Dedjatz Kassai, of Kwara, who having subjugated all his rivals, and scorning the secondary title of Ras, caused himself to be crowned Emperor, by the name of Theodore the Second. In doing so he pretended to be the monarch of that name, who, according to a native prophecy, is to divide the eastern world with the Emperors of Rome. that is to say the Eastern Empire; he being crowned at Jerusalem, whilst the Emperor of Russia, as the head of the Greek Empire, is crowned at Constantinople, and in whose time all the world is to become Christian.

This vast scheme, which is rather an appropriation than a fulfilment of the native prophecy, is of foreign origin. It would be out of place here to trace it to its source; but it may be stated as a fact that the Abyssinians generally did not readily accept the present usurper as the true Theodore of prophecy, who is to come from the east, whereas Kassai's native country, Kwara, is in the west. That it was only in consequence of his wonderful success at first that they submitted to close their eyes to this discrepancy; and that in consequence of his excessive tyranny, cruelty, and oppression —so diametrically opposed to the attributes of the Christian Monarch they were led to expect—they now style him Pharoah, King of Egypt, and sigh for the Moses who is to deliver them from the hands of the oppressor.

To look for such a deliverer from among the degenerate descendants of Yekweno Amlak, would be useless. Since the death of the Emperor Tekla Haimanot II, now just a century ago, they have ceased to occupy the throne of their illustrious ancestors by succession, having been placed on it and removed from it at the caprice of every powerful chief who could gain possession of the capital, and desired the title of Ras or

Vizier as a cloak to his actual power. So frequent indeed were these changes that there were as many as six Emperors living at one time, despised and neglected; and the existing members of this family are become so thoroughly lowered and contemptible, and their right to the throne so completely ignored, that not one of them could hope to bring a dozen soldiers to rally round the standard of "the Lion of the Tribe of Judah," were he to unfurl it, an act of madness which would inevitably insure his immediate and violent death.

Under these circumstances, the line of Yekweno Amlak may be considered as virtually extinct; and the existing hereditary Prince of Waag, Gobazye, as the descendant and representative of the Emperor Nakwetolaab, has consequently a right to resume the throne abdicated by his ancestor, under the contract which reserved that throne to his descendants in the event which may be regarded as having now occurred.

Halai, Abyssinia, April 27, 1866. (Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 717.

Map of Abyssinia, by Dr. Beke: 1866.

Inclosure 7 in No. 717.

Extract from a Lecture on "Abyssinia and the Abyssinians," delivered by Dr. Beke in the Theatre of the London Institution, on Wednesday, January 16, 1867.*

RISING from the alluvial plains which skirt it on the north-west, the mountain system of Abyssinia widens as it extends southwards, till it soon acquires a breadth of 200 or 300 miles, and even more, forming an extensive table-land, of which the seaward edge runs from north to south, at a general elevation of about 8,000 feet, and presents, therefore, towards the sea-coast, the appearance of a lofty range of mountains.

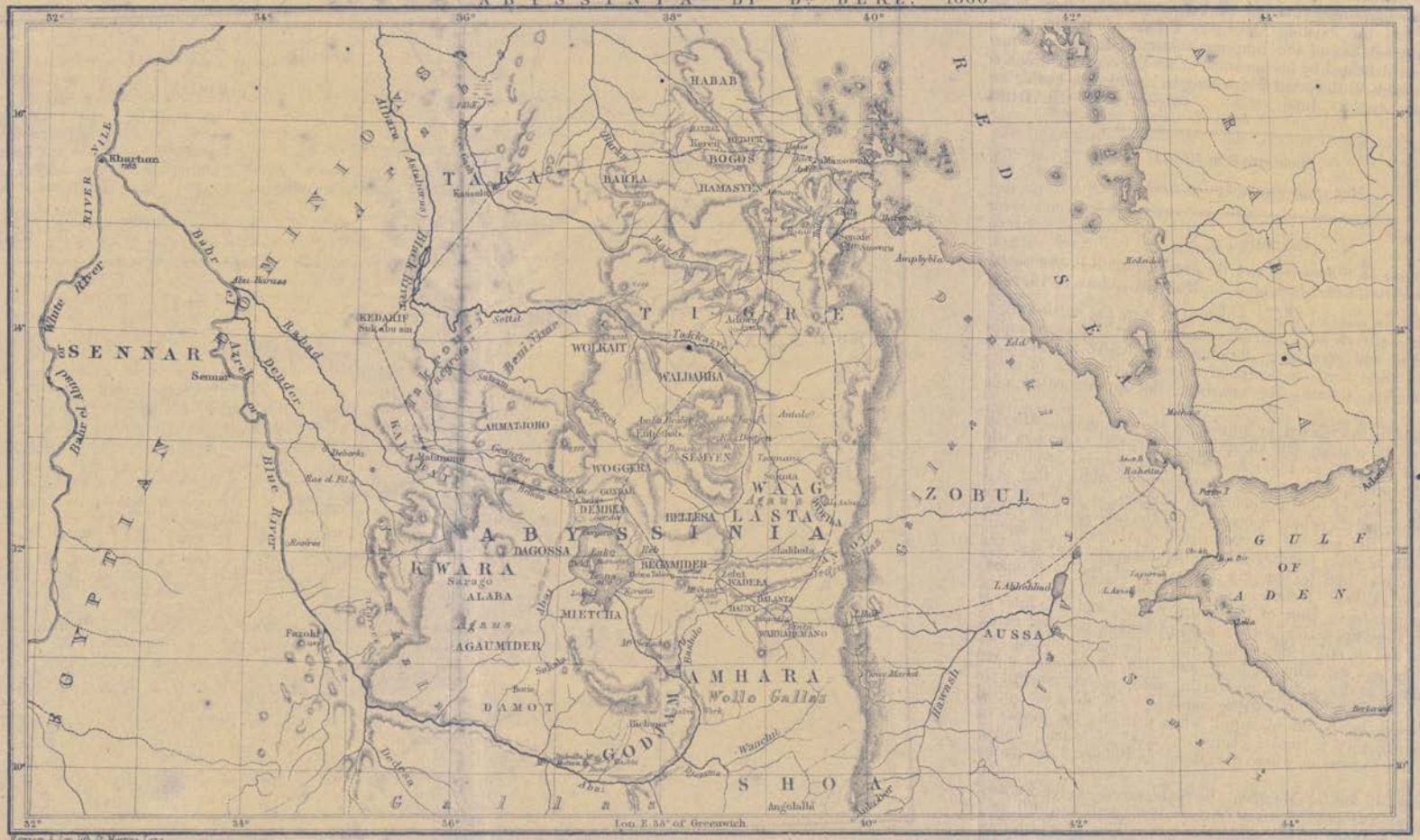
This table-land is intersected by numerous streams, which, after a short course over the surface of the plateau, fall abruptly into deep-cut valleys, in which they soon reach a depression of 3,000 or 4,000 feet below the general level of the table-land. The valleys of the principal rivers are of considerable width; that of the Abai (for example), in the south of the peninsula of Godjam, is at least twenty-five miles between the extreme points, where it breaks from the table-land on either side. These deep-cut valleys are the peculiar characteristic of Abyssinia, as serving to convert what was originally a plain country into a mountainous one; not by upraising the mountains themselves, but by carving them out of the solid mass through the formation of these valleys. Hence it may be understood how a traveller, who has not taken a comprehensive view of the entire region, and who finds himself on the banks of a river shut up within such a mass of broken country, rising to the height of 3,000 or 4,000 feet on either side of him, should be led to imagine that in ascending from the river he was ascending a lofty mountain, or crossing a mountain-chain; whereas, on arriving at the summit, he has in reality merely reached the continuation of the table-land, from which he had previously descended on the opposite side of the river. This should be borne in mind when perusing the works of travellers in Abyssinia or countries of a similar character, many of whom, under an erroneous impression, describe mountains where mountains, in the usual acceptation of the term, do not exist.

The Amba or hill-fort of Magdala, the State prison of the Emperor Theodore, in which the unhappy European captives have so long been and still are confined, may be adduced as an instance of the erroneous conceptions to which this mistaken view of the physical character of Abyssinia may give rise.

Mr. Stern, one of the ill-fated prisoners, in a letter to his wife, which I have quoted in my recently-published work, "The British Captives in Abyssinia," says:—"As I am reminded of the approach of winter, I will give you a hasty sketch of the place where we and upwards of 200 unhappy natives of all ranks and conditions may have to pass the ensuing inclement season of winter. [And unfortunately they passed not only that winter, but also a second, and I much fear they will have to pass a third.] Just picture to your imagination an isolated locality, rising out of the midst of a jumble of conical hills, deep ravines, and serrated ridges; and you have Amba Magdala. On the summit there are clusters of thatched huts, occupied by

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

ABYSSINIA BY Dr BEKE. 1866



Harrison & Son, lith. St Martins Lane

about 1,000 troops. Not far from the church, which you recognize by an apex surmounted by a glittering cross, you gaze on a mass of wretched hovels, that stand in mocking contrast round four spacious circular dwellings. You approach a few steps nearer, and you behold a strong thorn fence, guarded by groups of sooty soldiers, close to whom lie, basking in the sun, bands of unfortunates, loaded with galling fetters. This is the royal prison." This description, though minute in some particulars, does not enable us to form any definite idea of the natural features of the place.

We will now turn to the description which the well-known missionary, Dr. Krapf, has given of Magdala, as seen by him on his journey from Shoa in March 1842. Having left Tanta, the residence of the Imam Liban, the Mahommedan Chief of Warrahemano, since conquered by the Emperor Theodore, Dr. Krapf reached the bed of a river running to the Bashilo, where, he says, he saw the stronghold of Magdala. "This is a high and large hill, resembling the form of a square, the banks of which are almost perpendicular. There is a plain on the top, with water and a field for cultivation, on which the Imam has a garrison and keeps his treasures, and in which he takes refuge when an enemy is too strong for him. No Abyssinian force could easily take this stronghold. There is only one entrance, which is in the east."

From this it will be perceived that Dr. Krapf, being in the bed of the river, described Magdala as a high and large hill, which, without the explanation I am about to give, would convey an entirely erroneous idea of the true character of the place. I never was at Magdala myself, but I have seen numerous Ambas of precisely similar character, and the following description of that of Dey, which I visited in October 1841, will answer equally well for Magdala.

After leaving Angolàlla, the Galla capital of Shoa, I proceeded westward across the level country of Shea Myeda (the plains of Shoa); till, in the district of Enori, the plain gradually narrows between the valley of the river Bèrsena and that of the Adabai, and at length ends in a point, across which a stockade is thrown, at the gate of which travellers are stopped, till the Governor's permission is obtained for their passage. Upon admission, their road passes round to the right, within this stockade, but outside of an inner one, descending almost perpendicularly down abrupt basaltic rocks, by a narrow path impracticable for beasts of burthen, My luggage had consequently to be unloaded at the outer gate, and carried on mens' backs to near the bottom of this pass, where it was re-loaded.

"After descending a cross valley between the two principal ones, which is, however, far from attaining their depth, the road winds round to the left, and up a separate mass of rock of considerable extent, forming the Amba or hill-fort of Dey, the residence of Aito Bisàwer, the Governor of the province of Morat, which name the country bears from the point where the descent from Shoa Myeda begins. On reaching the top of the Amba, one finds oneself on a level of sufficient extent to contain a tolerably large village of the Governor's retainers, reaching on the west side to the Church of St. George, where the ground begins to fall."

It will be perceived how completely this description, though of a totally different place, takes in all the points mentioned both by Mr. Stern and Dr. Krapf respecting Magdala. The elevation of Dey, which is merely a continuation of the plateau of Shoa Myeda, and is about the same distance as Magdala from the edge of the table-land (forty or fifty miles), I found to be 7,887 feet, being between 600 and 700 feet lower than Angolàlla. The fortress of Dey is a very important station, situated as it is at the junction of the Adabai and Berséna, it being thus the key to the high plain-country to the west, at the same time that it commands the mountainous country below it in the opposite direction. For it must be remarked that, from the peculiar physical character of Abyssinia, the plain country is above, whilst the mountainous country is below. There are only three roads by which the Amba of Dey is at all accessible, and only one of these is practicable for beasts of burthen, the other two being through mere fissures in the rock, by which only one person can pass at a time.

When I left Dey, the road at first went for some little distance past the Church of St. George, most delightfully situated on a level and smooth plot of grass, studded with cypresses, and commanding an extensive view over the valleys to the north and south. The baggage-horses having to make a long circuit round the Amba, I remained seated for upwards of an hour, when, seeing them below, I descended by a chasm in the rock, still worse than that by Enari, to the large village of Debra Biseràt. I need not continue further the narrative of my journey, which, during the same and part of the following day, was always descending. Sufficient will have been said to show that Amba Magdala, though, from the bed of the river below,

it had to Dr. Krapf the appearance of a high and large hill, is merely a point of the table-land of Warrahemano; it being most probably several hundred feet lower than the mass of that table-land, in the same way that Dey is lower than the plains of Shoa, of which it is the extremity.

It is hardly necessary that I should urge the importance of bearing this distinction in mind, especially as Abyssinia possesses numerous mountains properly so called.

No. 718.

Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 17, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant,* and to thank you for the information therein contained respecting Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 719.

Mr. Murray to Major-General Sir E. Lugard.†

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 20, 1867.

THE Secretary of State for War is doubtless aware from papers which have been laid before Parliament, that early in the year 1864 King Theodore of Abyssinia imprisoned and illtreated Her Majesty's Consul, and that, with a view of effecting Captain Cameron's release, a special mission was sent to that country in charge of Mr. Rassam, the Assistant Political Resident at Aden, who was accompanied by two British officers, and who was the bearer of a letter from the Queen to King Theodore.

This mission however has not only been unsuccessful, but its members have also been detained in captivity and in chains.

The time has therefore arrived when it is needful for Her Majesty's Government to consider what further steps it may be at once possible and advisable to take in order to vindicate the honour of the Crown, and to protect Her Majesty's subjects from further harm.

I am accordingly directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you the accompanying printed papers, which contain a history of all that has passed up to the present time, together with a copy of a letter to the India Office,‡ in which the assistance and co-operation of that department is requested, and I am to state that Lord Stanley would be glad that this subject should engage the early and careful consideration of Sir John Pakington with a view of deciding upon the course to be adopted.

Since the above was written Lord Stanley has received a letter (copy inclosed) from Dr. Beke,* whose information as to routes in Abyssinia may be of value.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 720.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Merivale.†

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 20, 1867.

THE Secretary of State for India is already aware, from the communications made to him by the Political Resident at Aden, of the present position of affairs between this country and Abyssinia, and I am directed by Lord Stanley to request that you will call his attention to the gravity of the circumstances, and to the necessity of considering what further steps should be taken with a view of procuring the release of the captives.

* No. 717. † Laid before Parliament, 1867. ‡ No. 720.

Besides Colonel Merewether's reports, of which, for convenience, I transmit to you printed copies,* Lord Stanley has received from Major-General Sir William Coghlan a Memorandum,† of which a copy is also annexed, on the measures which it might be possible to adopt for effecting the object in view; and as the employment or co-operation of Her Majesty's Indian Forces would be necessary in carrying out operations, Lord Stanley is anxious to obtain the opinion of Sir Stafford Northcote as to the course to be pursued.

You will perceive that Colonel Merewether is of opinion that force must be resorted to, and that Sir William Coghlan, who has hitherto deprecated the employment of force, has reluctantly come to the conclusion that it is inevitable. He seems, however, to think that the preliminary steps which would be necessary before troops could be dispatched from India, and which would of course, reach King Theodore's ears, might have the effect of opening his eyes to the danger of persevering in a wrongful course, and might produce the release of the captives, in which case perhaps the employment of troops might be avoided.

The probability of their being required must, however, be so far counted on, in the event of its being decided to employ force, and to insure their services being available at the right season, which appears to be in October.

A copy of this letter will be sent to the Secretary of State for War, with whom I am to request that Sir Stafford Northcote will communicate.

I also transmit a copy of two letters which Lord Stanley has addressed to Colonel Merewether,‡ in reply to his last communications, and also a copy of the letter therein referred to as addressed by Lord Stanley to King Theodore.§

Since the above was written Lord Stanley has received a letter (copy inclosed) from Dr. Beke,‖ whose information as to routes in Abyssinia may be of value.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 721.

Lord Stanley to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.¶

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 20, 1867.

I HAVE received your several despatches of December 10, 1866, January 15, February 15, and February 28, 1867;** and have learnt therefrom, with unfeigned concern, that all the efforts which have hitherto been made by Her Majesty's Government to effect, by reasonable means, the release of the persons detained in captivity by King Theodore, have been unsuccessful. Up to this time, Her Majesty's Government have been willing to believe that King Theodore's intentions were pacific, and were based upon a desire, however unusually indicated according to European notions, of introducing into his country the enlightened intelligence of other Christian nations; but the fact of the King having lost sight of the rule, observed throughout all ages, of considering the person of an envoy as sacred, and having imprisoned and detained in chains Mr. Rassam and his companions, who were sent by the Queen on a peaceful mission to him, necessarily leads Her Majesty's Government to the conclusion that peaceful relations are not the King's object, and that the idea of entering into friendly relations with him must be abandoned.

Under these circumstances it will be for Her Majesty's Government to consider carefully the course which they shall adopt; but being unwilling, at least in the first instance, to proceed to extremities, I have addressed to King Theodore, by Her Majesty's command, the accompany letter, which you will forward to him; and if at the expiration of three months from the date of despatching it to him, the captives shall not have been set at liberty and have left Abyssinia, you will either send home, or sell the presents now in your charge, and hold the proceeds at my disposal.

I have only to add that I am in communication with the India and War Offices, in regard to any further steps which circumstances may render necessary.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

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* Nos. 695 and 700, Inclosure in No. 705, Inclosure in No. 712, and No. 709. † No. 708.
‡ Nos. 721 and 722. § Inclosure in No. 721. ‖ No. 717.
¶ Laid before Parliament, 1867. ** Nos. 695, 700, 705, and 712.

Inclosure in No. 721.

*Lord Stanley to King Theodore.**

Foreign Office, London, April 16, 1867.

I AM commanded by the Queen, my Sovereign, to state to your Majesty that she had expected to hear by this time that the prisoners, respecting whom Her Majesty wrote to you on the 4th of October last,† had been all released and had arrived at Massowah, and that the presents which were awaiting their arrival at Massowah, were already on their way to Abyssinia. The Queen regrets to find that, although you had become acquainted with the contents of her letter by the copy sent up by Mr. Flad, you had hesitated to comply with Her Majesty's wishes for the release of the prisoners, and instead of sending them at once to Massowah to be exchanged against the presents, had looked still to obtain the presents on the faith of your own assurance that, on the receipt of them, you would release the captives. Looking to what has already passed, the Queen cannot again write to your Majesty, but she has desired me to write, and to say that her determination, as expressed in Her Majesty's letter, of which you know the contents, is unchanged and unchangeable; and that so far from being willing to allow the presents to go on before the prisoners have reached Massowah, the Queen has sent orders that the presents shall be returned to Europe, unless the British authorities at Massowah are satisfied within three months after the dispatch of this letter from that port, a copy of which is sent by three different messengers, that the prisoners are actually released and on their way to the coast. In that case the return of the presents may be deferred for such time as may suffice for the prisoners to perform the journey to Massowah, on their arrival at which place the presents will be made over to your Agents.

The Queen has forbidden her Agents to enter into further correspondence on these matters. Her Majesty requires for the last time, by her Secretary of State, that the prisoners should be be made over to her, and she trusts that your Majesty will be sufficiently well-advised to comply with her demand, rather than forfeit the friendship which, notwithstanding all that has happened, the Queen is still disposed to entertain for you.

Having thus fulfilled the commands of the Queen my Sovereign, I bid your Majesty heartily farewell.

Your sincere Friend,
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 722.

*Mr. Murray to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 20, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you a duplicate and triplicate of Her Majesty's letter to King Theodore,‡ referred to in his Lordship's despatch of to-day, and I am to instruct you to send each of the three copies to Magdala by a separate messenger.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 723.

*Lord Stanley to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 20, 1867.

WITH reference to my letter of this day's date, forwarding a letter which I have addressed to King Theodore,‡ I have now to state to you that I concur in the suggestion made in your letter of the 4th of March,§ that the artizans who went out under your supervision with a view of entering into King Theodore's service, should at once be advised to return to England, as Her Majesty's Government cannot now, under any circumstances, sanction their proceeding to Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 661. ‡ Inclosure in No. 721. § No. 709.

No. 724.

*Consul Moore to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 22.)**

My Lord, *Jerusalem, April* 3, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I received a few days ago, through Colonel Stanton, the letter addressed to the King of Abyssinia by the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople† relative to the British captives in that country, obtained by Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte. I forthwith waited on the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, with whom I am on very friendly terms, who promised me to give his immediate attention to the matter. It was agreed that his Eminence should send me word when his arrangements were made, when I would repair to the Patriarchate to be made acquainted therewith. I begged the Patriarch to select an ecclesiastic of suitable rank, and urged, in becoming terms, expedition.

To-day I received the invitation agreed upon, and have just returned from the interview with the Patriarch. His Eminence informed me that he had selected Bishop Sahak, his Vicar-General, to proceed to Abyssinia on this service, and that he would furnish him with a letter to the King in addition to that of the Constantinople Prelate, which he did not consider would be of much use, with an Abyssinian translation (as it was very doubtful whether a proper translation from the Armenian or Arabic could be made on the spot), and with presents consisting of objects from Jerusalem, such as crucifixes, rosaries, &c., which would be held in the highest veneration by the King.

His Eminence added that the letter was being drawn up, properly illuminated, and the presents selected, and that he hoped all would be ready in time to enable his Envoy to embark for Egypt by the next French steamer on the 14th instant. I applauded the Patriarch's arrangements and thanked him.

I will not fail to report to your Lordship the final arrangements and departure of the Bishop.

I should add that the Patriarch desired that the name and nature of the mission of his Envoy should not transpire, to prevent endeavours being made to thwart the object in view.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 725.

*Lord Stanley to Consul Moore.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 25, 1867.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 3rd instant,‡ reporting the arrangements which have been made by the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem to send an Envoy to Abyssinia with a view to procure the release of the British captives in that country; and I have to instruct you to express to the Patriarch the high sense entertained by Her Majesty's Government of his prompt and friendly action in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 726.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 29.)*

My Lord, *Cairo, April* 17, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, to your Lordship, two despatches and inclosures from Colonel Merewether, that have just reached me under flying seal.

Colonel Merewether's last despatch, dated Massowah, 6th April, reports the receipt of intelligence from Mr. Rassam, dated Magdala, the 19th February.§ Up to that date no change had occurred in the position of the captives, but the messengers who brought this letter state that, on leaving the foot of the mountain rumours existed that Mr. Rassam had been set at liberty.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † See Inclosure in No. 702. ‡ No. 724.
§ The last previous date was January 29.

Colonel Merewether places no confidence in this report, but if true, reliable intelligence of the fact must shortly be received.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 727.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 29.)**

My Lord, *Massowah, March 30, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to report for your Lordship's information that I returned here this morning.

2. Mr. Flad left this on the 6th instant, four days after my last departure. M. Munzinger accompanied him to within five days' journey of Kassala, to assist in procuring change of camels. They there met the messengers dispatched by the King in January. M. Munzinger parted with Mr. Flad on the 17th, bringing with him the King's messengers, and arrived here on the 23rd instant. Mr. Flad expected to reach Matemma to-day or to-morrow.

3. A copy of translation of King's letter is appended; it contains merely an expression of the King's expectation of the coming to his Court of all here, and statement that after he sees a sign of friendship from Her Majesty he would "send them (Mr. Rassam, &c.,) in a friendly, honourable way;" from this it might be inferred that, on receipt of Her Majesty's letter, and on Mr. Flad's return to Debra Tabor, the King was disposed to release M. Rassam and the others, and send them to the frontier. I regret to say that, from the intelligence I have received, and as the correspondence already forwarded to your Lordship will have shown, there is not the least hope of this occurring, on the contrary, the letters written after the departure of the messengers, and which were received by the direct route a month ago, lead to the conclusion that his object is to try and get Mr. Flad, the artizans, presents, and myself into his power before he will ever change his conduct towards Mr. Rassam; and there is not the slightest indication that he will then ever comply with Her Majesty's demands.

4. It is contrary to your Lordship's instructions that the artizans and presents should leave this until intimation has been received from the King that he has released Mr. Rassam and the other British subjects now kept in confinement by him. The messengers will, therefore, be sent back to-morrow with a letter (copy is annexed) from me of the same tenor as the one sent by hand of Mr. Flad.

5. No further letters since those dated 29th January have been received from Magdala, but Mrs. Flad writes to me from Gaffat direct, under date 16th February, as follows:—

"A few days ago I received a letter from my husband, in which he informs me that he intends leaving Massowah on the 10th January; he also wishes me to write to you. I hope by this time a letter† from me to my husband will have arrived at the coast, together with letters from Captain Cameron to you and my husband, which will have given you an insight into the present state of things.

"Owing to Mr. Rassam being confined to the fortress of Magdala, five days' journey from here, the diplomatic despatches of His Majesty took more time than they ordinarily would, and, besides, he does not seem in a hurry to finish this business. Yesterday four weeks His Majesty sent off six messengers, viâ Matemma, with an answer to you, so that possibly they may have met my husband. From Mr. Rassam and his companions I have not had any news since the 29th January, the road being blocked up, which [causes?] a great deal of distress, as well to us as to those in the fortress. They are still in the same condition,—the chains on their feet. The King said, two days ago, when he heard of my husband's arrival at Matemma, he would send for Mr. Rassam, to consult with him about what was to be done. The stores which had been sent viâ Matemma for Mr. Rassam arrived nearly two weeks since; and Mr. Rassam's and the others' servants are waiting His Majesty's permission to take on their masters' property, for which they long very much; shortly ago, when His Majesty was reminded by a sentence in Her Majesty's letter, that an Ambassador's person was regarded as sacred, he said to some Europeans that were with him, he had chained Mr. Rassam because he had received intelligence from an European residing at Massowah that the English Government had hostile intentions towards him. M. Munzinger will give you the particulars of a melancholy event that happened shortly ago: five Germans, among them two Missionaries

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† See No. 712 and Inclosure.

of the Scotch Mission, attempted to escape from the King's camp, but having been betrayed, they were, even before setting off, taken and put in chains. They were very imprudent, but nothing else could be said of them against their character."

6. The particulars alluded to are given in a letter from Mrs. Flad to Mr. Haussman, a Missionary in Cairo, dated 15th February, forwarded through M. Munzinger:—

"The Brothers Staiger and Brandeis have been closely confined since three weeks, Bardel had framed with them a project of escape, and then betrayed them to the King. I know no particulars about this design, but so much is certain that the brothers, together with the two hunters, Shiller and Essler, and Makerer, the Frenchman, had for some time been in communication with Bardel. In the middle of January, the King ordered them to go to Debra Tabor (from Gaffat) with all their baggage; they were to aid Bardel in the construction of a road to Amara Geddel. This was the pretext; but the intention was to lay a trap for them. The poor brothers were imprudent enough to put themselves in the power of a traitor, whom they supposed had joined them, and the good opportunity thus offered they believed to be a hint that the right moment to fly had arrived. They minded my safety and that of the Gaffat brethren. They had had many opportunities before at Korata, and here too, but were unwilling to harm others by the step. You can imagine what a terror I had when, on the night of the 26th January, about 11 o'clock, I was roused from the profoundest sleep by a vigorous knocking at the door. The old woman who sleeps with me in the house asked who was there; "the King," was the answer. I had no time to dress myself, and that was my good fortune. The King was really at the door; and he sent in a Slealaka, with sword, spear, and shield, who, without asking permission, looked behind my curtain, and could so persuade himself at once that I had never designed to fly, having my three children around me, sleeping most profoundly. He was then civil enough, and ordered five soldiers to watch outside the door, at the same time he examined all the houses at Gaffat, but finding nothing, he took the guards away. The brothers Staiger and Brandeis, together with the other three named before, were found in their huts, ready for flight. Bardel, himself, had given the signal for decamping, but instead of taking the road they had agreed on, he went to the King and denounced the project (he had, in reality, revealed it before). Then the King promised Bardel he would reward him. The other five were put in chains, when the King asked them, 'why did you wish to go away; what have you against me?' they answered, 'we have nothing against you, only we longed again to see our country.' They declared also it was Bardel who had seduced them. Bardel also wrote to his compatriot (Makerer), saying he really had the design to fly, but having persuaded himself the thing was not feasible, and not having any more control over the others, he had denounced it to the King, so as to prevent worse. The next morning the King made believe that he intended to send the fugitives to Magdala. They were conducted at noon before our house bare-headed and bare-footed. I felt so moved that I went down with my children, and bade them farewell. Anna and Frederick wept aloud; the King, who was walking before them, looked back. When I had returned to my house, he asked me by Binder and Maier if I preferred to go with my friends, the fugitives, or to join my children at Gaffat. I answered, my husband had given me Saalmüller as Baldaraba, and had put me also under the King's protection. The King then ordered me to be at Gaffat, where I am able, at least, to aid the poor men."

7. Mrs. Flad also writes to M. Munzinger on the 16th February:—

"You will, by the inclosed to Mr. Haussman, be informed of what has happened here lately. The King has, or feigns to have the most extravagant ideas about the behaviour of European Governments. He appeared to be persuaded that my husband was retained as a hostage in the same manner as he retains us. He appeared to be pleased when, last Monday, the 11th February, my husband's letter reached him. But his temper since that has not at all become gayer. What irritates him yet more is that a great number of his soldiers have deserted him. Of those who were caught again he ordered seventy-eight to be put in a hut and burnt alive. It was believed that the King would reconcile himself with the Bishop, and the poor prisoners in the fortress had rejoiced at it, because there was a hope that our situation would then have taken a better turn. But the peace negotiations, if they sincerely meant, miscarried, because of the wounded pride of his legitimate wife, Dejaj Oobeay's daughter; when, not long ago, the King ordered her to join him again, she answered she would come to him, but not as his concubine, and if so she felt much happier in the fortress reading her Psalter in peace. The King is always here (Gaffat). The natives believe he is kept here by a spirit; certain it is the works interest him much. Each week we receive from him a direct or indirect advice to prepare for going away; but up to this it has been all for nothing. Mrs. Rosenthal has several times asked permission to join her husband, at Magdala. Mr. Rassâm too, entreated the King on her behalf, but although the King has not refused her directly, he retains her here

with vain words, we know not the motive of. We have little hope to see this intricate affair resolved in a good way, but at all events there is no impossibility of it."

8. I purpose proceeding on the 1st proximo to visit the plateau mentioned in my last despatch as distant about eighteen miles in a direct line from this. It is within Egyptian territory, and some 4,000 feet above the level of the sea, so may be found useful hereafter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 727.

*King Theodore to Mr. T. M. Flad.**

(Translation.)

IN the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God.

This letter, which is sent from the King of Kings, Theodorus, may it reach Mr. Flad. How have you spent your time? God be praised, I am well.

On the 29th of December your three different messengers you had sent to me from Massowah arrived here. Tell those men, who arrived with you, who are the people of my friend the Queen, and Colonel Merewether. How are you? From me, Mr. Rassam, Mr. Cameron, with the rest of the Europeans, are, by the power of God, all well.

Mr. Rassam sends a letter by his servant. We are waiting for the arrival of all of you. I, a poor man, am waiting for the word (will) of the great Queen of England and Ireland, Victoria, my friend, who is a friend of faith and love (friendship). On this account I keep them (Mr. Rassam, &c.) waiting here. If Her Majesty send me a sign of friendship, bring it to me, and after I have seen it, I will send them in a friendly, honourable way (manner) home by the way of Matemma.

Written January, in the year of our Lord, 1859 (Abyssinian year).

(Received March 17, 1867.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 727.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to King Theodore.**

Most Gracious Sovereign, *Massowah, March* 30, 1867.

YOUR Majesty's letter of the 7th January has been forwarded to me by Mr. Flad.

That gentleman left Massowah on the 6th of this month and should by this time be near Matemma on his way to your Majesty's presence, may he arrive at the fortunate moment. He will deliver the letter from Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, conveying to your Majesty the assurance of Her Majesty's friendly intentions.

In order that the terms of that letter may be exactly carried out, I trust I may have an early intimation of the arrangements your Majesty has been pleased to make for the appointment of suitable officers to accompany Mr. Rassam and the other British subjects to the coast, so that on their arrival Her Majesty's Gracious wishes may be fulfilled.

I hope this will find your Majesty in the enjoyment of excellent health, and have the honour to subscribe myself, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 728.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 29.)*

My Lord, *Massowah, April* 6, 1867.

I RETURNED to this yesterday evening, from visiting the plateau of Agametta. An account of the country traversed is given in a separate despatch.

2. During my absence letters had arrived from Mr. Rassam, dated Magdala, the 19th of February. The messenger declares that he had only been twenty-four days on the road, and when he left the foot of the mountain there was a report in the small Imperial camp there that Mr. Rassam had been released, and much rejoicing was expressed thereat. If there is any truth in this statement, the messenger must have delayed after quitting the op of the mountain, and not made a final start from the camp

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

below until the 10th of March, for he did not arrive at Massowah until the 3rd of April, forty-three days after the date of Mr. Rassam's letter. This he denies, but states that he did not receive the letter direct from Mr. Rassam, but through the Aboona, and time might thus have been lost. I do not place much faith in his story, but should the release have realy taken place we should hear of it from Magdala or Gaffat within the next fortnight.

3. Mr. Rassam's letter contains little or nó news. He confirms the account of the imprisonment of the four Germans and the Frenchman, Makerer, detected in an attempt to escape, and with his companions was naturally anxious as to the effect it might have on their position. A message had reached him from the King on the 16th of February, to the effect that "half of the articles from Matemma had reached Debra Tabor, and as soon as the rest arrived he would forward them on to Magdala." Mrs. Flad, in her letter of the 16th of February,* mentions that these stores had "arrived nearly two months since," writing as if all had come, and the messenger who brought the letters confirmed this, merely adding, that two bags of rice had been left at Matemma. It would seem from his mis-statement on this point to Mr. Rassam, that the King had no intention of sending on these stores. I am sorry to say that out of all the messengers dispatched from this, with letters, papers, &c., for the captives, only one had succeeded in reaching; the man who left in October last.

4. Dr. Blanc gives a melancholy account of their position. He says "If all knew as well as we do what little use there is in trying and writing further conciliatory measures, a very different course would long ago have been followed, and somehow or another a termination put to our miserable condition. We will never get out unless active measures are used. My opinion on the subject has been varied, and now all of us are of one mind on the matter. The prospect of spending another rainy season in chains is anything but pleasant, and though a few months ago we scorned the idea, we are obliged now to bear it. We are all getting grey, even Prideaux, though he shows it the less on account of the colour of his hair; Rassam's whiskers are almost white; Stern looks like a man of seventy. Boils are never very pleasant, but round the ankle (as I have now the advantage of having a few) when compressed by an iron ring, they almost make one mad. Cameron is very much worn out. We are weary, mentally and bodily, of this uncertain state of affairs."

5. I propose leaving for Aden to-morrow morning in order to catch the mail passing there on the 10th instant. The "Victoria" will return to this on the 20th. The King's messengers were still here. I did not like, therefore, to take the artizans away with me this trip; they will remain till the 20th. The change to Aden will then be necessary to prevent their suffering from the great heat and the life of inactivity they are compelled to lead, and their future disposal can be decided upon afterwards according to your Lordship's instructions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 729.

Consul Moore to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 29.)†

My Lord, *Jerusalem, April* 13, 1867.

REFERRING to my despatch of the 3rd instant,‡ I have the honour to report to your Lordship the departure this day of Archbishop Sahak, accompanied by a priest, on his Mission to the King of Abyssinia, viâ Alexandria and Suez.

I beg leave to inclose herewith copies of translations with which I have been furnished by the Armenian Patriarch, of the letters addressed by him to King Theodore, As your Lordship will perceive, his Eminence further strengthens his appeal to the Abyssinian Ruler by assurances of protection and assistance to Abyssinian residents and pilgrims visiting Jerusalem, likely to carry great weight with the King. The letters, which are accompanied with Abyssinian translations, are very handsomely illuminated with sacred subjects. The Patriarch has had the happy idea of heading his letter with a picture of our Saviour bound in chains. The presents, which I have seen, consist of articles in olive wood from the Mount of Olives, and mother-of-pearl from Bethlehem, chaplets, a sceptre made of wood from Abraham's oak, &c., and a valuable gold cross, surrounded with diamonds, and containing relics held in high veneration by orientals. Besides these the Patriarch has thought fit to send with the Archbishop a complete and splendid suit of vestments, crozier, prayer-book, communion plate, &c., so as to enable

* See No. 727, paragraph 5. † Laid before Parliament, 1867. ‡ No. 724.

him to perform high mass before the King in full canonicals, with accessories coming from the Holy City.

There can be no doubt that the measures which the forethought and solicitude of the Patriarch of Jerusalem have devised are calculated to constitute a powerful appeal to the feelings of the King.

Archbishop Sahak will communicate with Colonel Stanton at Cairo, to whom I have furnished him with the needful introduction, with a request that he would provide him with letters of recommendation to Her Majesty's Consuls at Suez and Djeddah, desiring them to afford the Envoy every facility for the prosecution of his voyage to Massowah. I have also sent to Colonel Stanton copies of this and of my previous despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 729.

The Armenian Patriarch at Jerusalem to King Theodore, March 30, 1867.*

(Traduction.)

NOUS, Isaie, Archevêque, et, par la grâce de Dieu, Patriarche des Arméniens de Jérusalem, occupant le Siège de l'Apôtre St. Jacques, vous offrons nos salutations apostoliques, et nous prions Dieu qu'il vous comble des bénédictions et des grâces de la Sainte Cité de Jerusalem, de Nazareth, de Bethlehem, du Jourdain, du Saint Tombeau de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ, de Golgotha, du Mont de l'Ascension, du Cenacle de Sion, et de tous les Lieux Saints et glorieux, où ont été accomplis les Mystères de l'Incarnation du Fils de Dieu, et de l'Eglise Apostolique de St. Jacques, frère de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ. Que le Ciel veuille exaucer nos prières que nous Lui adressons pour la prospérité de votre royaume, qu'il propage largement tous les biens célestes sur la personne de votre Majesté, sur l'auguste famille et sur tout l'Etat gouverné par votre puissante Souveraineté. Ainsi soit-il!

En vous offrant les bénédictions célestes de ces Lieux Saints, nous déclarons aussi à votre Majesté très-gracieuse les désirs qu'ont conçus mes prédécesseurs d'heureuse mémoire d'établir des relations intimes et de pure charité Chrétienne entre eux et votre Majesté, mais les difficultés des routes les ont empêchés de l'exécuter. Les mêmes désirs nous animaient aussi, il y a deux ans, depuis que nous avons montés le Siège de l'Apôtre St. Jacques, de faire parvenir nos Nonces jusqu'aux pieds de votre trône, et nous nous sommes retenus par les risques des routes. La bonté divine daigna enfin nous accorder l'occasion favorable pour pouvoir porter à la connaissance de votre Majesté Très-Chrétienne au moyen de la présente bulle, les vœux les plus intimes et les souhaits pleins de sincérité et de respect que nous portons à l'égard de votre Majesté. Pour vous donner une preuve plus sensible encore de nos hautes vénérations, nous avons pensé de les faire présenter à votre Très-Chrétienne Majesté, par l'entremise de mon Vicaire le très-Révérend Archevêque Sahak et le très-honoré Père Dimothéos, Membre du Conseil Administratif du Siège Apostolique, tous les deux chéris et respectés par nous. Ils sont chargés aussi de remettre à votre Majesté une croix en or garnie de diamants renfermant un morceau de la vraie croix de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ, laquelle nous la prions d'accepter bénignement et de la porter au cou comme une décoration digne d'un Roi Chrétien.

Sire, notre dernier prédécesseur Jean V, d'heureuse mémoire, fut effectivement heureux d'avoir eu l'honneur d'accueillir son Altesse le Ministre de votre Majesté, qui, l'an 1858 de notre Sauveur, a fait un pélérinage aux Lieux Saints. Il a pu bien observer la sympathie que nous avons à l'égard de votre Majesté, et les affections charitables que nous témoignons matériellement aux pieux religieux Ethiopiens qui se trouvent à Jerusalem, et qui, dès les temps immémoriales, sont sous la sauvegarde de notre Siège Apostolique. Nous avons aussi, à notre tour, reconnu la bienveillance et les sentiments pieux de son Altesse, lequel est, sans aucun doute, inspiré par votre Majesté Trés-Chrétienne, et que la personne de votre Ministre n'était que le digne Représentant des précieuses qualités de votre Majesté.

Veuillez, Sire, accueillir gracieusement les deux humbles serviteurs le très-Révérend Archevêque Sahak et les très-honoré Père Dimothéos, et daignez leur accorder votre audience particulière et en même temps votre haute protection jusqu'au temps que votre Majesté voudra bien leur donner le congé. Que la paix et les grâces de Dieu soient toujours avec vous! Ainsi soit-il!

Donné au Siège Apostolique de St. Jacques, le 30 Mars, de l'an 1867 de notre Sauveur.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Inclosure 2 in No. 729.

The Armenian Patriarch at Jerusalem to King Theodore, March 30, 1867.*

(Traduction.)

NOUS, Isaie, Serviteur de Jésus Christ et, par la grâce de Dieu, Archevêque et Patriarche des Arméniens de Jerusalem; et Gardien des Lieux Saints, offrons avec les divines bénédictions et les grâces de la Sainte Cité, nos salutations apostoliques à votre Majesté Très-Chrétienne, Souverain d'Ethiopie. Que la protection céleste et les regards de la Providence divine soient toujours sur la personne de votre Majesté, sur la Famille Royale, et sur tout l'Etat gouverné par votre puissante Souveraineté.

Nous connaissons, Sire, la haute prudence et l'amour de justice dont votre Majesté est caractérisée. Nous sommes de plus enchantés de voir en votre auguste personne le vrai type de la Reine dont la Sainte Ecriture fait les éloges, qui était passionnée de la sagesse du Roi Solomon. C'est le même sang sans doute qui circule dans les veines de votre Majesté, la même équité que celle de Solomon qui vous ranime. Ces précieuses qualités donc qui brillent sur votre auguste personne nous ont encouragés de mettre aux pieds de votre Sublime Trône nos très-humbles prières. Nous sommes assurés qu'elles seront exaucées par votre Majesté très-miséricordieuse pour l'amour de Jésus Christ, qui nous a donné en sa personne l'exemple d'humilité et de douceur, et qui nous a prescrit aussi de visiter tous ceux qui se trouvent opprimés et privés de leur liberté, qui est préférable à tous les biens du monde. Nous sommes animés de ces mêmes sentiments évangéliques pour prier votre Majesté trés-clemente de faire grâce au Consul Anglais et à ses compagnons, et de leur pardonner toutes les fautes qu'ils ont pu avoir commis. Si nos humbles prières seront exaucées par votre clémence, comme nous aimons à y croire, nous seront infiniment obligé et tout le monde sera charmé, ainsi que nous, de l'indulgence que vous aurez bien voulu accorder aux infortunés. Dans cet acte tout philanthropique votre Majesté ne fera que d'augmenter le nombre des priants pour la prospérité de votre état, et pour la conservation de la vie précieuse de votre auguste personne. Que la paix et les grâces de Dieu soient toujours avec vous ! Ainsi soit-il !

Donné au Siège Apostolique de St. Jacques, le 30 Mars de l'an 1867 de notre Sauveur.

No. 730.

*Lord Stanley to Lord Lyons.**

My Lord, *Foreign Office, May* 6, 1867.

YOUR Excellency will doubtless have learnt from Mr. Consul Moore† the steps taken by the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem in support of the representations which, at your instance, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople has made to the King of Abyssinia, with a view to procure the release of the British captives in that country. It is therefore unnecessary for me to do more on the present occasion than to express the gratification with which Her Majesty's Government have learnt the nature of the steps which have been taken with such liberality and judgment by the Armenian Prelate, and to instruct your Excellency to convey to the proper quarter the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for the service thus rendered not only to British interests, but to the general interests of humanity.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 731.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received May 7.)*

My Lord, *Cairo, April* 22, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Armenian Archbishop Sahak, the Envoy sent to the King of Abyssinia by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, has arrived at Cairo on his way to Massowah, and proceeds to that port by the first opportunity.

At the Archbishop's request I have furnished his Eminence with letters of recom-

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † See No. 729.

mendation to Her Majesty's Consular Officers at Suez, Jeddah, and Massowah, with a view to facilitating his voyage to Abyssinia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 732.

*Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received May 11.)**

Sir, *India Office, May 10, 1867.*

I AM directed by Sir Stafford Northcote to acquaint you for the information of Lord Stanley, that having received your letter of the 20th ultimo,† on the subject of the measures to be taken for the liberation of the British captives in Abyssinia, he has given to it in Council the full and deliberate consideration which the importance of the questions suggested demands.

On a review of all the circumstances connected with the captivity of these unfortunate gentlemen, whose fate he most deeply compassionates, Sir Stafford Northcote is of opinion that the main question as to whether there shall be any ultimate resort to force to effect their release, is one, the responsibility of determining which rests with Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Should Lord Stanley be of opinion that forcible measures ought ultimately to be resorted to for the rescue of the prisoners in the hands of King Theodore (in the event of the failure of all other means of securing their safety), and if Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the force should be provided in India, Sir Stafford Northcote considers that no time should be lost in making preparation for that purpose; and he would be glad of an early decision on this point, so that he may send the proper instructions to the Governments of India, with a view to the organisation of the desired military force, so as to enable it, if necessary, to embark at the commencement of the ensuing cold weather.

I am further directed to inform you, that the Secretary of State for India in Council wishes it to be clearly understood, that whilst he is anxious to afford all possible assistance for the furtherance of the object in view, by placing the forces of India at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government, he must stipulate that the revenues of India are not to be subject to any portion of the expenditure which may be incurred for an object in which that country has no direct interest.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HERMAN MERIVALE.

No. 733.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received May 13.)**

My Lord, *Massowah, April 6, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I left this on the morning of the 1st instant, at half-past seven o'clock, for the Agametta plateau. The route followed passed Moncooloo, and by the Eylat road for one and a-half miles from that place, then turned off abruptly to the left in a south-westerly direction, through low hills for five and a-half miles, when it rounded the point of a small range, and went due south by the bed of a mountain torrent, round Kholoo, to "Part," three miles; where excellent water was found in plenty, by scratching about two feet in the sandy bed. From the moment of entering this torrent the country commenced to show the luxuriant vegetation, which was found everywhere afterwards, until again nearing the coast. The valleys and hill-sides were covered with rich grass, wild flowers, and in some places of most dense wood, consisting chiefly of Babul (Acacia Arabia) bush, other thorny bushes and wild fruit trees, with whose names I am unacquainted, and to which the native denominations gave no clue. Large numbers of very good looking cattle were collected at this watering-place, belonging to the Tsanatigli tribe; water is to be found here by digging, at all times of the year. This was made the first halting-place. The march took from 7.30 A.M. until 10.15, though it was the month of April, and the sun powerful, the heat was found by no means excessive.

2. The journey was resumed at 7.15 the following morning, 2nd instant. The road lay the whole distance [in the bed of the] Ukhaloo torrent, and though quite

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 720.

practicable for camels, and even artillery, was difficult in some places. The obstructions could either be removed or turned. Running water was found continually. The hills on either side increased in height, and as well as the narrow valley were dotted with dense wood and high grass. The general course was S.S.W.; but, as the torrent had to be followed, the windings were very great; the distance marched 10 miles; time taken 4½ hours, moving slow. The camp was made at a pool of water, called Henrote. The breadth of the torrent was very narrow at that part, not above 50 feet. It had varied the whole way up, opening out in some parts to a moderate-sized plain, in others narrowing, as at Henrote.

3. Started at 6.35 A.M. of the 3rd, and, after proceeding three quarters of a mile, commenced a steep ascent, unsuited to draught artillery, easy enough for mules, carrying mountain guns, but difficult for laden camels, unless having light burdens. Those with the party surmounted it; but some of them did not reach the next encamping ground till the following morning. The highest point the road took was 1,300 feet above Henrote; a higher point, called Fathak, was ascended, which afforded a capital bird's-eye view of the surrounding country. This was 1,476 feet above Henrote, and 3,222 above the sea level. To the north was seen the country traversed by the road to Bogos; to the north-east and east, that which had been passed over. Massowah, and the sea beyond, dotted with islands of the Dunbar group. To the south-east and south, the high mountain of Gondar, Annesley Bay, and the road to Kiaguor, by the Agadey water-course. On the west, the high mountains which bound Abyssinia proper. Immediately before us, to the west and about five miles distant, were the patches of comparatively level ground, styled the Agametta plateau, the point to be reached. Hills, densely clothed with verdure, were scattered about around in the most fantastic manner. Large boulders of rock, blackened by exposure, were lying on the hill sides, as if some violent explosion had taken place. In a direct line Massowah appeared to be certainly not more than 20 miles, bearing N. 39° E. Passing this peak the road descended abruptly several hundred feet, but then rose gradually again to the plateau of Agametta, which was found to be 20 feet below Fathak, or, 3,202 feet above the sea. From Fathak the road wound a good deal to the plateau, through the same rich country, with grass and wild flowers, waist high in most places; or, dense bushes, with grass underneath; on the plateau were patches of towaree, millet cultivation belonging to the Tsanatigli tribe. The encamping ground was about two miles short of this cultivation, on the edge of a torrent in which running water was met. Half-a-mile lower this trickled over bare sheet rock (granite), into a deep, densely wooded ravine below. When the torrent is flooded by heavy rains there must be a beautiful cascade here, and, judging by the appearance of the rocks, the discharge of water must sometimes be very considerable. The distance from Henrote to the camping ground by the road is not more than five miles, but it took two and a-half hours to traverse. The best site for a permanent residence would be on the plateau itself; where the cultivation is, where it is open to the breeze, and where water could always be obtained by sinking wells. The Banyan tree (Ficus Indica) was found here; also the Guava tree. The Babul had almost entirely disappeared, and the fir trees that were seen were in poor condition.

4. A finer or richer country than this could not be desired. The scenery and general appearance very much resemble the Ghauts on the western coast of India, and the verdure was equal to what is seen in those favoured parts immediately after the monsoon. The reason of this is that the cool season is the rainy one in the portion of the country lying between the Abyssinian highlands and the sea. There is a north-east monsoon; in fact, from October to end of March there is some rain every day, but never very heavy,—nothing approaching the Indian south west monsoon. The climate is very similar to that of Matemma. An April sun during the day was warm, but the heat did not make being out in it unpleasant; and in the open plain, or on the hills, there was always a delicious cool breeze blowing from the sea. At night there was heavy dew, consequent on the recent rains, and it was so cold that blankets were necessary, sleeping inside a tent. Water is obtainable almost everywhere, and wells could easily be sunk. The ascent from Henrote to Fathak, with subsequent descent, is; as it at present exists, undoubtedly difficult, but the track followed went straight up the hill; a zigzag might be made at no very great cost, up which laden camels, and even carriages, might pass. The country is full of game in the cool months. Recent traces of elephants were seen, but the guide said those animals had passed on to higher grounds to escape from the flies, which are very numerous at this season of the year. Tracks of lions, leopards, wild hog, and deer were noticed daily; and of birds there were abundance of guinea fowl, spear fowl, and quail.

5. The great want of the country is population; after leaving Part not a soul was seen. The cultivation at Agametta, though nearly ripe, was unwatched. The land had been ploughed, and the grain sown in October, and the crops left to mature as it might. The splendid grazing grounds were undisturbed by cattle. From inquiries made, it appears that the whole of this extensive and fertile tract of country between the mountains and the sea, from Agadey torrent to nearly 20 miles north, giving an area of some 400 square miles, belongs to one tribe, Tsanatigli Christians, mustering not more than 800 adults. They also hold lands in Abyssinia, where they reside in the summer months, migrating with their cattle, of which they have large herds, to the lowlands, nearer the sea, from October to the end of April. As they pass down they cultivate patches here and there, reaping the produce as they return. This dearth of population I conclude to be owing to the absence of any one fixed good Government, as before mentioned. About Eylat the soil is considered to belong to Abyssinia, while the Egyptian Government holds the country, and is nominally supposed to protect the people. The latter have, therefore, to pay dues to both.

6. In returning, the same route was followed as far as Henrote, and for half-a-mile beyond, then the Ukbaloo torrent was left, a turn being taken to the right, and the road passed over a hill, about 250 feet high, descending into another torrent, which four miles further on, joined a larger one, and this was continued until the sea was reached, at the village of Arkeeko. Three miles down the larger torrent running water was found, and was met with at intervals for the remainder of the way.

7. The nature of the country was the same as on the upward journey; but this was a much more direct route to the sea, though not to Massowah, shorter in consequence, and, with the exception of the hill just below Henrote, which was bad for camels, a better road. Three marches were made going up, only one coming down, the distance by the former 29 miles, by the latter to Arkeeko, 22. From Arkeeko we went by boat to Massowah, 3½ miles; had we marched by land 7 miles, the distances would have been identical,—29 miles. The camping ground near the plateau was left at 6.30 A.M., and Arkeeko reached at 3.25 P.M., deducting 2 hours 30 minutes halt for breakfast; the actual time in marching was 6 hours 30 minutes. The last 8 miles from Galata, being a good road, was done more quickly than the first part. The whole was on mules, excepting down the hill, from Fathak to Henrote, and down the hill beyond Henrote which was walked.

8. The heights were taken by readings from the two aneroids by the boiling point of water; a tabular route is annexed; also a rough sketch, by Captain Merriman. It should be mentioned that this is no regular road into Abyssinia. It is nothing more than a track by the Tsanatigli tribe in their annual migrations. I availed myself of the services of Captain C. J. Merriman, Royal Engineers, Executive Engineer, to observe the country; and of Surgeon James, Civil Surgeon, Aden, to inspect the state of the work-people colony at Moncooloo, taking these officers with me on duty.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 733.

Route from Massowah to Agametta Plateau.

No. of Station.	Station.	General Directions.	Time taken in marching.	Distances in miles.	Height above Sea Level.	Observations.
			H. M.			
1	Geeran to ..	..	..	..	..	Place of disembarkation on mainland opposite island of Massowah.
2	Moncooloo..	W.	1 0	4	54	Over dry level plain, water good, supplies procurable here or from Massowah, road good. Enter low range immediately after passing Moncooloo, for the first mile and a-half on the Eylat road, W. and by S., then through low hills for five miles and a-half, bushes and grass; turn to the left, round spur of hill, and go due S., in bed of Ukbaloo torrent to Part, small valley surrounded by hills. Water plentiful, found by digging a few feet below surface of bed. In April only two feet; deeper in summer months. Wood, grass, and cattle plentiful; no grain. Hill west of camping ground, 981 feet above sea level.
3	Part ..	SW. by S.	3 45	10	639	
4	Henrote ..	S. S.W.	4 30	10	1,746	Road throughout, in Ukbaloo torrent; rough from stones, sometimes hidden by grass and, occasionally, abrupt sheet rock: filling-in would remedy this, or the worst places could be turned. Running water at intervals the whole way. Valley generally narrow, but opening out here and there; high hills on either side covered with grass and bushes. Camp pitched at the water, a pool; torrent very narrow here, but opens out a quarter of a mile further up; water plentiful. Pool dries up in summer, but water can always be found by digging. Wood and grass plentiful. Supplies none.
5	Agametta ..	S. W.	2 30	5	2,979	For three-quarters of a mile still in Ukbaloo torrent-road; then commence steep ascent, continued for one hour (on mules), rising about 1,300 feet, having high peak of Fathak, 3,222 feet above sea on left. Descend about 500 feet, and again ascend gradually, crossing small ridges and some rough places to Agametta. First ascent difficult for laden camels, and impossible, as at present, for draught artillery, but could be easily improved. Country more open; grass and bushes, with trees. Camp on edge of water-course, two miles short of plateau of Agametta. Running water, wood, and grass plentiful. Some ripe towarree, millet, on plateau in April, otherwise no supplies. The best encamping ground would be on the open plateau, where there is room for 10,000 men, and water could be obtained always by sinking wells. Height of plateau above sea, 3,202 feet.

Return Route.

No. of Station.	Stations.	General Directions.	Time taken in marching.	Distances in miles.	Height above Sea Level.	Observations.
			H. M.			
1	Agametta ..					
2	Henrote ..	..	2 30	5	..	As before.
3	Galata ..	NE. by E.	2 45	9	612	For three quarters of a mile in Ukbaloo river, then turn to right (NE. by E.), over a hill 250 feet high. Road over hill rough and bushy. Descend into torrent, and proceed along it E.NE. for about four miles. Enter larger torrent, turning to N.E., three miles to Galata; road fair after descent of hill. Hills close at first, but open out soon, covered with grass and bushes as before. Towarree cultivation; where smaller torrent joins large one. Running water at Galata, and any quantity to be obtained always by digging round open. Wood and grass plentiful; abundance of cattle in cold season.
4	Arkeeko ..	E. N.E.	1 45	8	0	Road good, winding rather still along larger torrent. Marching much quicker. Hills gradually lessening in height, and losing verdure. Running water seen in many places. This will be dry in a month, but it can always be obtained in bed of torrent by digging. Leave hills at seven miles, and enter level plain to Arkeeko, one mile. Village larger than Moncooloo, on sea shore; residence of Mussulman Naik of district garrison of 700 Egyptian Infantry. Grass and wood obtainable from the hills near. Water plentiful, and good supplies procurable.
5	Massowah ..	N. by E.	..	3½	0	By boats, three and a-half miles; land route, seven miles round curvature of bay to Massowah.
				25½ or 29		

(Signed) W. L. M.

No. 734.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received May* 22.)*

My Lord, *Aden, April* 29, 1867.

THE "Victoria" returned from Massowah this morning, bringing intelligence from Mr. Rassam up to the 16th March. The report of his release, mentioned in my last, has proved as I expected, to have been the invention of the messenger who brought down the letters of the 19th February.

2. Mr. Rassam writes on the 15th March, "Your kind and welcome note of the 14th January reached me on the 12th instant, with a large budget of letters for myself and party. The messengers were nearly two months on the road. They assert that they had sometimes to wait a long time in certain villages on account of petty warfares amongst the rebels, between Tigré and this. My long letters, which I sent to you monthly, especially the one which I sent you on the 11th January, will give you the true state of affairs. Our position now is worse than ever with regard to communicating with different places. Since the middle of last month, a petty rebel has appeared between Debra Tabor and this place, who has stopped all intercourse between the Royal Camp and Magdala, so much so, that the last message I received from the Emperor was to the effect, that as the road was very unsafe, he was not able to send me the things he had obtained for me from Matemma, but that as he was coming here shortly himself, he would bring them with him. I have now no less than twelve messengers at Gallat, some of whom have been detained there forty days. Two messengers who left Massowah on the 4th December are also sticking there, as they were foolish enough to come up through Waggera, instead of Lasta. There is certainly something very unfortu-

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

nate about the movements of the messengers who come up from Massowah, not one has yet returned in proper time, though I have always taken the precaution to send them under the protection of an influential chief. From what I hear I believe Wakshum Gobazye's power is beginning to shake, because some formidable rebels have appeared in what he calls his dominions (Tigré). If this rumour be true, I fear my messengers will have in future more difficulty in passing through the rebellious country than ever. I am so short of hands, that I am sending down to Massowah this time two of Cameron's servants, under the protection of an Abyssinian Chief, in order that they might bring us up some money. I have written to M. Munzinger not to intrust any important communication to them, but merely to send me about 500 or 600 dollars by them, with any newspapers and unimportant letters. All the money I had at Matemma I fear will never reach me, on account of the disturbances on the roads between this and Debra Tabor.

"*March* 16. Since writing the above, the messenger who left Massowah on the 4th December, and who had been so long detained at Gaffat, has arrived and brought me your note of the 1st September. I am grieved beyond measure to find that all the trouble you have taken on behalf of the Emperor of Abyssinia has proved fruitless. I only wish that His Majesty could be made to understand his interests better. He has just sent and chained the Ras, who was in command of this fortress, on the pretence that he had heard that he was corresponding with the rebels of Shoa. He has sent me a kind message to say that he would send me the things which he had obtained for me from Matemma. The messengers whom I sent down on the 11th of January have just returned and brought me your kind note of the 3rd ultimo. This is the quickest communication I have yet had from the coast. All the messengers have now reached, save two who were plundered by the rebels in Waggera."

3. From the above it will be seen, and it is confirmed from other sources, that the state of the country is getting worse and worse. Even the sole district left to the Emperor (Begemder), is much disturbed, so that communication between the capital and State fortress is most uncertain and unsafe. The Emperor has been causing supplies to be seized where they could be found, and the people are flying from Begemeder with anything they have left to them. He is so hard pushed for money, that he called on the most important and most influential chiefs, who still hold by him, for help, and on their refusal, threw many of them into prison; only one has obtained his release, and that on payment of 1,500 dollars. The real cause of his having imprisoned the Commander of Magdala was, that he had become offended with the brother of the Commandant, a chief serving with the Imperial army, but dare not arrest him until the Magdala man was secured, for fear the latter should avenge his brother by holding the fortress against him, or handing it over to the rebels. It would seem impossible that this state of affairs can last much longer, and I would beg the favour of early intimation in regard to your Lordship's wishes, and to the line of policy Her Majesty's Government would desire carried out, so that I may be in a position to take advantage of any favourable opportunity that may offer.

4. There is one part of the situation which is not so satisfactory as before, and that is the state of affairs in Tigré. A division has taken place among the rebels there. A powerful rival has risen against the Wakshum, by name Kassa. He was formerly a servant of the Wakshum, but has lately turned against him and set up on his own account. This might cause a little more trouble if operations are decided on, and it was thought advisable to proceed through Tigré. But I am disposed to think that, should a force be sent into Abyssinia, the best way of approaching Begemder and the Emperor Theodorus will be by landing the troops at Amphilla, and marching through the Azubo Galla country to the neighbourhood of Lake Ashangi, and then entering Abyssinia Proper through Lasta and Wadela, both of which are in most active opposition to the Emperor, and thus avoiding Tigré and its high table land, where camel forage is reported difficult to be obtained always.

5. The Azubo Gallas are independent. Their country is said to be well supplied with grain, grass, water, and camel forage, and the people well-disposed. I am having full inquiries made about this route. Reference to Keith Johnston's map of Upper Nubia and Abyssinia will show that Amphilla and Tajoora are exactly equi-distant from Magdala; the former, however, though further by sea from Aden than the latter, has the advantage of leading at once into a suitable country, whereas the latter for the first 200 miles opens into a country belonging to the most inhospitable, worst-dispositioned people possible, where water and supplies are both very scarce.

6. M. Munzinger sent 300 dollars by Mr. Rassam's returning messengers. This was as much as they could conveniently carry, but Mr. Flad should have reached by

the time they do, and he is well provided with funds. Nothing further has been heard of or from Mr. Flad. I regret to say that it is the general opinion among the captives that the stores from Matemma, which the King had received at Debra Tabor, would not be sent on by him, but had been appropriated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

P.S.—I ordered Mr. Morris to bring the artisans here for change of air, leaving the presents, stores, &c., at Massowah and Moncooloo. They arrived by the "Victoria," and will remain here for a while, until I am made acquainted with your Lordship's wishes. Several European adventurers, French, Swiss, and German, have come to Massowah from Egypt. They propose trying to join the Emperor to get service with him. M. Munzinger has very properly pointed out the great risk they will run by going up the country at the present time, and the little chance there is of their reaching the Emperor's head-quarters. I trust they will take his advice and remain on the coast.

W. L. M.

No. 735.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received May 22.)**

My Lord, *Aden, May 1, 1867.*

HIS Imperial Majesty's steam frigate "Minerve" arrived yesterday afternoon from Suez having called in at Massowah on the way down, and by the kindness of the commodore, M. de Chaillie, I have been placed in possession of further intelligence from Magdala to the 2nd April, received by M. Munzinger at Massowah on the 27th.

2. To the surprise and great comfort of the captives the Matemma stores had been sent on by the King, and reached Magdala on the 19th March, immediately after the last letters were written, they were forwarded with a communication from the King to the following effect, "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, from the King of Kings, Theodorus, to Aitoo Hormuzd Rassam.

"Your servants have brought some things from Matemma, and as I found them too bulky, I divided them into small packages in the presence of Mr. Waldemir and his party. I now send them to you in small parcels, because I want them to reach you fast." This was more civil than had been expected, but no orders accompanied for any amelioration in the condition of the captives. The stores were divided into small light packages, because they had to be carried by the troops who formed the escort; and, as delay was to be avoided, they were sent in charge of Ras Engada the Prime Minister.

3. Mr. Rassam writes, "The rebellion is getting worse and worse every day, and if report can be relied on, the Royal Army has dwindled down to less than 5,000 fighting men, desertions of hundreds are said to take place daily. This I cannot believe, because, according to this rate, he will not have a soldier left by the end of next month. There is one thing certain, however, that he is getting weaker and weaker every day, and now Begemder has revolted; but the Emperor took the precaution to imprison all that district's valiant chiefs before they had a chance to join their disaffected brethren. Three of these chiefs had only a few days ago the highest commands under him. Two of whom were the bravest Rases in the Royal Army. The third who is also a Ras, had the command of this fortress. And when Ras Engada brought me the stores from Matemma, he took one chief in hand chains with him to Debra Tabor. I was sorry to lose him, as he was exceedingly kind to us; but the Emperor has appointed a successor who is also a friend and a very good man. Indeed, this man who is a relative of the Emperor has always been kind, and if his master would only listen to him, our difficulty might soon pass over, and His Majesty would no doubt benefit by his advice. His Majesty has gone to Korata for the purpose of destroying it as he did Gondar, because some rebels had gone there, and were received by its inhabitants. The poor wretches have no more power to keep the rebels out of the place, than they have of opposing the attack of His Majesty. It is said that the whole country is now in such a state of anarchy that it is dangerous for any one to venture 3 miles from Debra Tabor, without a strong escort on account of the roving deserters and disaffected peasants. I believe these reports are somewhat exaggerated, because Royal messengers are constantly coming and going between the Royal camp and this place. Those who think the whole country has risen against the rule of King Theodorus, say, that these

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

messengers can only manage to pass unmolested because they disguise themselves thoroughly. I hope, however, that my messengers will always be able to pass, as they are befriended by the different petty chiefs in the disaffected districts. The road between this and Massowah and Lasta is also I believe quite safe for my messengers. Two of my messengers who were coming from Gaffat escorted by a petty chief of Begemder were seized by a petty rebel chief near the River Chieta; they managed to escape after a few hours' detention, but the chief, who was a vassal of the Emperor, was detained; he is still kept as prisoner with the rebels, in order I believe that they may get him to enter into an alliance with them.

"We are all anxiously awaiting the decision Her Majesty's Government has come to with regard to our case; some time ago I had still hopes that our difficulties might be settled amicably, but since the Emperor received Her Majesty's second letter of the 4th October, and has taken no steps to repair the evil he has done, I have come to the belief that he will never let us out, unless he obtains every thing he wants—to the Crown of England! We must either be left to perish in bondage or be liberated by coercive measures from without. It is quite evident that His Majesty thinks by having us in his power he is safe, but I hope that he will soon find himself mistaken. I always thought he would never go so far as to refuse the friendship offered to him by England, but the fact is he distrusts every one so much, that even he suspects that we wish to play a trick, and through the foolish talk of some scamps of Europeans who would say whatever they thought would please the Emperor, will prove at the end a great loser. I have not the least doubt that if any person had a hand in creating distrust in the mind of the Abyssinian Monarch he will rue the day one of these days, for I feel sure that His Majesty will vent his rage upon him when he finds that he has lost the game, which he imagined he was going to gain. The roads between this place and Matemma are getting more and more disturbed every day, and I fear we shall have great difficulty after a few days to obtain anything from that place. I am sending messengers thither in a day or two for the purpose of bringing us money. I am going to write to M. Munzinger not to send anything more to us to Matemma, excepting money. I think I shall always be able to get the chiefs to assist in transporting cash thence; I am glad to inform you, we are all well excepting Cameron. I wish that this imprisonment would soon be over, because I fear some of us would suffer if we were to be left in our present situation next rainy season. Indeed, we are afraid that when the Emperor finds that he cannot get the workmen and the presents, he will send us to the common prison, where we shall have a very hard lot, in comparison to our present situation."

4. I append copy of an interesting letter from Dr. Blanc, in full, as it contains much I think your Lordship would like to read, not that I agree with the whole of it, and would remark on the following points:—The force he suggests is even less than I last proposed, with more European and less native element in it. I would not recommend less than 6,000 men to enter Abyssinia with, and of those as few as possible should be Europeans on account of the very extensive carriage requirements they entail. That force should be complete and perfect in everything for a six months' campaign. It should have supplies for that time, and material for everything called for from it—should look to the country for nothing but grass, wood, and water, which may be had for the taking. If it had to remain in the country for longer than that, it can be replenished from the seaboard with those things which more familiar acquaintance with the country shows are not procurable. I have no doubt that liberal dealing and just treatment will within that period have drawn the inhabitants towards us, and through the arrangements of our excellent Indian Commissariat much will be procurable on the spot for the Force, but at the first nothing should be left to chance. The baggage should be made as light as can be, but nothing should be omitted that can conduce to the comfort and well-being of the troops. Hailo is the Emperors' Governor in Hamazeyn, and would, I believe from all I have heard, not prove a difficult person to deal with. But I am strongly of opinion that the best time of operations will be through the Azubo Galla country where there are no rivers of any consequence, where the people are independent, and where supplies and forage for the baggage animals would be found in abundance, than through Hamazeyn, Adowa, and Sokota where there are rivers and large ravines, and where though supplies are plentiful, forage for the baggage cattle is uncertain. The further information I am collecting, regarding the route from Amphilla, will prove the value of this opinion. Though the rainy season from May to September might not be found adverse to the movement of troops in Abyssinia, Dr. Blanc has forgotten that it is the very worst for approaching that country, owing to the very great heat on the shore of the Red Sea, where

the troops would have to disembark and rendezvous, which would in fact be the immediate base of operations—October would be the earliest when these could be commenced. It is cooler than proceeding up the sea, or encamped on the shore. By October, if the Emperor's power lasts so long, his army will be reduced to a very small number and will be easy enough to overcome. I do not see how he can fly, all Abyssinia is against him, and the people in the low-lands having for him no love, would if they received him at all, only do so to plunder him, and he would be the more easily reached by us—of the three courses mentioned by Dr. Blanc, I believe the Emperor will adopt the first as his best chance. If hemmed in and confined to the Amba, unconditional surrender with guarantee of life should be the only terms allowed; on operations being commenced a proclamation would be issued, as I suggested before, stating that Her Majesty's Government had entered on hostilities with the Emperor—forced to it by his breach of faith and disregard of the laws held sacred by all civilised nations; on the due vindication of these, or reparation being obtained from the Emperor, and on the release in safety of the British subjects held in captivity by him, the troops would be withdrawn from the country. He would be warned at the same time that he will be held responsible with his Throne and life for any injury that may happen to the captives. Private property would be respected and strictly protected, and all those who aided in the object Her Majesty's Government had in view, would be amply rewarded and honoured with the friendship of Her Majesty. I quite agree with the advisability, indeed indispensability of no threat being issued without the determination of its being carried out to the letter. But at the same time, I see a very strong probability of its being of the greatest importance that an exposition of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government should be promptly made, even before the arrival of the troops, in the event of the sudden annihilation of the Imperial power occurring before the favourable season has approached. As long as there is any chance of the Emperor being able to recover himself, or as long as he retains the semblance of power, not one of the rebels will move actually against him: but directly they are assured that we are in earnest and that we are determined to destroy that power, they will no longer fear him, and we shall have at last their good wishes if not direct assistance. Certainly, no opposition provided, we act alone and are in no way associated with any other nation against which the Abyssinians generally have an antipathy. I allude here to the Egyptians; it is said some people advocate the employment of Egyptian troops. This would be suicide. The whole of Abyssinia would band against them, and would even bear longer with Theodore to oppose their most hated enemies. Instead of having merely to put the finishing stroke to a falling usurpation we should have the entire nation arrayed against us.

5. The decay of the present empire of Abyssinia is running on most rapidly, and I would again beg the favour of being early made acquainted with your Lordship's wishes, that I may be prepared to act as circumstances may demand.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 735.

*Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, March* 31, 1867.

DO not believe that on leaving my prison I am going to apply for some high command, because I am chatting with you on military matters. I know that my qualifications are in the pills and black draught line; even if it appears that I am unfitted as a civilian, Rassam having frequently asserted that I would never make a Political Officer. Amen.

Admitting that all our party is right, and that the best informed natives who join in our opinion, are also correct in their surmises, then there is no other possible solution to our present difficulty but the speedy employment of military force. *Nota bene.*—Nothing could be worse than an ultimatum without troops.

If we take into consideration the present political condition and resources of this country to effect a short and successful campaign, two regiments of Europeans, two of natives, one of cavalry, one or two batteries of artillery, a company of sappers and miners, with small depôts at Adowa and Sanota, are all that is required.

The troops ought not to be encumbered with baggage; as little as possible ought to be carried; Abyssinians, though not up to much fighting, are good hands at long marches.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Always beware of treachery; never trust; if obliged to make use of some Chief for the sake of transport, keep your eye on him.

Mules in sufficient quantity ought to be obtained in Hamazeyna. Old Hailo would no doubt give up his master easily, if well paid, and be faithful to you, as long as he believes you take the strongest party. Should he, however, be obstinate, a good thrashing would do him no harm, and show the people what they can expect should they not favour our cause.

I believe the rainy season would be the most favourable time for a campaign in this country. The rain by itself is not very severe, the sky being cloudy the weather is always agreeable and cool. There is no sickness during that period; it is before and after, that certain localities are unhealthy. It is true, paddling through the mud is not pleasant; and being drenched to the skin at least once a-day, is anything but comfortable. Still, soldiers do not melt through such influences; and as it does not affect the health, a little discomfort can easily be put up with.

In the present reduced state of our friend's army, it is doubtful whether he will make a stand even here; it is probable that when the British soldiers comes near enough to make him shake in earnest, he will endeavour to cut. In the rainy season that is quite impossible; he cannot cross the many rivers he would meet whatever course he may take, whilst to European troops, provided with pontoons, &c., it would be mere child's play. No rivers except a few, such as the Takazzay, the Bechilo, and the Teddah (the latter would not be in the way, unless in the case of pursuit), are of any extent; and should our good friend try to decamp, he would be caught to a dead certainty.

Should our friend, trusting in his guns, matchlocks, and natural strength of this Amba, not to speak of the many "bilâts" he may use at the time, remain here, I believe all his courage (some certain at least of that of the majority of his followers), would vanish at the very sight of British bayonets, and he would give the slip before even the second shell had burst. Therefore, to prevent such a disagreeable termination, the whole Amba ought to be surrounded, or at least the three gates attacked at a time. The question is, should the British soldier come, what will the Emperor do? It is generally supposed that he will adopt one of the three following courses:—

1. Come here, defend the place perhaps; place the Europeans in such a position as to impede the fire of our soldiers, or treat us well, and come to terms.

2. Kill all the Europeans (the great men), his prisoners, Bishop, and all, and fly to the lowland.

3. Take the Europeans with him, march from district to district, destroying everything in his road.

This last was his plan some years ago, but now it is hardly possible. His army is much reduced in numbers; the peasantry all over the country discontented and rebellious. On the approach of British troops the soldiers would run away *en masse*. Only a few hundreds of thoroughly-compromised individuals would, from sheer necessity, follow his fortune. The peasantry, seeing him deserted by his troops, would find courage in their intense hatred, surround him, and, you may depend upon it, give him no quarter.

However, during the rainy season, it is quite out of the question. What he will do, is certainly a mystery. At all events he must not be rendered desperate; he must still be treated with the same courtesy and respect as in former days; the past ought not to be charged against him. On the contrary, he should be told there is no personal ill-will against him, and that all will end well if he does not further ill-treat any of the Europeans.

In the meanwhile he and his acolytes must be made fully aware that any further brutalities will not be tolerated, and that should he shed, or cause to be shed, the blood of even a single white man, the hand of vengeance will weigh heavy upon him, and on all those directly or indirectly connected with such murder. Certainly, it will be a trying time, but it cannot be helped; we must come to it some day, so the sooner the better. Though he only possesses at present the vestiges of his former power, such is still the terror of his name, that none will ever dare attack him; he will remain unmolested at Magdala until some unforeseen accident puts an end to his career. We gain nothing by his fall, on the contrary, he is only more savage and cruel. He knows well that he would meet with no pity either from the Wakshum or the Turks; only in case of his resorting to extreme measures should such alliance be made, otherwise the lives of all would be surely forfeited.

Wheat is little grown in this country, and barley, the usual food for horses in Abyssinia, could not, I fear, be obtained in sufficient quantity, on account of the present desolate condition of immense tracts of land. Cattle is still abundant, but the question is, will the peasants come forward with their supplies, or retire with their property to distant parts of the country. I believe they will, in general, adopt this latter course. The

peasants are very ignorant; they consider all white men as Turks, well aware of the *penchant* of Mussulmans for Abyssinian damsels, the very dread of slavery will make them deaf to all offers of remuneration. It is to be hoped, however, that after a short time they will find out their mistake; and, as usual, English gold and courtesy will win over their hearts.

My dear Colonel, I beg respectfully to apologize for my presumption, and hope you will kindly excuse the perhaps foolish, but at least well-meant, intention.

A spy returned from the coast a short time ago, and informed His Majesty that all was quiet; he therefore, having first examined the kit, and finding nothing suitable except the calico and shirts, which he could not decently appropriate, though angry about them, whilst still hopeful that his stratagems will succeed, and that workmen and presents will be sent to him, he was considerate enough not to rob us this time, and forwarded everything to the Amba.

Dissatisfaction daily increases amongst the soldiery and peasantry. The sacking of Korata, a holy city, though it may slightly refill His Majesty's coffers, will neither add to his fame or influence, rather give another impetus to his rapid fall.

The Chief of this mountain recently chained another Ras (Oobeay), his Wakshum, and Sheik Walash, all three long time prisoners at Magdala, have been called to the Imperial presence, the reason is not yet known, but it is generally believed for no good.

The Europeans of Gaffat wrote some few days ago: we are not dead but we are not alive; obliged to work hard in the day and to watch at night for their own safety, their position is not to be envied. The five would-be runaway Europeans are not in favour. Some time ago they were deprived of all their clothing, and not allowed either bread or water for forty-eight hours; the poor fellows pay hard for their mismanaged attempt.

No news from the rebels; the fact of the Wakshum's brother in Lasta having abandoned his brother's cause has not been confirmed; I believe it to be an invention of some friend of the Emperor.

Jagaque, my servant, is one of the messengers; you can trust him; I have constantly employed him as a messenger between this place and Gaffat, he has always proved honest, intelligent, and active.

We are all pretty well; Cameron is rather seedy, he is not careful enough about himself. Samuel begs to send you his respectful compliments, &c.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. BLANC.

No. 736.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(*Received May* 27.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, May* 25, 1867.

FROM letters received by me, Mrs. Stern, and other relatives of the captives in Abyssinia (which your Lordship may see if you will condescend to favour me with an interview), we all feel perfectly convinced that nothing but force will induce the King to give up the prisoners. If, therefore, your Lordship and the Government do not take immediate steps to rescue these poor men, they must necessarily be sacrificed.

It would appear quite evident that the King's power is so circumscribed that he admits he shall be compelled to seek his last refuge in Amba Magdala; an event much dreaded by the captives themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 737.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 27, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th instant, in which you state that, from letters received from Abyssinia, the relatives of the captives feel perfectly convinced that nothing but force will induce King Theodore to give up the prisoners, and that if Her Majesty's Government do not take immediate steps to rescue them, they must necessarily be sacrificed.

I am to state to you, in reply, that the question of the use of force has not been ove

looked: indeed it appears to have been considered by the last, as it has been by the present Government. It involves, however, many other questions of serious difficulty, including the important matters of the distance of the seat of war from India, which must necessarily be the base of operations, as well as the distance of Magdala from the point at which troops would be landed; but the most important question which arises is, what effect would the use of force have on the fate of the captives.

The object of the employment of force would of course be to save their lives and to effect their release; but a very strong opinion is held by many persons that it would instantly lead to the murder of the captives. It is the duty of Her Majesty's Government to spare no efforts to avoid so disastrous a result, and they are still in hopes that the steps they have taken will lead to the liberation of the prisoners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 738.

*Mr. Murray to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 27, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches of the 29th ultimo and 1st instant,† conveying information from the captives in Abyssinia up to the 2nd of April.

Her Majesty's Government trust that the prospect, though still uncertain, of the captives being restored to liberty by the collapse of the authority of King Theodore, which from your accounts would seem to be imminent, may be realised; but, while awaiting further intelligence from you, Lord Stanley can only say that his Lordship finds nothing in the accounts lately received from you to cause him in any way to modify the instructions conveyed to you in his despatches of the 20th ultimo.‡

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 739.

Consul Wood to Lord Stanley.—(Received May 28.)

My Lord, *Jerusalem, May* 15, 1867.

IN compliance with the instruction contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 25th ultimo,§ I have the honour to report that I have expressed to the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem the high sense entertained by Her Majesty's Government of his prompt and friendly action in the matter of the arrangements made by his Eminence with a view to procure the release of the British captives in Abyssinia. The Patriarch desired me to convey his sense of gratitude for the high acknowledgment made by Her Majesty's Government of his action in the matter, which was prompted by his friendly feelings towards the Government of Her Majesty, and by the sense of his duty in the cause of humanity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. WOOD.

No. 740.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(Received June 1.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, May* 30, 1867.

I CANNOT but thank your Lordship for the lucid, logical reply which you have kindly forwarded to me on the subject of the Abyssinian captives. But at the same time I am bound to say from all I know on that subject (and that is not small), that the strong opinion expressed in your Lordship's letter is not at all acquiesced in by the captives themselves. They have much more dread that the King in making Magdala his last refuge will subject them to a series of annoyances that will be worse than their fear of his putting

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † Nos. 734 and 735. ‡ Nos. 721, 722, and 723. § No. 725.

them to death. If your Lordship's time had permitted you to read the last letters of the captives, which I did myself the honour to offer you, I think you would have formed a different idea from that expressed in your letter. It is true that there is great probability that the King's rule may soon be at an end, as far as regards the hold that he has had upon the Abyssinian people.

And it is strongly intimated in the letters above alluded to, that he may, as a last resource, make the Magdala his refuge; and the fortress would be impregnable for years against a native force. At the same time it could not hold out for a week against European troops and appliances.

Your Lordship, I believe, knows that the force now in Magdala amounts to only 1,600 men, 600 matchlock or musketeers, and 1,000 spearmen, weapons utterly valueless against European missiles. Then; again, I find your Lordship has estimated the number of troops necessary for an expedition to Abyssinia at 15,000, which from all I can learn is at least 7,500 more than would be requisite for such an expedition. It has been said by those who know Abyssinian well, that 5,000 European troops could hold the country in complete subjection. Your Lordship's letter also intimates that we know but little of that country. This may be to a certain extent true; but when we consider that caravans for the purposes of trading are constantly going forwards and backwards into the interior from various other countries, it is fair to assume, that with good guides and plenty of mules (which are always to be had for money), there being sufficiently good roads for such purposes, much less difficulty of transit would be found than is imagined or apprehended. Unfortunately, too much diplomacy has been used to bring the King to a sense of his bad conduct, and that, too, of such a character that he has only presumed upon it to take liberties that would never have been permitted in any other sovereign. This has led him, in his cupidity, to hold out threats in order to make a market of these poor captives. If, my Lord, a severe lecture had been read to the King, rather than to the unfortunate Consul, by our former officials, whose neglect of duty has left such an onerous legacy to their successors, we all feel convinced that, in the providence of God, these poor people would have been released long ago. As it is, they have but one hope, which is, that as they have hitherto been most marvellously preserved by a Divine hand, in whom they have had strong faith, that hand may yet deliver them out of their troubles when to all appearance human policy may fail. We are not surprised, my Lord, to find that Her Majesty's Government pause at going to war with so distant a country. And the poor captives (those of them who are missionaries at least) would be the last to exact their deliverance at the probable cost of a single life, doubtless as valuable as their own. But, my Lord, I must still say that I have very little apprehension that King Theodore would take the lives of the captives upon hearing that Her Majesty's Government were determined upon compelling him to release them. He would long ago (as he once declared) have taken their lives, but that "God prevented him."

In conclusion, my Lord, however reluctant Her Majesty's Government may be to go to war on account of the cost, I doubt not that energetic action at the outset would have cost much less than has already been expended in fruitless diplomacy. The captives themselves (who know better than we do how such a man as Theodore should be treated) say, "In this country one gets nothing by good words." Then, again, "If our friends want to help us out of this scrape, it must be by other than diplomatic means." One and all agree that, humbly speaking, "nothing but force will extricate us." I believe this was Mr. Flad's advice to your Lordship. If then we are to save the lives of these people, we are bound to take action. The fear is strong upon them, that if the King is compelled to make Magdala his refuge, he will deprive them of everything that he can lay his hands upon; he may even torture them again, and at last leave them to starve. He will not murder them in cold blood, as your Lordship seems to imagine. I hope it may not be deemed impertinent for me to add, that apart from all other considerations, there is something due to the dignity of the British nation, and to our gracious Queen, who has been so grossly insulted in the persons of her Consul and Diplomatic Agent.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

P.S.—I beg to inform your Lordship that I intend to publish the letters of the captives addressed to myself, Mrs. Stern, and Mr. Rosenthal, a copy of which I shall do myself the honour to present to your Lordship.

C. H. P.

No. 741.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received June 4.)

(Extract.) *Aden, May* 11, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 20th ultimo,* and to report that, in accordance with the instructions therein conveyed, the artisans were advised to return to England, and they will leave by the mail to-day, under charge of Mr. J. Morris, the Assistant Engineer.

The presents will be retained at Massowah for three months, and will then be disposed of as directed by your Lordship.

I leave for Massowah on the 14th instant, and should arrive there on the morning of the 17th.† The letters to King Theodorus will be dispatched that day.

No. 742.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received June 6.)‡

My Lord, *Civil Service Club, London, June* 6, 1867.

IN consequence of intelligence dated April 17th last, just received from the captives in Abyssinia, the particulars of which will ere this have reached your Lordship's department, I deem it to be my duty to recall your attention to the measures for the liberation of those unfortunate persons, which I had the honour to suggest in my letter of the 12th of the same month.§

In doing so, I would respectfully represent that if the suggestions so made were immediately acted on, there would be a fair prospect of the liberation of the captives before the Emperor Theodore retires to the fortress of Magdala, where they are confined. When once he is forced to take refuge there, the natural defences of the place are such as to enable him easily to hold out for an indefinite period against any native force, however strong, that may not be aided by Europeans. This opinion, which has long been entertained and expressed by me, is now (if I mistake not) confirmed by all the captives, without a single exception.

I would further beg leave to remark that though the approaching rainy season would naturally place obstacles in the way of military operations on an extensive scale, especially if any of the principal rivers had to be crossed, there is nothing to hinder the movements of troops, even in considerable numbers. In proof of this I may refer to Mr. Rassam's letters, in which he reported that when he and his companions in captivity were being conducted in chains from Debra Tabor to Magdala in the month of July last, the Emperor left them to continue their journey in charge of M. Bardel, and went himself on a military expedition.

At the same time it is right to direct attention to the fact, that in the low country lying between the sea-coast and the high table-land of Abyssinia, the rainy season is not the same as on the table-land itself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 743.

Mr. Hammond to Dr. Beke.‡

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 8, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, in which you call his Lordship's attention to the plan proposed by you on the 12th of April last, for obtaining the release of the captives in Abyssinia: and, I am to express to you Lord Stanley's thanks for your suggestions, and to inform you that they have been duly considered, but that Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to undertake, in any country, such a direct interference as you contemplate in the affairs of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

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* No. 723. † See Inclosure in No. 721. ‡ Laid before Parliament, 1867. § No. 717.

No. 744.

*The Secretary to the Admiralty to Mr. Hammond.—(Received June 11.)**

Sir, *Admiralty, June 11, 1867.*

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, for the information of Lord Stanley, that Commodore Hillyar, in a letter dated the 15th May, states that Colonel Merewether, the Political Resident at Aden, left that port on the previous evening for Massowah, with the ultimatum† of Her Majesty's Government as to the prisoners detained by the King of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. G. ROMAINE.

No. 745.

*Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received June 14.)**

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, June 13, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Hammond's letter of the 8th instant,‡ in reply to mine of the 6th instant,§ informing me that my suggestions of the 12th of April last‖ for obtaining the liberation of the captives in Abyssinia have been duly considered, but that Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to undertake such a direct interference as I contemplate in the affairs of Abyssinia.

In reply to Mr. Hammond's letter I would ask permission to say a few words by way of explanation.

The interference in the affairs of Abyssinia which I have ventured to suggest would, of course, now only take place in the event of the Emperor Theodore's non-compliance with your Lordship's ultimatum† the term of which (as is stated in the "Pall Mall Gazette" of the 5th instant) will expire about the middle of August next.

But when that time arrives, it appears to me that unless Her Majesty's Government shall resolve on abandoning the captives to their fate, a direct interference of some sort in the affairs of Abyssinia must inevitably take place, and it would really seem as if that interference can only assume one of three different shapes.

In the first place, a British army of sufficient force may, single-handed, and at an enormous cost to the Imperial Treasury, invade the country. On this point I need not dilate, as the subject has received the full consideration of Her Majesty's Government. I would only venture to express the hope that, should this course of action be decided on, the Bay of Hánfila (Amphila) may not be chosen as the place of landing, on account of the serious objections there are to that spot, as is sufficiently shown in documents existing in the archives of the Foreign Office.

The second plan is that advocated by Sir Henry L. Bulwer, in a letter published in the "Pall Mall Gazette" of the 11th instant. His words are "With a moderate British and Sepoy force, and such assistance as the Viceroy of Egypt told me he would be ready to give, it would be no rash engagement to undertake to hang Theodore in the chains that now torture the limbs of his captives."

On this proposal I may be allowed to remark that there can be no doubt of the readiness of the Sovereign of Egypt to avail himself of any pretence for invading Abyssinia; and inasmuch as it was through the instrumentality of Sir Henry L. Bulwer himself that the transfer from Turkey to Egypt of Massowah and the Abyssinian seaboard was effectuated, it is quite consistent that that diplomatist should advocate a policy, the effectual result of which would be the delivery of the Christians of Abyssinia entirely into the hands of the Mahometans of Egypt.

What the practical operation of this would be is plainly shown by the statement of a Mahometan native of Abyssinia printed in the number of the "Pall Mall Gazette" which contains Sir H. L. Bulwer's letter. In December last a battle took place between the Beni 'Aamr Arabs and the people of the Abyssinian province of Shiré, and adjacent parts of the north-west of Tigré, when the latter were defeated with great slaughter, and "of the whole Tigrean force, numbering many thousands, and attended by the women and children belonging to its members, only 200 horsemen are said to have escaped. The Beni 'Aamr killed the old and useless prisoners; the younger of both sexes and children they took in triumph to Takka, the seat of the Egyptian Governor of those parts, who is related to have told the Arabs, that as God had given the booty into their hands they were

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.
† Inclosure in No. 721.
‡ No. 743.
§ No. 742.
‖ No. 717.

at liberty to dispose of it. Accordingly the captives were sent to market in such numbers that Christian slaves are reported to be comparatively cheap in the Red Sea ports and on the Egyptian frontier ever since."

On the impolicy of abandoning to the powerful Sovereign of Egypt the entire coasts of the Red Sea on the high road to India, Australia, and China, it is unnecessary to dwell on the present occasion.

The third and last mode of interference in Abyssinia is the one suggested by myself, namely, that we should subsidize and assist one of the insurgent native chiefs, who are enumerated and described by the Mohammetan native of Abyssinia in the "Pall Mall Gazette" almost in the same terms of those in which they have been enumerated and described by myself, both in my communications to your Lordship, and also in pages 283 and 289 of my recently published work "The British Captives in Abyssinia."

The Egyptian Correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette," who sent home the report of the Mohammetan Abyssinia, remarks very sensibly that among the insurgents "we ought to be able to find allies against Theodore in the event of its being at length determined to effect by force the release of the captives; for I don't believe," he says, "in the success of the mild expedients hitherto resorted to. They have now been tried more than three years without our being one whit nearer the desired result than when the first letter from the Queen was sent. Fate may assist in bringing about the death of Theodore by any one or more of his many adversaries; but if we are to wait upon fate, it may bring about the death of the prisoners likewise, and leave us with the stigma on our power of having been unable to cope with a resolute chief of Abyssinia; and it will be small crowing over a dead lion who kept us at bay while alive, and whom we had no hand in subduing. The effect would not be lost on Egypt or along the shores of the Red Sea, and might have its influence in India."

As regards the choice of an ally among the native chiefs, I would beg leave respectfully to repeat my recommendation of Waagshum Gobazye, who is thus described in the "Pall Mall Gazette" by the Mahometan Abyssinian already referred to: "In Tigré, Waksham Gobazi, a descendant of the rulers of Lasta, holds his own. He is spoken of as a man of courage and determination, and counts for one of Theodore's most potent adversaries;" which description, as far as it goes, is entirely confirmatory of that already given by myself in my communication to your Lordship of the 12th of April last.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

P.S.—In corroboration of my objection to Sir H. L. Bulwer's proposal I would quote these words of the Egyptian Correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette:" "If we set the Egyptians on Abyssinia we shall merely be immolating its Christian population, and opening the door for influence there not our own, one day, perhaps, to be used adversely to us." C. B.

No. 746.

*Memorandum by Sir Henry Durand on Expedition to Abyssinia.—(Communicated by India Office to Foreign Office.)**

Simla, June 10, 1867.

IN the absence of everything approaching to reliable information, I should not have hazarded any remarks at all on Major-General Coghlan's Memorandum,† had it not been for the request of his Excellency the Governor-General. In deference to the Viceroy's wish, but with a painful sense of the want of all data on which to proceed, I venture to offer the following observations:—

2. It is related by historians that the Negashi of Abyssinia invaded Yemen in the year A.D. 525 with 60,000 men, conquered the province, and held it until A.D. 575, that is, for half-a-century. In A.D. 525 the conquering army crossed from the Abyssinian coast, apparently from the Annesley or Massowah harbours, and landed at Ghalifica, on the Arab coast. For fifty years they maintained their conquest, and reinforcements had therefore continually to be provided from Abyssinia. This single fact proves that the communication from the plateau of Abyssinia to the seaboard by the routes leading on the harbours of the coast cannot be insuperably difficult for the march of considerable bodies of men. If in A.D. 525 an Abyssinian Monarch could march down 60,000 men and cross them over to the Arab coast to avenge the persecution the Christians had suffered, I cannot deem the features of the country so altered in the present day, that with our command of means it should be a matter of insurmountable difficulty to push a well and suitably equipped force into Abyssinia.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 708.

3. At the same time I am bound to say, after a careful perusal of Major-General Coghlan's scheme for an Abyssinian expeditionary force, that it affords no information upon points absolutely essential to be known in the event of military operations being undertaken. It relies, in fact, on a series of preliminary inquiries to be made by a staff of officers to be deputed to Massowah for the purpose of collecting the very information which, considering our now long possession of Aden, ought to have been available, and in the possession of the Political Agent at Aden. For instance, in 1854 there was an expedition to Serbera, under Burton, Herne, Strogan, and Speke; and after journeys by Burton and Speke, the party met in April 1855 at Serbera, and though the final result of the expedition was unfortunate, yet a good deal of information must have been collected as to the resources of the Somali country in cattle, sheep, ponies, and other kinds of produce. Moreover, subsequently, since 1856, our relations with the Somali coast have been so continuous at Aden that some positive knowledge of the resources of the Somali coast, and that trending south to Zanzibar, ought to be known. North of Massowah, also, the resources of the Nubian coast should by this time have been ascertained, and it ought not to be absolutely problematical whether we can rely or not upon the tracts above adverted to for a supply of slaughter cattle and sheep, and also of baggage animals.

4. Major-General Coghlan's Memorandum concludes with the hope that the preliminary arrangements for the acquisition of information may, on coming to the knowledge of King Theodorus, induce him, through fear of impending consequences, to liberate the captives unconditionally, and to sue for an amnesty. This, I would fain hope, may by good fortune happen; but it is a very dubious supposition, especially if our procedure be such as to imply an alliance, overt or concealed, with the Turco-Egyptian Power.

5. By the latest reports from the captives in Abyssinia we know that the available force now under the direct control of Theodorus is much reduced, and that it was in course of daily rapid diminution. At the same time, there is a general concurrence on the part of those conversant with the existing state of feeling in Abyssinia, that the hatred of the Turco-Egyptian rule is so great, and the national antipathy so ingrained, that whatever steps might be taken for retrieving the captives and coercing Theodorus, we have been repeatedly warned against our operations assuming the semblance of alliance with Turco-Egyptian support or aid, for that such an impression might rally the Abyssinians to something like union, and could not fail greatly to strengthen Theodorus. It is impossible to judge how far this may be a correct representation of the national feeling in Abyssinia, but some incidental remarks by the eminent traveller, Baker, who passed some time in an Abyssinian province before he started for the Albert Nyanza exploration, are a weighty confirmation from an independent source of this alleged virulent national feeling. As at present informed, therefore, it may be politic to avoid any line of procedure that might be construed to indicate an offensive coalition with Turco-Egyptian designs on Abyssinia.

6. In a rough way the Turk claims the coast as far as the Straits of the Bab-el-Mandeb, but, unless I am misinformed, he holds nothing lower down than Massowah island, which, according to Coghlan, we could not use without the permission of the Turkish Government. It would seem preferable, even at some disadvantage, to select a port such as Annesley Bay where no such previous permission was necessary, aad possible complications with the Turco-Egyptian Government were avoided. As the old road to Tigré came to Annesley Bay, there can hardly be a doubt that it is a practicable line. In a late despatch, Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether spoke much more favourably of the route from Amphilla than does Major-General Coghlan. It is no doubt a bad roadstead, and not comparable as a harbour with Annesley Bay, but it is nearer to Tigré, and it is questionable which of the two routes is the better for troops advancing on Tigré. As a demonstration, as well as with a view to operations, it would be advisable to institute inquiries as to both routes.

7. The essential difference between such an expedition and that to the Persian Gulf, under Sir J. Outram, must not be lost sight of. The latter expedition had, as its first object, to strike a blow on the coast, and by the occupation of Bushire, and the operations at the head of the Gulf, to threaten, though not to undertake, an advance from the coast on one or other line of operations. It was expected, as proved to be the case, that the Persian Government would be brought to reason by the occupation of Bushire, and the operations at the head of the Gulf; and it was only in case of disappointment in this respect, that more serious operations were contemplated. The case is very different with regard to an expedition into Abyssinia. The blow to be struck, is not one on the coast, but involves a long and probably a difficult march from the coast to the plateau of Abyssinia, as a preliminary to effective action against the Nagashi. A *sine quâ non*, therefore, is that what ever force is thrown on shore from the ships at the head of Annesley Bay, or at Amphilla,

shall be so equipped with carriage cattle for stores, camp equipage, baggage, spare ammunition and ordnance park stores, besides sheep and cattle for slaughter, that a rapid advance from the coast may be possible. There must also be the means from time to time for throwing forward additional supplies. Now, granting that no wheeled carriage except that of the guns is allowed, and that the arrangements are such that every thing else for the army is carried on the backs of animals, such as camels, mules, ponies, bullocks, &c., such a mode of equipment, involving daily loading and unloading, necessitates not only a large number of animals, but also of men to take care of them ; and all, man and beast must be fed. The first consideration, thorefore, must be the organisation of ample means of transport, for nothing is either more useless or helpless than a body of troops thrown on shore without means of movement.

8. Where there are no data whatever as to the available supply of carriage cattle, and nothing is known of the routes, it would be expedient so to organise the force as to combine, as far as possible, a maximum of efficiency with a minimum of transport, for it is the means of transport that will probably be the difficulty throughout the operations. A force composed as follows would answer the foregoing conditions from the moderate strength of Europeans proposed ; but bearing in mind the wear and tear of a long advance over such a country as must be traversed, the Column, a weak division, is of minimum strength in natives also.

Column to advance from the coast upon Tigré or the plateau of Abyssinia.

1*st Brigade.*—1 European regiment; 1 Sikh Pioneer regiment; 1 Native Infantry regiment.

2*nd Brigade.*—1 European regiment; 1 Sikh Infantry regiment; 1 Native Infantry regiment; Artillery and Sappers; 1 Mountain Train Battery; 1 Field Battery, Armstrong guns; 2 Companies Sappers (Native).

Cavalry.—2 Regiments Irregular Native Cavalry ; a small Ordnance Park ; a small Engineer Park ; Commissariat Park.

Reserve on the coasts with transport in course of organization as rapidly as possible, in case of an advance being necessary in support of Columns.

Reserve Bridage.—1 Regiment of European Infantry ; 2 Regiments of Native Infantry ; 1 Company Sappers (Native) ; 1 Field Battery, Armstrong guns.

9. In the event of the Reserve being called up, which would probably be the case before the operations were concluded, Government must be prepared to supply its place by a reinforcement from India, or better still, by one being held in readiness at Aden of a like strength.

The 1st and 2nd Brigades would be about 4,000 men; Artillery, 300 ; Sappers, 200 ; Cavalry, 900 ; total, 5,400 men.

Reserve Brigade.—Infantry, 2,000 men ; Artillery, 150 ; Sappers, 100 ; total, 2,250 men.

Contingent on demand to supply reserve, if called to the front, 2,250 men.

The force to be embarked and landed on Abyssinian coast would be,—column, 5,400 men ; reserve, 2,250 men ; total, 7,650 men.

To be held in readiness,—brigade, 2,250 men. Grand total, 9,900 men.

10. All the servants and camp followers from India landed in Africa should be well armed.

11. The Medical Department must be strong in officers and stores. If Annesley Bay were the base of operations, it would be a wise precaution to have a hospital ship of good size there.

12. The Topographical and the Telegraph Departments should not be neglected on such an expedition. They are both essential.

13. Though the coercion of the Negashi Theodorus, and the liberation of the captives may be the sole aim of the expedition, it does not follow, unfortunately, that the force may be able to effect these objects and return to the coast without making some stay in Abyssinia. The column will advance under the disadvantage of knowing nothing of the country. Under such circumstances great rapidity of action cannot be expected ; it must feel its way with more or less caution. A temporary occupation will probably prove inevitable ; and that again will entail the necessity of endeavouring to restore order in the vicinity of the position occupied by the troops and on the line of communication with the coast. The mere advance to the plateau from the coast, though the route may present difficulties, will really be the easiest part of the business. The temporary occupation, and the ultimate withdrawal from the country to the coast, will prove the more serious part of the enterprize. Much will depend on the judgment and tact with which the Abyssinians are conciliated, and the good fortune that may attend the endeavour to restrict hostile operations to a conflict with Theodorus; but in the disturbed and wasted state of the

country it is impossible to foresee what complications may arise from the jealousy of factious chiefs. It does not follow that because they are in rebellion against Theodorus they should side with us, on the contrary, they may resent the domination, temporarily though it may avowedly be, of foreigners, and cause much trouble to the force. Once embroiled with any of the chiefs and races now harrying Abyssinia, the withdrawal would be very difficult, if not dangerous. The fact is that it may turn out far easier to get into and occupy the country, than to leave it at the moment we may desire to wash our hands of the affair. Government must therefore be prepared to afford a somewhat protracted support, both naval and military, to the force in Abyssinia. Although a division well commanded might, if fortune befriended the enterprise, effect what is desired, it might, on the other hand, be necessary not only to send up the Reserve Brigade, but even to follow that up by another, always at the same time maintaining a strong hold of the base of operations on the coast. It is exactly that sort of expedition the precise issue of which it is impossible to foretell, from the circumstance that what with our own ignorance of the country and its difficulties, the anarchy which at present prevails there, and the reception of a foreign force being always an utter uncertainty among savages and semi-savages, the elements of trouble and discord are many, and those of order non-existent. Alliances with petty chiefs would be insecure and as much a source of vigilance as their open hostility. Whilst before our armed domination could retire, it must for its own welfare, as well as that of the people who come under its temporary protection, leave some organized power to take its place, nothing would be more disagreeable, and hardly anything more discreditable, than a withdrawal which took the form of a retreat in the face of hostile masses. And this must almost inevitably be the case unless before the withdrawal from the country began there had been a reconstruction of some sort of substantive power to be left behind us. To retire amid seething anarchy would be to invite pursuit and attack, if only for the sake of plunder, and we might suffer more on the withdrawal than during the advance.

Simla, June 10, 1867. (Signed) H. M. DURAND.

No. 747.

*Memorandum by Major-General Sir W. Mansfield—(Communicated by India Office to Foreign Office.)**

June 14, 1867.

I AM sorry to say that I labour under the same difficulties as my honourable and gallant friend in meeting the wishes of his Excellency the Viceroy.

2. It appears to me, however, that so far as recommendation and argument can be relied on, without available data of precise knowledge of a barbarous country, against which a military expedition is to be directed, Sir Henry Durand has furnished the lines on which Her Majesty's Government will have to erect the details of such an undertaking as that such suggested by Major-General Sir W. Coghlan.

3. I believe my honourable colleague to be correct in principle, in the warning he gives with respect to the first landing and advance of a column being the easiest part of the project; that we must be prepared for occupation perhaps of a prolonged character, and that we cannot return from such an expedition without loss of political honour, and, perhaps, of military reputation, if after exacting reparation from King Theodorus we should leave the country in a state of "seething anarchy." I am inclined to think that the most valuable portion of Sir William Coghlan's Memorandum† is the latter part of it, which is styled "preliminary arrangements."

4. It is certainly necessary that we should have full reports on the coast, on the inland roads, on the temperature of the coast, on the first ranges of hills and the higher uplands, on the amount of carriage, slaughter cattle and other supplies obtainable by purchase near the coast and in the nearest hills. We should also be told on reliable authority whether it be true or not that we may trust to the good offices of the "Shihos," or other tribes. This can only be done by establishing a Political Resident on the coast, with an effective Staff.

Her Majesty's Government can judge better than we, if this should be at Massowah or Annesley Bay, or elsewhere.

5. It seems to me that such an establishment, if dexterously directed, would not only give us all the information which we are now absolutely without, but that it might be more to act on the fears of Theodorus, and so achieve the object of Ministers without the cost and responsibility of an expedition, which can hardly fail to entail an occupation of two

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 708.

years' duration in the country of Theodorus; and, perhaps, ultimately commit us to an Abyssinian "Algeria," a project which Consul Cameron has always had in his mind: *vide* one of his early letters at the commencement of his captivity.

6. As King Theodorus may not impossibly have learnt the contents of that letter, he is not improbably impressed with the fear of such an ultimate result if we should now make a demonstration of any kind. As said before I should be much disposed to work on it politically, by the adoption of the measure suggested by Sir William Coghlan as the preliminary arrangement for a military expedition.

7. With regard to Sir Henry Durand's proposals, I fear we cannot rely on Aden as an intermediate base between Bombay and the Abyssinian coast.

There is such scarcity of water in that place, and so little spare room, that I can hardly conceive 2,500 additional troops being put there with their followers without very great inconvenience, loss of health, and, perhaps, sacrifice of life.

I should rather advocate that, given a good harbour, and a place well supplied with water on the Abyssinian coast, all reserves should be landed there at once. They would, in all probability, be fed there as easily as at Aden, and their presence would be at once felt in support of the expedition, and the achievement of its object.

8. I think we may consider it certain that secular hatred and jealousy exists on the part of the Abyssinian towards the Turk. But I am not sure that this feeling may not be used advantageously by a Resident established on the coast, as I would propose for the attainments of our objects.

9. If Massowah be more convenient as a point of disembarkation and of future advance than any other, I should not consider anti-Turkish or Egyptian feelings in the Abyssinians to be sufficient cause to prevent our adopting it. But if we must ask the permission of the Sultan's Government for such a purpose, we have probably a reason of a weighty character for acting on Sir Henry Durand's suggestion to leave Massowah alone, and seize some other point where permanently to establish ourselves on the coast during the expedition and occupation.

10. It seems to me important in the sense of our European policy, that the affair should in no way be mixed up with Turkish territory and pretentions, or in joint action with the Turks.

11. I would venture to state that my opinion corresponds with that of Sir H. Durand's in opposition to that of Sir William Coghlan's in considering the expedition, with its object and difficulties, and with the distances to be traversed before the objective point is reached, to be a far more serious affair, and likely, therefore, to be much more costly than that conducted by the late Sir James Outram against the Persian coast.

June 14, 1867. (Signed) W. R. MANSFIELD.

No. 748.

Acting Consul-General Reade to Lord Stanley.—(*Received June* 15.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, June* 6, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, a despatch I have received under flying seal, from Colonel Merewether, dated Massowah the 17th May, and reporting intelligence which had been received by him from the captives in Abyssinia, under date the 20th of April, up to which time no change appears to have taken place in the position of the prisoners.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. F. READE.

Inclosure in No. 748.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir C. Wood, May 17, 1867.

[Same as No. 749.]

No. 749.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received June* 15.)*

My Lord, *Massowah, May* 17, 1867.

I ARRIVED here at six this morning. The letters for King Theodorus go on this evening.

2. I found letters from Mr. Rassam and Captain Cameron, dated 18th and 20th April, respectively. The former writes:—

"Since the date of my last letter† to you, dispatched on the 3rd instant, nothing here has occurred worth mentioning. The Emperor has written me a most polite answer regarding my offer to him of sending him some calico and shirts for the use of his servants. He says that in my present position, he ought to look to my wants, and asks me to dress my servants with it. He says he only wants the friendship of my Queen and myself. I have no time just now to send you a copy of the letter, but I will do so by the next opportunity when I send down to Massowah after a few days.

"I suppose that by this time Mr. Flad has arrived at Matemma, as we have heard that he had left Massowah about the middle of last month.

"You will be glad to hear we are all well."

He adds a P.S. in cipher:—

"The King calls himself in his letter to me, a kind (for 'blind,' word not clear) donkey. He is still plundering, and is getting weaker every day."

3. Captain Cameron writing on the 20th, says:—

"We heard from Flad yesterday, but have not got the remotest idea how the King will take his failure; I don't believe there is the slightest chance of his complying with the Queen's wishes.

"The fact is, it is a fearful thing to be in the hands of such a savage. At this moment things are tolerably well. But who can assure us they may be so to-morrow. It is this that makes me write so earnestly as regards the necessity of active measures."

4. Captain Cameron asks for some medicines, which I am sending him by his returning messengers. These men describe the country as being in a fearful state. Bands of marauders in every direction. Mariam, which is only 7 miles south of the King's camp at Debra Tabor, was in the hands of the rebels.

5. The King had made a sudden descent on Korata, and destroyed it; but since then, he had remained quiet at Debra Tabor. All agree in reporting his army to be getting less and less, every day; and it is said now that he has not above 4,000 men left with him. It is greatly to be hoped that when it comes to the very last with him, he will not have sufficient force left to allow of his getting to Magdala.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 750.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received June* 15.)*

My Lord, *Aden, May* 24, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith three copies of a very interesting and good account, by Assistant-Surgeon H. J. Blanc, in medical charge of the Mission, of recent events in Abyssinia. Also of the character of the Ruler of that country, King Theodorus. It has been printed at the Aden Government Jail Press, for facility of perusal, and as yet has not been out of the hands of trusty Government servants.

2. In the event of Her Majesty's Government deciding on active proceedings against the King, I would venture to suggest that the accompanying paper should be placed at the disposal of the Press. It will clearly show to the public the exceeding forbearance with which King Theodorus has been treated by Her Majesty's Government, and also how impossible it is to any longer defer the adoption of the most stringent measures towards one who, by his acts, has proclaimed himself utterly wanting in true faith and sincere dealing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† See No. 735.

Inclosure in No. 750.

*Memorandum by Dr. Blanc respecting the Emperor Theodorus and his Captives.**

Magdala, March 30, 1867.

SO many contradictory accounts are given and believed concerning the Abyssinian captives, the real character of the Ethiopic Ruler so little understood, and the series of misfortunes, from the beginning to the end, that befell Europeans in this country, so grossly misrepresented, that I will endeavour to give a short and impartial summary of the principal events that have occurred since the last few years, and by the simple adducing of facts attempt to conclude as to what course will most probably lead to a happy termination of the present difficulty.

Any one in the least conversant with Abyssinia, is well aware of the career of the Emperor Theodorus, how as Lij Cassai, a young man of good family, nephew to the celebrated Dejaz Comfou, if not, as he asserts, a descendant of the Ethiopic Kings, he followed the very common example of Abyssinian feudatory chiefs, by throwing off his allegiance to his sovereign.

After obtaining the hand of the daughter of Ras Ali, the real Emperor (the puppet one Johnnse, then a young man being well contented to possess the beautiful mother of his Ras, Waizero Menen) he began to plunder the friendly province of Dembea, and by the courage he manifested on all occasions, the abstemious life he led and the favour he showed to all who served his cause, he soon collected around him a band of hardy and reckless followers.

Ras Ali at last awoke to the danger of allowing a young and brave Chieftain to wage war on his own account, and to plunder peaceful districts, he ordered him to repair to his Court; the request naturally met with a refusal. Several Dejajmatches were sent to enforce the command, but the young soldier easily conquered the courtiers sent against him; their followers, charmed with the insinuating manners, and, dazzled by the splendid promises of Cassai, were easily induced to range themselves under his standard; urged, it is said, by his brave and beautiful wife, who even threatened to leave him if he did not struggle for the supreme power, he attacked his father-in-law. The battle of Amba Chara decided the fate of Ras Ali, his army having been completely routed, by the gallant behaviour of Lij Cassai, he fled to the Galla country, where he shortly afterwards died, leaving Cassai as the recognized master of Central Abyssinia. Victory followed victory, all trembled before the fierce assaults and great prestige of the rising man. After a few years, from Shoa to Matemma, from Godjam to Hamazein, all feared and obeyed the commands of the Emperor Theodorus, for under that name he desired to be crowned after he had finally conquered Abyssinia, by subduing the powerful Tigré Chief, Dejaj Oobeay.

For a few years all went on well, the fear of his very name retained in obedience even the most distant provinces, tribute in gold, horses, mules, grain, &c,, almost encumbered the royal camp, and many credited his own assertion, viz., "that the glorious reign of the long-promised Theodorus had in reality begun.

But though a great conqueror, and naturally endowed with military genius, the Emperor Theodorus is a bad administrator. He owed his crown and country to his army; when strife gave way to peace, he found himself at the head of a powerful host, the soldiers of the many Chiefs he had conquered, and he felt either reluctant or afraid to dismiss them to their homes; he, therefore, seeing all peaceful around him, like many great captains of old, turned his thoughts towards foreign conquests, until the re-establishment of the former Ethiopic Empire, comprising the Soudan and part of the Galla country, became a fixed idea, which he longed to realize.

He had, however, some experience of what a small number of well-armed disciplined troops could do against his undisciplined horde; on a former occasion he had endeavoured to obtain possession of the Soudan. At Gedaref a handful of irregulars proved too much for him, and he returned from this expedition, if not a better, at least a wiser man. Consequently, feeling himself, with all his boasting, unable to cope, single-handed with the Turks, he invited the concurrence of England and France, and wrote to the Sovereigns of both these countries, calling on them to join him in his crusade against the Mussulman race. In the meanwhile his army consisted of about 150,000 fighting men, but as in most Eastern armies, encumbered with numberless followers, his own being computed to be no less than 600,000. If we admit the population of Abyssinia to be about 3,000,000, more than a fourth of the whole had to be fed, clothed, and paid by the remainder. During some years this terrible oppression was quietly submitted to; at last, however, the peasants, half starved, and almost naked, finding that with all their labour and privations

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

they could not succeed in satisfying the daily-increasing demands of their terrible master, abandoned the plains, and under the conduct of their hereditary Chiefs, retired to high mountains or deep valleys; some few took to arms, and prepared to resist by force the armies of the formidable Theodorus, preferring even the chances of a cruel death, to the certainty of misery and starvation,

In Godjam, Wolkait, Shoa, Tigré, the rebellion broke out almost simultaneously; the idea of foreign conquest was postponed, whole rebel districts were laid waste, but protected by their strongholds, the peasantly quietly awaited the departure of the soldiery, when they returned to their desolated homes, and cultivated just enough for their maintenance. With but few exceptions this system succeeded, and they escaped the terrible vengeance of their now infuriated lord. The immense army soon suffered from this mode of warfare; year after year, the provinces the soldier could still plunder become less and less; several severe famines broke out; large districts, such as Dembea, formerly the granary of the empire, were now depopulated and uncultivated; dissatisfaction showed itself amongst the formerly pampered soldiers, now half starved and badly clad; desertions began to take place, many fled to their native provinces, and joined the ranks of those in arms in defence of their homes, or tilled the soil with their now transformed lance. The fall of Theodorus was as rapid as his rise; on the battle field he still remained unconquered; Garet, Negousie, and others paid with their lives, their attempts to snatch from his hands the sovereign power, but against the passive warfare of the peasantry, and the Fabian like policy of their chiefs, he could do nothing; he went from province to province, all disappeared at his approach; no enemy, but no food; little by little his army as well as kingdom dwindled away; at last nothing remained to him but to plunder the few provinces still faithful to him. At the present date his army hardly numbers 10,000 fighting men, and of the whole of his former conquests he retains with difficulty, a portion of Begemder, the small districts of Dahouto, Dalanta, and Eches, with a few Ambas, shortly his only refuge.

Admitting for an instant that Theodorus was born with the best dispositions, endowed with the best of tempers, that sobriety, truthfulness and justice ruled his life, still he passed through the double ordeal of rapid and unexpected elevation, to fall so suddenly, hardly retaining the appearance of his short-lived royalty, as to account for his present suspicious character, cruelty and duplicity. It is however more natural to suspect, that whilst poor and a candidate to power, he concealed his many vices and restrained his natural evil propensities. Soon after his coronation, at the height of his glory, when all Abyssinia crouched at his feet, he had neither cause nor reason to be false and cruel, still he was both; he loved to ensnare by kind words or deeds those he thought might give him trouble some day, and many of his first and most faithful followers had to lament the hour they had trusted in the most sacred oath of their lord and master.

Even now, low as he is fallen, when he likes, he has all the dignity of a sovereign, the amiability and good breeding of the accomplished diplomat—his smile is so attractive, his words so sweet and gracious—that those who have seen him thus, and we are amongst them, cannot believe that the affable and accomplished monarch, is but a good actor playing a part, a monster of hypocrisy, who is chuckling all the while inwardly at the dexterous manner he is taking in his admiring friends.

A few examples will illustrate better than mere words the true character of the Emperor Theodorus, and efface the impression that, being one of his victims, I am painting him blacker than he really is.

Beru Goscho, the hereditary Governor of Godjam, fell a prisoner into the hands of Theodorus at the battle which decided the conquest of that considerable province. But an important Amba remained, and without its possession his victory would be of little avail. Theodorus having no artillery, and the fort being well provisioned, he was well aware that both assault or siege would fail, and that only by cunning he could enter its narrow doors. The fort was in the hands of Beru Goscho's wife, he consequently sent her offers of capitulation, to the effect that should she surrender the fort to his victorious army, she and her husband would be free, promoted to high rank, and left in possession of all their property; after some hesitation, Beru Goscho's wife accepted the terms offered, on Theodorus taking the most solemn oath that he would fulfil his promise. Trust not in princes; as soon as the fort opened its gate to the victor, Beru Goscho and his wife were made prisoners, stripped of everything, himself heavily chained, and sent with his wife to a hill fort, where they remained until they were sent here, where both now reside; the husband bound hand and foot and thrust into the common jail, the wife living a guarded prisoner in some other part of the mountain; and though so near they are not allowed to communicate, much less to visit and comfort one another.

Oobeay, the Governor of Tigré, though worn out by excess and old age, led his army in person against the invading host of Theodorus. Tired and weary, the old man rested

for a few minutes under a tree; in this position he was accidently surrounded and made a prisoner by some of Theodorus's soldiers.

In Abyssinian warfare when the Chief is taken or dead, the battle is over, the conquered army either joins the victor, or, throwing away arms and baggage, flies in all directions; such was the case on the present occasion, and almost without fighting, by a lucky stroke of fortune, Theodorus found himself master of Tigré. The son of Oobeay, shut up in the stronghold of Semien, refused to listen to the terms offered by Theodorus, well-knowing by this time the value of his word. But Theodorus was not a man to be frustrated in his wishes. He treated the old man Oobeay exceedingly well, and at last married his daughter, making her his lawful wife and consort. He then sent word to his brothers-in-law, telling them, we are now of one family, your sister is my wife; you, my beloved brothers, what have you to fear. The unhappy young men surrendered the fort and repaired to the Imperial camp. A short time afterwards Theodorus repudiated his new wife and loaded his brothers-in-law with heavy fetters, which death alone will remove.

One of the bravest men in Theodorus's army was the "Wakshum," a descendant of one of the oldest Lasta families; he fought for his King on many a battle field, and by his valour more than once turned the tide of victory. At last, the suspicious Theodorus began to be afraid of his brave Chief. To try his fidelity he sent him with a small force against another "Wakshum," his uncle, who had rebelled. The "Wakshum," to show his King that his loyalty was above family ties, accepted the unwelcome task, scattered the rebels, and brought to the Emperors's feet his uncle a fettered prisoner. He was instantly executed, and the "Wakshum" himself shortly afterwards was made to learn that even the sacrifice of his own family could not satisfy the suspicious tyrant; he was deprived of his command, chained, and sent a prisoner to this Amba.

At the second battle in Tigré, against Aga Negousie, many of the Chiefs, after the fall of their leader, took refuge in the sacred churches of Axum. Even Theodorus dared not drag them from their sanctuary; he therefore swore that he would grant a free pardon to all who would come to him, on condition that they would serve him in future. Almost all accepted. They had no sooner reached the camp than many were handed over to the executioner, whilst the remainder, loaded with chains, were sent prisoners to some hill fort.

I could adduce hundreds of instances to illustrate the utter worthlessness of his most sacred oaths, if a few were not sufficient to show how vain it is to believe anything he says. In his cunning, he always endeavours to cover his treachery by some paltry excuse. He plundered Dembea because the inhabitants were too friendly towards the Europeans; Gondar, because one of our messengers had been betrayed by the inhabitants of that city, He likes to shelve the odium of his cruelties on the Europeans or priests whenever it is possible. He destroyed Zegay, a large and populous city, because, he said, a priest had been rude to him. No person is sacred in his eye, however faithful he may have proved. A few months ago he cast into chains his adopted father, Cantiba Hailo, who, by protecting him at the beginning of his career, was greatly instrumental in his rise. Tesemma Engedda, the hereditary Chief of Gahinte, last year, with the peasantry of his district, utterly destroyed a large invading body of rebels. He was first cajoled and made a grandee, but, soon after, made to feel the evil of too well serving his master; he now lingers in chains, and is occasionally tortured to extort money from him. A few days ago the Chief of the Amba, one of the oldest and most faithful servants, has been chained and all his property confiscated. His brother, Ras Walde Mariam, also one of his first and most trusty followers, is, with almost all the Begemder Chiefs, in chains. In the meanwhile the peasantry are daily plundered. Theodorus, by chaining the Chiefs, secures the object he desires, money from the great men, and the peasants, however anxious to fight they may be, are left helpless, deprived as they are of all their leaders.

I have already stated that, having subdued Abyssinia, he turned his thoughts towards annexing the Galla country and Upper Egypt. He overrun a part of the Galla country with his immense army and forced them to acknowledge him as their Suzerain; they agreed to pay him tribute, and many of the still unconquered Galla chiefs, listening to his honied words, gave up their guerilla warfare so detrimental to his army, and joined his standard. They had soon to repent their too generous confidence. Fara Kassim, a brave warrior, and considered amongst a race of horsemen as one of the most skilful, a chief of a large district in the neighbourhood of the Magdala, availed himself of the amity to join the army of Theodorus. "To prove that you are sincere," said the Abyssinian Monarch, "go and plunder your own district." He obeyed; chains were his reward.

After the submission of the Gallas, Theodorus required hostages. Several of the principal chiefs volunteered and accepted to remain at his new acquired Amba of Magdala.

The Queen sent him her eldest son, the heir to the throne, as a proof of her good-will. At first they were all well treated, the young Prince being made Governor of the Amba. This period of favour did not last long. Theodorus exacted so much that the Galla declined to comply with his requests; the prince and his chiefs were put in chains, and when the heir to the throne of Shoa escaped with his followers, as he was kindly received by the Galla Queen, the prince, his companions, Fara Kassim, altogether thirty-two Galla chiefs, were put to death, and their still breathing bodies hurled over the precipice.

Almost all travellers agree that African princes are despotic to the extreme, consider as nothing the lives of their subjects, their property as their own: moreover, that deceit and treachery are well-known features of the African character. They delight in bullying the weak, and cringe willingly before the strong. It may be that Theodorus is not worse than many of his predecessors and countrymen, only that his extraordinary fortune has brought out to the utmost the bad qualities of his nature: still, Theodorus, however unscrupulous he may be, accomplished as he is in hypocrisy and deceit, is no fool; there is more cunning and plotting in him than will be found in all Abyssinia put together; he knows well the cowardly race he has to deal with, and that he can commit crimes to satiation, without fear of punishment; soldiers as well as peasants, when too harshly treated, simply run away.

Theodorus has had for many years Europeans around him, amongst them Bell and Plowden; the first was his great and good adviser, and up to the time of his death there were but few stains on Theodorus's name. He has had long conversations on European affairs with the Europeans in his service, all men of good education, and he is well informed regarding the resources and power of Western nations; indeed the very way he injured and illtreated foreigners clearly indicates that he was afraid at first to go too far, it was only when he believed himself beyond the reach of punishment that he proclaimed by words and deeds his intense hatred of the white man.

The Egyptian Governmeut, to save the Soudan from being plundered, restrained, by some reasons or others, from declaring war against its boasting neighbour, endeavoured to allay the wrath of the all-powerful Emperor, and to that effect first sent to him with suitable presents, David, the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria. Theodorus, always jealous of the power of the Church, took advantage of the presence of this dignitary, to show his army whom they had to fear and obey; one day, on some frivolous pretext or the other, he caused a hedge to be built around the Patriarch's residence, and for several days the eldest son of the Coptic church kept his holy father in close confinement. It is true that, believing he had gone too far, he apologized and allowed the terrified old man to leave the country. As usual, Theodorus was considered the injured man; he was right, the Patriarch wrong. So at least Said Pasha must have thought, as soon after the return of David, he sent Abdul Raham Beg with enormous and costly presents, a sop for the infuriated lion. However, the Egyptian ambassador fared somewhat worse than his predecessor. After having been detained more than three years, the greater part of the time as a semi-prisoner, he was allowed to leave, but was plundered *en route* by the Shum of Tchelgo, contrary to the orders and entirely without the concurrence of Theodorus. Strong remonstrances having been made by Egypt on account of the long detention of their Ambassador, perhaps doubtful concerning the plunder, if his story would be believed, he accused the unfortunate Beg of many a serious crime. Fearful that his word would not stand against the crafty accusations of his kind host, Abdul Raham Beg poisoned himself at Berber. For the second time, Theodorus was allowed to ill treat foreigners without any notice being taken of his brutality; on the next occasion, the dread of retaliation being less, he went a step further.

This time his victim was M. Lejean, a member of the French Diplomatic Service. Tired of Abyssinia, and having received letters requiring his presence in Europe, M. Lejean requested an interview with the Emperor, in order to obtain his permission to leave the country; an evasive answer was returned to his request; M. Lejean sent again, as His Majesty being *en route* to Godjam, each day would increase the difficulty of his return. Such impertinence could not be tolerated, and Theodorus' army had the glory to see, in full uniform, a "Représentant de la Grande Nation" chained and imprisoned. After twenty-four hours he was released, and allowed to remain at Gaffat, the European workmen of the King being securities for his good behaviour, and for his residing in the country until the return of a M. Bardel, also a Frenchman, sent some months previously on a mission to the Emperor of the French. On the arrival of M. Bardel with a letter from the French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, M. Lejean, after a kind of mock trial, was allowed twenty-four hours to leave the country.

Here again no notice was taken of the insult; a French official was chained,

imprisoned, detained for many months, and, lastly, literally kicked out of the country, and with the sole exception of a protest from the gentleman himself, Theodorus could proudly boast of the insults he had offered to a great Power, without her daring to resent the same.

The Patriarch he imprisoned for a few days; the Egyptian Ambassador for several years, and plundered him of everything he had; the French Consul he imprisoned, chained, and kicked out of the country. Any semi-barbarian would no doubt have thought the same as Theodorus did, that, through fear or impossibility, whatever ill-treatment he might inflict on strangers no punishment could possibly overtake him; that such must have been his impression is manifest by the gradual increasing brutalities of his conduct towards those Europeans, the next victims of this sainted hero.

The unjust, cruel, and savage treatment inflicted by the Emperor of Abyssinia on Stern, Cameron, Rosenthal, and their respective followers is without precedent, and its horrors unparalleled in history. It is indeed a wonder how these unfortunate and innocent men could bear against such a long imprisonment, coupled with heavy chains. For a long time almost bound to the ground by additional fetters, nearly starved to death, frequently deprived of every article of clothing, and without friends or sympathy, strangers in a dark and distant land, how the cry of their sufferings could find no echo, and why the inhuman being who for so many years revelled in their sufferings, was petted, absolved, almost pitied, is a mystery and an enigma the mind must accept but is incapable to solve.

By this time Theodorus took no trouble to hide the contempt in which he held all Europeans and their Governments. He knew that an answer to his letter to the Queen of England had arrived at Massowah in July 1864; "Let them wait my good pleasure," said he; and it is probable that he would never have taken any notice of Her Majesty's letter, or of the Mission sent to him, if the political condition of his country had not induced him to adopt another line of conduct. When the Mission arrived at Massowah in July 1864, Theodorus was still at the head of a powerful army, and master of the greater part of the country. His campaign in Shoa was most disastrous. On his return from that expedition, Mr. Rassam's third letter reached him; it probably struck him that he might make capital out of us, he therefore granted the long expected permission to enter his country. The cordial and hospitable reception he gave us, his gracious demeanour and polished manners quite won our hearts, and almost forgetting the suffering of our countrymen we were almost inclined to consider him as the injured individual. But the mask of hypocrisy was to fall at last. The captives had been released, presents ordered, a letter of apology to our Gracious Queen written, the day of departure fixed, all was forgotten and forgiven, but before they leave his friends must come to him once more to gladden his heart.

On the 13th April, 1866, the former captives left Korata *en route* to Tanka, a village at the extremity of the Tsana Lake, where the whole party was to rendezvous. The Mission started at the same time by boat for Zegay to bid adieu to their good friends, on our arrival we were received at the beach with due honours, and proceeded to the Royal enclosure. The large audience hall was crowded, all the officers of the army being present in their gala dress; we thought that the good King wished on the last visit of his friends to surprise them by the grandeur of the reception. Indeed he did surprise us! as we entered the hall, the chief Ras Engeddah, kissed the ground; again a kiss was a signal used by an arch traitor, in an instant we were seized, searched, our swords, caps, belts, thrown on the ground, our uniforms torn, and three of Her Majesty's officers dragged along the double line of Abyssinian grandees, degraded and reviled.

Whilst the mission was thus treated in the very house of their host, the former prisoners were arrested at a village a few miles from Korata, chained and brought to Zegay.

The farce of a public reconciliation took place a few days afterwards, Mr. Flad started on his mission. The Emperor previously taking a solemn oath that until his return he would treat us as his friends. In the meanwhile we remained for some time at Zegay, prisoners without chains.

Our subsequent history is well known. His Majesty left Zegay at the beginning of June; arrived at Gaffat, he gave us horses so that we should be near our friends; on the 25th of that month, either on some false report (or what is more probable a mere invention of his) that the Turks were building railways in the Soudan, without his permission, in order to invade his country, he removed us from Gaffat to a black tent in his inclosure. On the 5th of July, Mr. Rosenthal and myself were arrested at Gaffat (where we both resided at the time, on account of cholera and typhus having broken out amongst the Europeans) by His Majesty himself and taken to Debra Tabor, where, after a series of accusations had been made by His Majesty against Messrs. Stern and Rassam, and after we had been duly informed that the Emperor of Abyssinia were entitled to half the world, the whole party was sent to a dark house and guards placed in the room with lighted candles. Two days

afterwards, with the exception of a few who entered His Majesty's service, we were all sent to Magdala, where we arrived on the 12th of July, on the 16th we were chained, and though it has been said that since then, our heavy fetters have been changed to lighter ones, that statement like so many others, is incorrect, except as concerns Mr. Rassam, who enjoys that favour; as for provisions, we should certainly have died of starvation last rainy season had not the Europeans of Gaffat generously supplied us with all the money they could spare. Mr. Flad succeeded far beyond our most sanguine expectations; presents and workmen arrived at Massowah, fortunately for us and them, accompanied by a dignified letter from our gracious Queen. Even at the eleventh hour the most liberal offers were still made to him, the past was forgotten on condition that he should behave better in future; we were to be exchanged for useful mechanics, and friendship re-established between the two nations. As we all expected, Theodore refused: in bland terms, he humbly begs for the presents, and artisans to be sent to him: "Oh! if they would only trust me, I would let fifty such as Rassam go." In the meanwhile he leaves his friends in chains, the only trouble he takes about them is to have them carefully watched, so that they should not leave without bidding him good bye. I hope that by the time this letter reaches the coast the outrageous and unscrupulous policy of the Abyssinian Emperor has been at last found out; that pretending friendship with our Government, whilst Her Majesty's servants and other Europeans are in chains, and left to starve, is a farce so gross and so absurd as not to leave room for the usual misrepresentation, always brought forward to exculpate his worst actions.

In the present state of the country, what could Theodorus possibly do either with the presents, or the workmen; the first, unless he sent half the remainder of his army to carry them they would never reach his camp, and what works could be erected by means of the latter? when at present the Europeans at Gaffat are, by Imperial command, told not to sleep at nights, but watch, as they are not a single day safe from being made prisoners by peasants or runaway soldiers.

What he wants is this: more Europeans in his hands. Should such an unfortunate event occur, should truth not yet be known, should that wonderful infatuation to trust in a man without honour or sincerity still prevail, and these unfortunate men allowed to enter the country, then some new and more unreasonable request will be made; not only will no one be allowed to leave, but the comers will soon be made to join our ranks; and who knows, he has not yet tasted the blood of the white man, let him only in one of his fits of ungovernable rage sacrifice one to his fury, the fate of all the others would be immediately sealed.

Let England, who glories in her civilisation, who hates falsehood and cruelty, bring her light to dispel the darkness of this land; England always proved that her citizens, like those of Rome in former days, may exclaim, "Civis Romanus sum." Will she leave her children to be slaves in the hand of a heartless tyrant? No, the noble efforts made already in our favour by our gracious Queen, those of an enlightened government, and the sympathy of the nation, are as many pledges that we are not forgotten, and that one day, we will be rescued, returned to our homes and families.

It must not be misunderstood, to obtain that object, the wishes of all, only one thing remains, *Force.*

I cannot better conclude than by stating the opinion of an Abyssinian gentleman, Samuel, sent by the King as our Balderaba. Since the beginning he has been mixed up with this affair; he knows Theodorus better than any man, and the many good services he has rendered us since imprisonment are a guarantee of his sincerity. "Is England asleep? Should your countrymen be foolish enough to send the presents and workmen, it would do you no good; none of you will ever leave the country unless your soldiers come, but if not soon, it will be too late to save you!"

(Signed) H. BLANC, *M.D., Staff Assistant Surgeon, Her Majesty's Bombay Army, Abyssinian Mission.*

Magdala, March 30, 1867.

No. 751.

*Mr. Murray to Major-General Sir E. Lugard.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 25, 1867.

WITH reference to my letter of the 20th of April last,† respecting the Abyssinian difficulty, I am directed by Lord Stanley to request that you will suggest, for Secretary

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 719.

Sir J. Pakington's consideration, whether, pending a final decision on the course to be pursued by Her Majesty's Government, it may not be desirable to make preliminary inquiries as to the precise steps to be taken in the event of its being found ultimately necessary to resort to force.

At present there is no intention of doing so. The Armenian Patriarch at Jerusalem has sent a Mission to Abyssinia for the purpose of trying to effect the release of the captives; and Lord Stanley is awaiting the result of the letter* which I informed you he had addressed to King Theodore, and which was dispatched from Massowah on the 17th of May. Nevertheless, as the time for action in Abyssinia seems to be limited to the period between the 1st of November and the 1st of June, it might be well for Her Majesty's Government to be furnished in time with all information calculated to assist them in their decision, in case warlike measures should hereafter be deemed inevitable.

It seems to Lord Stanley that it would be well that the following information should be procured:—

1. What amount of force is considered needful; what should it consist of; and by whom should it be commanded?

2. Assuming Bombay to be the base of operations, how long, after receiving from England orders to prepare the force, would it take to insure its being ready for service?

3. What arrangements would be made for its transport?

4. At what point would it be proposed to land it, bearing in mind that it is essential, if possible, to avoid landing on Egyptian territory?

5. What commissariat arrangements would be requisite?

6. What reserve would be necessary to insure success, and how is it proposed to keep this supplied?

7. Whether any, and what, preliminary steps would have to be taken, and what time would be required for the purpose, in order to obtain answers to these questions?

No doubt this information must be procured from Bombay, but Sir J. Pakington will probably concur with Lord Stanley in opinion that the request for it should rather be made by the War Office than by the Foreign Office.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 752.

Major De Dohsé to Lord Stanley.—(*Received June* 28.)†

Your Excellency, 29, *Mornington Road, New Cross, June* 27, 1867.

IT is not the least presumption, but a strong feeling of compassion as well as a presentiment of a certain success, which induces me to repeatedly addressing your Excellency on behalf of the poor British captives in Abyssinia.

It has always been my humble opinion that Earl Russell did not treat that Emperor Theodore with that respect and attention due to his exalted position, which brought on the latter's wrath and rage. A man like the Emperor, risen from almost nothing by his ownself, more ignorant than enlightened, flattered by courtiers, and advised by them, especially by foreigners, is more ambitious and proud than other Royal personages in civilized countries. Also the sending of some gentlemen with presents, which they had to deliver to the Emperor under the condition of releasing the captives, must have made a bad impression upon him, being already too much informed of the customs at the European Courts.

As regards sending 10,000 men to Abyssinia, it would, upon my opinion, be a total failure, being not only connected with great expenses, but also with the greatest difficulties. The Commander-in-chief of that corps would have a hard task in finding out his basis of operations in a country entirely unknown to him. It would not be advisable for him to advance into the heart of the country, as it could happen to be cut off in the rear from the Red Sea, his only refuge in case of a retreat, by the Emperor's troops. Such proceedings would, I think, lead to the greatest disasters, and the captives for ever be sacrificed.

There is another and better way, namely, the way of reconciliation, and if your Excellency will deign accept my former offer, or propose me for that appointment I applied for, I hope to God that I shall meet with a brilliant result if the undertaking is left to my own consideration.

* Inclosure in No. 721.

† Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Being Her Majesty's subject, and formerly a superior officer in Her Majesty's army I should be most happy to sacrifice myself for this noble and generous Government, directed at present by a most enlightened and wise Prime Minister, supported by his noble son, equally great as he, upon which every Englishman looks with admiration and pride.

I, in conclusion, refer respecting my good prowess and character to the Government War Office, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cambridge, and especially to General Sir Henry Storks, and Colonel W. G. Cameron, my former superior officers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) Major DE DOHSE.

No. 753.

*Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 1.)**

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, June 29, 1867.*

WITH reference to the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 13th instant,† in reply to Mr. Hammond's letter of the 8th instant,‡ I now take the liberty of offering a few additional remarks. I am induced to do so by the bellicose tone assumed by many of the organs of public opinion since the Abyssinian question was mooted in the House of Lords on the 21st instant, from which it may be inferred that hostile measures against the Emperor Theodore will ere long ensue.

Should such be the case, I trust my suggestion as to securing the assistance of Waagshum Gobazye, the actual ruler of North-Eastern Abyssinia, will not be disregarded.

At the same time I would beg leave to represent to your Lordship that it would hardly be fair to the British nation if the whole cost of any warlike operations that may be decided on were borne by the Imperial Treasury; inasmuch as the Government of India is not less responsible than the Home Government for the breach between England and Abyssinia, if indeed it might not be contended that the mischief originated with the Indian authorities.

In order to explain my meaning, I would ask permission to refer to the facts bearing on the subject, which are brought together in my recently published work, "The British Captives in Abyssinia."

From what is stated in page 78 of that work, it appears that in October 1862, Consul Cameron, in contemplation of his having to leave Abyssinia for the purpose of accompanying to England the projected Embassy from the Emperor Theodore, wrote to Earl Russell in these terms:—"As it is desirable, on every account, that we should not be without a correspondence in Abyssinia for a considerable time, I am preparing a letter on the subject to the Resident at Aden, a copy of which will be herewith inclosed."

The said letter to the Resident at Aden is not given in the papers laid before Parliament;§ but (as is explained in page 79 of my work) it was written at the instance of Samuel Georgis or Hussein, my servant, on my journey to Shoa in 1840, who became (so to say) a party to Major Harris's Mission to the King of that country in 1841, and who has now acquired greater notoriety as "Samuel, the Emperor's steward;" and it was to the effect that the Government of India should forthwith dispatch to the Court of the Emperor Theodore a political Mission similar to that sent from Bombay to King Sahela Selasye.

With this letter for the Resident at Aden and his other despatches, as likewise with one from the Emperor of Abyssinia to the Queen of England,‖ Consul Cameron left the camp in Godjam for the coast in the beginning of November 1862, and (as is stated in page 92 of my work) "in the month of June 1863 Captain Cameron found his way back to Gondar, from his lengthened excursion in the north. His position was a most pitiable one. He had brought with him no answer from the Queen of England to the Emperor's letter of October 31, 1862; but, from the greater proximity of India, and apparently a greater alacrity there than at home in answering letters, he had already received a decided negative to the proposal made for a Mission to be sent from Bombay."

There were doubtless other causes tending to irritate the Emperor against Consul Cameron, arising from the altered policy of Her Majesty's Government with respect to Abyssinia and the Abyssinians. But, without alluding further to those matters here,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.
† No. 745,
‡ No. 742.
§ See Inclosure 2 in No. 343.
‖ Inclosure 3 in No. 343.

it will be sufficient to repeat (as is stated by me in page 97) that the Emperor "could only regard the refusal of the Government of Bombay to treat him as they had formerly treated the King of Shoa, now become his vassal, as an additional proof of this change of feeling and conduct towards him."

Not only is it true that when Consul Cameron met the Emperor in July 1863 he brought with him no reply from the Queen of England, but it may be regarded as certain that had it not been for the subsequent imprisonment of that officer, the Emperor's letter would to this day have remained unnoticed. And even supposing that letter to have been replied to without delay, Her Majesty's answer at that time would assuredly have been written in precisely the same spirit as that which had already been given by the Governor of Bombay to the Emperor's proposal; so that it may be conjectured that the reason why no such answer was sent, is, that it was deemed unnecessary for the Queen to write solely for the purpose of repeating what had already been said in Her Majesty's name by her representative at Bombay.

It would therefore seem that under all the circumstances it would be anything but fair to the British ratepayers at home, to throw upon them the whole of the heavy expenses of the proceedings against the Emperor of Abyssinia; and that, on the contrary, justice requires that the Indian Treasury should bear its proportion of those expenses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 754.

*Major-General Sir E. Lugard to Mr. Murray.—(Received July 2.)**

Sir, *War Office, July 2, 1867.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for War to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo,† relative to the measures to be taken for obtaining the release of the British captives in Abyssinia.

In reply, I am to transmit to you, for the information of Lord Stanley, the accompanying copy of a letter which Sir John Pakington has caused to be addressed to the Secretary of State for India in Council, containing an expression of the views entertained by Sir J. Pakington on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD LUGARD.

Inclosure in No. 754.

*Major-General Sir E. Lugard to Mr. Merivale.**

Sir, *War Office, July 2, 1867.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for War to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a letter from the Foreign Office, relative to the measures to be taken for obtaining the release of the British captives in Abyssinia, and I am to request that you will move the Secretary of State for India in Council to enable Sir J. Pakington to answer Lord Stanley's inquiries.

Sir J. Pakington is decidedly of opinion that the force, in the event of its being determined to send one, should be provided from India, and that the whole expedition should be organised at and proceed from Bombay; and he considers, so far as he is able to judge, that Major-General Sir W. Coghlan is an officer well suited for commanding the force and conducting the expedition, and also that the Rev. Percy Badger should be attached to the expedition as Political Agent and Interpreter.

With reference to paragraph 7 of Mr. Murray's letter, it appears to Sir John Pakington that it would be advisable, as a preliminary step, that Major-General Sir W. Coghlan should proceed to Massowah as soon as practicable, accompanied by Mr. Badger, and be met there by a selected medical officer, a commissariat officer, and an officer of the Quartermaster-General's Department from Bombay, to inspect the locality and settle what arrangements would be necessary for the landing, reception, feeding, &c., of the force, in the event of its being necessary to send one.

Sir W. Coghlan and Mr. Badger might, moreover, be empowered to negotiate with the tribes, and use such means as they deem fit, to ascertain whether the release of the captives could not be effected without having recourse to arms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD LUGARD.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 751.

No. 755.

*Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 4, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo.†

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 756.

Mr. Lespard to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 4.)*

Bangor House, Buckingham Road, Brighton,
Right Honourable Sir, *July* 2, 1867.

AS the release of the Abyssinian captives appears to be a most difficult matter, I take the liberty of suggesting a plan that I think would be likely to succeed. Every civilized Government or nation must sympathize; hence could not a joint demand be made, or at least a request, from every European Power? I cannot help thinking this would effect more than all the presents you could send.

I should think that no Power would object; and if it should succeed, no individual would be more pleased than your obedient servant, &c.

(Signed) W. LESPARD.

No. 757.

Colonel Haly to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 4.)*

My Lord, 12, *St. Stephen's Road, Hammersmith, July* 3, 1867.

AS it would appear that it is in contemplation to take steps for the release of the prisoners so long in such sore custody in Abyssinia, I venture to do myself the honour to offer, with all due deference, the following remarks, suggestions, &c., trusting that my great experience of such characters as this demi-savage of the wilds of Africa, and with jungle and irregular warfare, as in part certified by the inclosed testimonials, will plead my excuse for the liberty I am taking.

Further, I have the less hesitation in doing so from feeling convinced that if an expedition is undertaken unadvisedly, or in the general routine in such matters, and more particularly should part of the force employed be taken from the—unhappily, at present—disorganized Native army of India, if it prove not a failure, will at least be a most disastrous one; and it is only necessary to remember the Bhootan Expedition to show why this should be anticipated. So far from any improvement having since taken place, day by day only shows still more the miserable working of the suicidal system under which a fine army was broken up, and a heterogeneous mass constituted in its stead, in which all confidence in themselves and reliance on their officers has been totally destroyed.

Nor is the system of discipline, training, &c., of Her Majesty's European Regiments of the Line much better calculated to meet the emergency or insure the success of such an enterprise; and it must be well known to your Lordship that at no time has the British soldier shone less than in jungle and irregular warfare.

I would therefore suggest (and the accompanying Paper‡ will show that it is no new idea of mine, but one long ago proposed, and which I was permitted to carry out by the Indian Government) that a special force should be organized of picked men whose constitutions have proved to be more fitted for work and exposure in a tropical climate, and to whom experience has given that training so necessary for an undertaking of so hazardous a nature as carrying war into an unknown and difficult country, and unhealthy climate to strangers, as there is reason to fear that Abyssinia may prove to be.

The European portion of such a force, of which there should be sufficient to form a safe reserve, would be the more difficult to deal with, the constitution of the British

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 753.

‡ At pages 31, 35, and 36 of "Remarks on Cholera," by Colonel G. T. Haley, forwarded by book post.

army not admitting of utilizing it, as might be done were its members entertained for general service in it, as was the case with the European force of the East India Company, which better system enabled the State to make use of the services of their men individually as they were found most fitted; whereas a British soldier once enlisted for any particular branch or regiment cannot be transferred, except with his own consent.

The injurious working of this system during war time has more than once been unpleasantly obvious in the untrained boys that have had to be sent out to take the place of the men killed and placed *hors de combat* during a campaign; and this was never more unfortunately evident than during the Crimean war.

That the late Recruiting Commissions should have overlooked a matter of such vital importance to the well-being of the army is indeed strange, and only to be accounted for by the weight of preconceived ideas and associations, ever sure to prejudice those trained to any system in which even the greatest evils may exist.

It may appear that I have here digressed from the original intention of this letter, but scarcely so when, taking into consideration its connexion with my present advocacy of a special picked force for service in Abyssinia, and which I propose should be a selection of men whose acclimatized constitutions have proved them to be fitted for work in a tropical climate, and whose experience has given that training so essential at all times to make a good and efficient soldier, more particularly called for when taking the field, and carrying war into an unknown country, the climate of which there is reason for supposing is but ill adapted for the material employed.

This latter supposition, however, suggests what would appear to be, in part, an easy remedy, viz., the employment of a large local Native contingent, and which would, no doubt, likewise be of cheap attainment as saving the expense of transport, always a large item in such expeditions. It would likewise appear to be the more politic, as well as the readiest mode of meeting the difficulty, as many of the adjoining tribes would, no doubt, be easily induced to join, more particularly the people of Souakin, who, besides being a fine soldierly race, are said to be unfriendly to King Theodore, whom they look upon as an usurper.

Such local and acclimatized material would speedily be formed into an efficient force if well officered by those selected for their knowledge in the field and management of Native Troops. That a body so formed would not only be the most useful during the campaign, but afterwards as a check on the present, or any other unscrupulous rules of Abyssinia can scarcely be a question.

Of the Native element from India I have already expressed my opinion, but still a selection might be made from the armies both of Madras and Bombay, which if well and fully officered might do good service, but there is always at hand, at least for the present, the still undisorganized Corps of the Sappers and Miners of India, more particularly that of the Madras Presidency, who have ever proved themselves good and true soldiers on all occasions, with constitutions of peculiarly hardy nature, rendering them capable of by far more endurance under fatigues and privations than most troops, as well as less liable to suffer from the effects of disease or climate.

In conclusion, I trust to be excused for offering an opinion on the diplomacy to be adopted; but my experience which is not small in such cases, and with such individuals as this demi-savage Emperor, induces the belief that a determined and even threatening policy is far more apt to produce salutary effects than any other; and that if King Theodore were to be distinctly informed that he would be held personally responsible in all ways for the life and safety of Her Britannic Majesty's subjects, and more particularly for those now so unjustly and cruelly treated and incarcerated, that it would be more likely to bring him to reason than ought else.

I shall only farther add that if my services can be of any avail they only need to be commanded either for Diplomatic or Military employment, and that I would more particularly willingly undertake the command, organization, &c. of the Native Local Contingent I propose.

With many apologies for the liberty I have here taken.

I am, &c.

(Signed) G. T. HALY,

Madras Army, and late Her Majesty's 108th Foot.

P. S.—I can confidently refer your Lordship to Sir Hope Grant, in reference to my fitness for the employment I seek.

G. T. H.

No. 758.

*Mr. Hearsey to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 4.)**

My Lord, *London, July* 2, 1867.

MAY I beg your Lordship to forgive my apparent presumption in pointing out to such a skilful diplomatist as yourself a method by which I think the Abyssinian captives might be rescued with scarcely any real danger to themselves.

Advantage might be taken of the visit of His Highness the Pasha of Egypt to this country, and a secret Treaty negociated with him.

2. Let the British Resident be sent to Souakin (a port not far from Massowah) with extensive civil and military powers.

3. Let under his direction certain regiments be raised at and about that place in the name of the Pasha of Egypt, but let those regiments be officered in a great measure in the same manner as regiments of the Turkish Contingent were during the Crimean War. These regiments to be nominally in the service of the Pasha, like the various contingents in India are under their native princes, but to be paid and disciplined by the British Government.

4. Let some good vessel such as the "Coromandel" with an officer of good local experience, such as Lieutenant Carew, late Indian Navy, now commanding the "Dalhousie" be dispatched to make surveys of the coast; create discontent amongst the subjects of the Emperor Theodore; and to make reconnoissances as to favourable spots on which to make a descent or create a diversion; also to take arms, clothing, ammunition, stores, &c., to Souakin.

5. Let good English non-commissioned officers be dispatched to Souakin from Aden to assist in drilling and disciplining a contingent.

6. Some few men who formerly served in our Turkish Contingent (Turks or Egyptians) might be obtained, and their draft into these regiments would greatly aid in disciplining the contingent.

7. Let some individual be dispatched from Souakin in disguise to make all the necessary enquiries possible, and if practicable sketch out the route to Magdala.

If no fitter person could be found to undertake this risk, I myself would be willing to do so on the sole condition, that if I perished in my enterprise the British Government would suitably provide for my wife and children. If I am successful, I shall then be able to prove that Brigadier General Rainier's confidential report of the 1st of April, 1865, was wilfully false and incorrect; and that he had been prejudiced against me by my Commanding Officer who was desirous of, and succeeded in obtaining my removal for the advancement of his nephew, who was my immediate junior in Her Majesty's 107th Regiment, and that I had been cheated out of my commission by the zealous obedience to the illegal orders of my military superiors. If I fail and lose my life in the attempt, I shall only be one more victim sacrificed in a good cause, viz., for the honour of my country and the rescue of my countrymen from the chains of a cruel savage.

8. During the cold season without any previous declaration of war (you are dealing with a savage) let two or three regiments of native Infantry with a battery and a half of Artillery† and detachments of Irregular Cavalry be sent to Souakin, advantage could be taken of the relief of regiments from England and a European regiment added if thought really necessary.

9. Thus without any suspicion on the part of Theodore a blow struck from an Egyptian province might be effected, and if the command of the expedition was put under the command of an Indian Officer such as Colin, Troupe, Tombs, Beatson, Chamberlain, or any of that class of men, and not under the leadership of Horse Guards pets such as Cameron, I think that the prisoners might be rescued at comparatively little cost to the British Government, and only small danger to the prisoners themselves.

10. The provinces so wrested from the savage, Theodore, might be sold, or in other words an equivalent might be given to us for them by the Pasha of Egypt.

11. Begging your Lordship to call to mind that my grandfather in 1804 penetrated with Dr. Morecraft into Chinese Tartary (in the disguise of religious mendicants), then a country totally unknown, and in which travelling was equally difficult and dangerous as it would now be in Abyssinia.

(Signed) ANDREW W. HEARSEY,
Eldest surviving son of the late Sir J. B. Hearsey, K.C.B., and late an Officer of Her Majesty's 107th Regiment.

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* ~~Laid~~ before Parliament, 1867.

† 3 siege guns, 2 24-pounders, 1 68-pounder howitzer; 3 field guns, Armstrong's; 3 mountaintrain, ditto.

No. 759.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 6.)**

My Lord, *Aden, June* 15, 1867.

HER Majesty's ship "Dalhousie" returned from Massowah on the morning of the 12th instant, bringing letters from Mr. Rassam up to the 3rd May. They were all well up to that date, but naturally in a state of very deep anxiety with regard to the future, the temper of the King having become more uncertain, and, what looked most unpropitious, he had suddenly vented his displeasure on the European workmen living at Gaffat, whom he had hitherto invariably treated well.

2. Mr. Rassam writes:—"Unless you come up and take us out, I fear there will be no chance of our ever leaving this country. Our friend the Emperor has no greater enemy in the world than himself.

"For the last four years he has done nothing but destroy the foundation of the mansion he had so nobly reared. He has been going from bad to worse since the death of Bell, and now there is scarcely a spot in the whole of Abyssinia where peace and safety prevail. The poor peasantry are now between two fires: if they escape from the rebels, they are plundered by the person who ought to protect them. If this unhappy state of affairs lasts a year or two longer, the wretched cultivators of the soil and the traders must inevitably be annihilated by the sword or famine.

"Probably you will not be surprised to hear that the last stroke of His Majesty's conciliatory policy was to imprison all his European artizans, for what cause it is quite impossible for me to tell, as none of the Gaffat people have had the pluck to write about their misfortunes, and the news which Mrs. Rosenthal gives to her husband is so vague that it is quite impossible for anyone to make anything out of it, save that on the 16th ultimo the Emperor ordered them to pack up their things, and the next day all their property was 'counted,' and they were taken up to Debra Tabor as prisoners. That on Tuesday, the 16th (the same day they were told to pack up their things), a letter reached the Emperor from Flad reporting his arrival at Matemma. That on Sunday, the 21st idem, everything was returned to them save the arms, mules, and costly ornaments which had been presented to them formerly by their Royal master. One of the Emperor's messengers, who left Debra Tabor on the 22nd ultimo, reported that the reason the European artizans have fallen into disgrace is because they had neglected the work entrusted to them by the Emperor. It appears his Majesty had told them to cast a mortar, which he wished them to finish by a certain time, and because they did not do so, as he had told them, he broke up their establishment at Gaffat, and took them to Debra Tabor.

"Mr. Waldemier, one of the artizans and the Emperor's favourite, sent a message to say (as he was afraid to write) that the Emperor had accused them of having had a knowledge of his 'enemies'' intentions to fight him, and had kept the fact a secret. I believe these enemies are the wretched Turks, as it has been rumonred they had been building quarters for troops at Kedary and Matemma. It has also been reported that the European artizans had been giving assistance to the Moslems. All these reports are neither more nor less than a stretch of imagination, and there is no more truth in them than the charges brought against me at Debra Tabor on the 25th June last. However, there is one thing certain, that the poor European artizans are now in disgrace, and everyone expects that we shall soon have them here in chains. By-the-by, it is also reported that the Emperor had told his European servants that he would leave them alone until the arrival of Flad, as he had some charges against them which could only be substantiated by that gentleman.

"It is also reported that Flad has written him a letter from Matemma, and there was something in it which exasperated His Majesty. This last rumour I certainly do not believe, because what could Flad have written to make the Emperor distrust his own servants? Had that been the case whatever Flad could have said must have been about the Mission on which he was sent—and instead of His Majesty getting angry with his own artizans he would certainly have vented his rage on me; whereas, instead of that, he is still very friendly, and, since his imprisonment of the workmen, he has sent me a polite message to say that he would have written to me but that an emergent business which called him away from Debra Tabor prevented him from doing so. On the 21st ultimo he left Debra Tabor for the lake, and it is surmised that he had made that move for the purpose of driving away some rebels who are said to be waiting for Mr. Flad in order that they might carry him off with all the things he has brought with him. Flad ought to be by this time with the Emperor. It is feared

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

that if he brings in with him all the money and the things he brought for us from Massowah, they will be confiscated. If we lose the 3,000 dollars we shall be badly off; but I have no fear at all of such mishaps. If all the Europeans at Debra Tabor will be sent there as prisoners, I shall have a difficult task to maintain them all, which I shall be obliged to do, seeing that they will all be in a state of destitution. But if 3,000 dollars reach me in safety we shall have then a good supply for the winter. Kindly tell M. Munzinger to send up 100 dollars by each messenger he dispatches from Massowah,* because, even if we get the 3,000 dollars sent by Flad, a few hundred dollars more will not be amiss in a country where money is scarce, and presents appreciated by all. I only hope that Her Majesty's Government may settle the account here 'promptly,' and if it could be before the winter it would be better, as there is no knowing what a day may bring forth. The Lasta road is becoming safer for our messengers every day, thanks to the assistance of the Chiefs of the different districts which have thrown off allegiance to our friend. I am looking anxiously for the arrival of Mr. Flad, as everything depends upon what he tells the King about the intentions of Her Majesty's Government. The general opinion is, that if once our friend, His Majesty, knows that he is not going to get anything, and that the British Government is lukewarm towards him, either in giving him nothing or allowing him to ill-treat British subjects with impunity, he would most assuredly retaliate. Our only safety now is that active measures should be taken: but if Her Majesty's Government do not intend to do more than has been done hitherto (that is to say, besides conciliatory tactics), I hope that we shall be told so, in order that we may make up our minds to perpetual imprisonment or to the hurrying down to the grave by a more ignominious death.

"The temper of our friend is getting worse and worse every day. May the Lord save us—if we are left in our present position the whole of this month, we may be allowed to spend the ensuing rainy season in the same quarters; but if our property be seized, and we are sent to the common jail in hand-chains, we shall have a most miserable winter."

3. Captain Cameron writes much to the same effect; but, in a P.S., adds, that the Gaffat workmen are prisoners without chains at Debra Tabor. Also, that Bardel writes to him that he, Schimper, and Zender, are not in the mess yet, but expect to be soon. The imprisonment of these people, Captain Cameron says, makes a great difference in their position at Magdala. "They not only acted as intermediators with the King, but furnished us with many little things, such as vegetables and so on, also a good deal of money."

4. Dr. Blanc writes one most interesting letter, which I think your Lordship would wish to read. I append a copy thereof. In another, dated the 3rd May, speaking of proposed more active measures, he says: "I fear, however, it will be too late. Do not believe that we cry before we are hurt. We have too good reason to fear the worst, and that shortly. May God protect us in these hard times. Let us put our trust in Him who can save, when to all human calculation no hope is left."

Again on the 4th, one day later than Mr. Rassam's letter, he writes:—

"There is no denying the fact our position is getting more critical every day; it will indeed be a miracle if we remain much longer unmolested. Samuel is very gloomy about the future; he believes that before a month or six weeks it will be all over with us, and that if nothing should be done before the end of the rainy season it will be too late. I myself believe that a crisis is imminent: our friend is quite desperate, hardly knows where to go. It is rumoured that Ras Engedda is coming to take command of the mountain, and that the King himself will come during the rainy season. A few days ago he gave orders to have all the prisons at Debra Tabor burnt, but postponed the execution until after Easter. Should he put this threat into execution he will also kill the prisoners on this Amba, including the Bishop, and, perhaps, ourselves.

"He knows that he is lost and cares little for what he does. He likes to revenge himself, though by so doing he ruins himself. Flad must be near him by this time, so that at any moment we may expect a smash, and when your messengers arrive, if he finds he has no hopes, it will be a bad look out. It is a question of vital importance to us that no delay should take place. Believe me I am not afraid, but only fully impressed with the danger of our situation and of the necessity of prompt action. Then, even the danger will not be over, far from it, still if properly managed I believe we will weather the storm. He is so low that he may listen to reason when he finds himself compelled to do so. He will be afraid, and though in the first burst of his rage he may kill all

* This has been ordered.—W. L. M.

the Europeans at Debra Tabor, that moment passed, we are safe here, and perhaps treated better than we expect. Action is for us life—delay, death."

5. This is an urgent touching appeal, my Lord, and coming as it does from a man in whose courage I could trust, it is most distressing to feel that at this season of the year, no response can possibly be made in the shape of active interference by display of force. It is not the rainy season in Abyssinia that is the greatest obstacle, though apart from direct moisture, there would be greater difficulties in moving a body of troops through the country than the unfortunate captives think of; but it is the extreme heat at the commencement on the shore of the Red Sea, which would cause great risk of disorganization of a force before it could be got ready to move from the sea-shore.

6. The only thing that can now be done, is to watch the course of events, and should the King in any way alter his mode of treatment of the captives for the worse, to at once inform him in plain and clear terms, that he will be held responsible with his throne and his life, for the safety of every European in his power. I shall not hesitate to act in such a manner should the necessity arise, but the announcement would have more effect on him, and on all in Abyssinia, if it came from Her Majesty's Government; and I would most earnestly urge the advisability of its being so given out. At the very same time that it was made and sent to him, intimation should be also given to all chiefs and others in the country, that those who protect and assist European subjects in Abyssinia, will be honoured and rewarded, while those who act otherwise will be treated in the same manner as the King.

7. Now that the King has turned against the Europeans at Gaffat, the position is most critical certainly, but I still cling to the hope that either this tyrant's career may be brought to a close before he can reach Magdala, or cause the death of the poor Europeans at Debra Tabor—or, that the sense of self interest will make him careful how he injures.

8. I had the honour of receiving your Lordship's instructions conveyed through Mr. Murray, dated 27th ultimo,* and was thankful to find no alteration would be made consequent on the intelligence previously forwarded by me. I would now beg leave to point out that the time—three months—allowed to the King will expire on the 17th of August. I would therefore suggest that the Government of India, and through it of Bombay, may be moved to send here by that date, proper officers to collect carriage, and make all the necessary arrangements for the force, which I conclude will be dispatched from India to act in October, should King Theodorus be still alive, and the captives unreleased. I need hardly say that I shall be ready to afford these officers every assistance. The earlier they come here the better, as cattle will have to be collected from a distance, even from Egypt, and this takes time.

9. The "Dalhousie," on her way down from Massowah, dropped M. Munzinger at Amphilla on the 10th instant, and that gentleman was to start from the coast two days after to survey the country between Amphilla and Lake Ashangi, and if possible on to Lake Haik. I supplied him with everything required, and am confident that if the thing can be done, M. Munzinger will carry it out; while, at the same time, I have implicit trust in his discretion, that he will not needlessly run into any undue danger.

10. I received a letter from Mr. Flad, but it was of old date (1st April), announcing his arrival at Matemma on the 29th March, and that he was waiting a reply to the letter to the King asking for an escort

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

P.S.—Appended also is copy of a meteorological register forwarded by Mr. Rassam, and kept at Magdala during the months of January, February, March, and April of this year. This is interesting; and at the same time it is very satisfactory to notice that the position of the prisoners possesses great advantages as far as climate is concerned.

W. L. M.

Inclosure 1 in No. 759.

Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.†

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, April* 30, 1867.

WE received yours of the 28th February only on the 25th of this month. I felt rather disappointed when we found that the messenger had been nearly two months on

* No. 738

† Laid before Parliament, 1867..

the road, as he brought us no further intelligence than what had reached through Flad's messenger. We all expected something decisive, but were doomed to something more than disappointment. We hoped, at least the majority of us, that all idea of negotiating any more had been given up as useless; a mere waste of time, most fatal to our interests. I give you, my dear Colonel, all credit. I know from what you wrote on your arrival at Massowah, what your intentions were concerning Flad, and am persuaded that it is only under great pressure that you allowed him to return to Abyssinia. When once His Majesty declined to accept the terms offered by our Queen, no further negotiations ought to have been proposed, as every one ought to be well aware that with a man of Theodore's temper, the moment that he will feel certain that his "belat" is of no avail, no one can tell to what extremities he may proceed; that is to say, if at the same time, he considers himself safe from retaliation.

On the 16th of this mouth His Majesty received a letter from Flad announcing his arrival at Matemma. On the 17th His Majesty proceeded to Gaffat; called the Europeans before him (with the exception of Messrs. Schimper and Zender); ordered all their property to be seized, and removed them prisoners to Debra Tabor. When he came to Gaffat His Majesty remained in the factory below the hill on which Gaffat is built. On the arrival of the Europeans he told them that he had received a letter from Flad, containing many things, and that until confirmed by Flad he could not trust them, and must therefore keep them near him. He said that he had also heard that preparations for the reception of troops had also been made at , and that if he was to be killed they would die first; but, added he, "do not be afraid" (the usual expression when he means mischief), "you are my children," &c.

Some of the Europeans, specially Mr. Maurice Hall, remonstrated strongly with His Majesty, asking him why, after serving him so many years faithfully, they were subjected to such an unjust treatment. "Kill us at once," said Hall, "but do not degrade us in this way; if, in the letter you have received, there is anything you can charge against us, then cause it to be read out before all your people. Death is better than unjust suspicion."

His Majesty, in an angry tone, ordered him to be quiet; sent them to Debra Tabor under escort, and had tents pitched for them in the plain at the foot of the hill on which the royal residence is built. The soldiers, in the meanwhile, were removing all the property from Gaffat. Mrs. Bourgeaud, the wife of the French gun-maker, gave 50 dollars to one of her favourite servants to take care of. As he was leaving the house he was seized by Agafari Meshisha, the chief executioner, and dragged before His Majesty, who ordered his hands and feet to be cut off on the spot. The following day soldiers were again sent to Gaffat to bring over the women and children, including Mrs. Flad and Rosenthal, whose property had not been confiscated, only searched and counted.

Gaffat is now entirely deserted, the workshops demolished, and not a servant allowed to remain to take care of the houses. For four days the Europeans and their families were deprived of all their property, to be returned, with the exception of the mules, horses, arms, and presents he had formerly made to them; they were removed to the hill, and allowed to pitch their tents near the royal residence. Tools were sent to them, and they were ordered to work. They were allowed the privilege of an audience that day. His Majesty said, "I am leaving to fight my enemies. When Flad comes, if all is right, you will return to Gaffat; if not, know that you are my enemies."

Such is the statement made by the messengers who arrived at Gaffat on the morning of the 17th; witnessed the plunder, and left only on the 22nd, after the departure of His Majesty.

On the 29th a servant of mine returned from Gaffat, having left on the 24th. He substantiates almost every detail, and brought a letter fram Mrs. Rosenthal to her husband, and a message from Mr. Waldemier to Rassam and myself. Waldemier says, "We were seized because His Majesty believes that preparations are made to wage war against him. Our position is so precarious I dare not write."

Mrs. Rosenthal refers more to herself than to the community at large; still it confirms in many respects the statement of our messenger. She makes no mention either of the arrest and interrogation of the gentlemen; but as regards the ladies, she agrees with what we had previously heard. As Mr. Rosenthal kindly allowed me to make use of the letter, I give you the following extracts. She says:—

"On Tuesday, April 16, we received orders to pack up our things, and to be ready to start, but where to nobody knew. On Wednesday, about 12 o'clock, soldiers arrived to watch the European's houses, but I am thankful to say, the guard did not enter our

house. In the morning (18th) all the property was confiscated, and we were brought up here to Debra Tabor. All the silver, gold, and money were taken from the Gaffat people; a few ornaments only were returned to the ladies; they had not a dollar left, nor arms of any description. On Tuesday, the 16th, a letter arrived from Mr. Flad, announcing his arrival at Matemma, bringing the things he had brought for His Majesty, and requesting His Majesty to give him an escort. He also said that he had met the messengers on the road, and forwarded them on to Colonel Merewether at Massowah. On Sunday morning the King left, but before departing gave back to the Gaffat people their money and property. Mrs. Flad and myself got back our riding-mules; he was told that the place in which they were located was not safe on account of the rebels; he, consequently, sent us into an inclosure on the hill itself, near the common jail, a filthy, dirty place where we have been obliged to pitch our tents."

Here is the fact; whatever may be the explanation, there is no doubt but that before long they will be our companions in chains. From a few expressions that some time ago fell from His Majesty's lips, also from the tone of his last letter to us, the opinion is that His Majesty now begins to fear that his "belat" will not succeed, and that the workmen will not be sent to him. This is the most reasonable explanation, otherwise he is cunning enough to have waited a little longer before throwing off the mask, well aware that if he plunders and imprisons these workmen now in his service he cannot expect others to come into the country. Except as Europeans in his power, he cares but little for them; his request for workmen was simply to get more white men into his hands. What has now happened places the matter beyond a doubt, and these poor fellows will have to pay for his disappointment. He has, without pity, plundered and imprisoned men who have never given him the slightest offence; on the contrary, who have been always most subservient to all his wishes. He will now, forgetful of the past, endeavour to obtain from them all the money he can; torture of all kinds they may expect; these are trifles in his eyes when he has an object to attain. He gives back one day, and takes more the next. When once he begins to injure, he never stops. He will wait now for the arrival of Flad, and when he finds that not a thing will be sent to him he will vent his rage on the Gaffat people, on Flad, and on us; every one expects it; at least I have had already several warnings from soldiers I have formerly attended.

The prospect before us is anything but cheering. It is true that our friend is such a curious character that often he acts the very opposite one expects; let us hope, therefore, for the best, not being too sanguine, as when it is for the bad the surmises are pretty generally realized. A rainy season in chains is anything but pleasant; but when one thinks of the many privations and cruelties he can inflict, the prospect of being chained by the hand, cast in the common gaol among a crowd of dirty natives, bullied by the guards, deprived of money, clothing, servants, &c., the very thought makes us shudder.

Certainly, if we remain in our present position after Flad's arrival (unless he believes that his letter not having yet reached its destination, he may still gain his point), we shall certainly be astonished; bad as it is, we are in paradise compared to the perfect hell of the common gaol.

What puzzles us is to know what people at home expect. Do they not know that every day our lives are in danger from privations, miseries, starvation, torture, or a more speedy exit? Have we not been nearly ten months in chains, and more than a year prisoners? Have not the former captives almost completed their fourth year; and still the fatal illusion seems to persist that we will "somehow" and "some day" get out by fair means? Many times I have written it, since many a month I have been repeating almost the same words—"We will never get out unless force is used."

Time must have proved that this opinion was correct. Why wait longer? Samuel, when he heard the news from Gaffat; told me, "I feared it would be so; now, indeed, I tremble for you. I see, with deep regret, the blindness of your countrymen." Why wait? The crisis must fall on us some day; why postpone it? Why subject so many Europeans, with their wives and families, to all the horrors of Abyssinian prison life? When once we were chained, was not that sufficient? Will England continually give way to a treacherous savage? Why engage workmen? why send him presents—a reward, I suppose, for his treatment of Her Majesty's servants—his friends, as he calls them—his guests, at least, whom he publicly degraded, afterwards imprisoned, and chained? Why not have brought, months ago, the false host to a sense of his duty, and the bully to tremble before retribution and justice?

Abyssinians laugh at us. Speak to any of them of the power and greatness of England; they sneeringly answer, "Why, then do you pay us tribute? Is it not now

on the road? Has not Flad gone to fetch it?" We may seem ungrateful after all, and mistake the real motive of all these delays. I believe I have guessed it—"They will all be killed should troops land," is probably the common song when warlike measures are proposed, and the tune of those ignorant writers on the subject who may mean well, but, nevertheless, are the cause of much of our misery.

Well, let him kill us; we can but die once. In their ignorance, Abyssinians may feel contempt for our power, but we shall certainly not give them the chance to sneer at English courage. We fear not death; but the very thought of his cruelties fills us with awe; to evade them, we will run any risk. Long ago we made up our minds on the matter. All our friends are fully aware of our entire willingness to take our chance. We have begged and prayed for that moment which will either restore us to our country or end our miserable fate.

After this, there ought to be no more valid reason for delay, unless it be the difficulties in the way—they are not insurmountable; the expenses———I would be ashamed even of such a thought. If only the garrison of Aden was to march at once into the country, and form a camp at Adowa until the arrival of a larger force, I would personally be without the slightest fear as to the future. All bullies are cowards; therefore he is a coward. When no more able to imprison, tease, and torture with impunity—when he sees unerring vengeance approach, though he might still boast before his people, he would, in his heart, tremble and quake; our lives would be saved and our liberties secured. He is no exception to the Abyssinian race; tyrants on the weak whilst they cringe before the strong.

Not knowing in the morning where the evening will find us, it is impossible to say, more so now than ever, if this will be the last time I am able to give you my opinion on the subject. His Majesty, tired of plundering Begemder, where the peasants themselves were beginning to offer resistance, proceeded during this month to the neighbouring Province of Fogara, partly disaffected, but has not reaped the rich harvest he expected. The peasants, warned by what had just happened in Begemder, removed some time ago the greater part of their property to Lasta. At Oodo, a village not far from Debra Tabor, a fight took place between the military and peasants. These having heard of the proposed attack were in readiness; they fell suddenly on the soldiers, killed a good many, and took several away prisoners. The brave army is fond of plunder but not fighting, dislikes resistance, so that now His Majesty is obliged to go himself with his men, otherwise they avail themselves of their temporary liberty to run away, preferring escape to the chance of being killed by some "ill mannered" peasant.

Our servant Hailo, who went lately to the camp with a letter from Rassam about the calico and shirts, does not appear to have much enjoyed his trip. Flogging and beating was going on at such a rate that no one remains near the infuriated master; when he calls some of his servants, they always, before resorting to the presence, recommend their souls to God. Several of the personal attendants of His Majesty are in chains, and what is more extraordinary, he has asked money from them—100 dollars each, from poor wretches who have never seen a penny of his money since they have been in his service. His temper is not of the best at night; it is said he seldom sleeps, but walks about half-naked, muttering prayers and curses.

Soon after he had received Rassam's letter, a fire was seen at a short distance; pretending that rebels must be on the spot, he at once ordered his horse and arms, and started with only a few followers intending to surprise the enemy. Arrived at the spot he found nothing, and returned apparently crestfallen. However, to soothe his feelings, he ordered several of his Chiefs whom he met on the road to be beaten and afterwards chained. However, even Bob's tricks take no more with his people; our servant was told that these fires were lighted by his order, to show to his people how brave he is still and how anxious he is to meet the enemy.

When our servant obtained permission to leave, he was sincerely congratulated by all the attendants, just as if he had escaped from the greatest danger or recovered from the most serious illness. According to his account there are but few horses and mules left; all the spearmen are gone; there remain only about 3,000 gun-men, 2,000 more having been left at Debra Tabor to guard the prisoners, harem, &c. Previously the army consisted of men taken from the several provinces, all forming distinct corps; the few left belong to no particular country, only the refuse of all Abyssinia; men who have left their country for their country's good. Few of them will ever run away, for the very good reason that they do not know where to go; it is therefore probable that unless attacked, a very doubtful case, he will for a long time possess an army of about

5,000 or 6,000 men, who will assist him in plundering on the understanding that they will share in the spoils. They are, however, the worst soldiers, will never face an enemy, and will abandon him *en masse* the moment plundering means fighting, and devotions hunger.

The letter Hailo brought from His Majesty is written in the humble style he generally adopts when he means mischief: he declines the calico, but wants his eyes to be open, *i.e.*, the workmen.

We have heard nothing certain about the former Chief of this Amba, nor of the Chiefs who were sent away at the same time, also prisoners on the Amba; we only know that they are still in fetters. The old Cantaba Hailo has been dreadfully tortured, and is to be daily tied with ropes until further orders, simply because there was some mistake about compliments, which he did not send when the other prisoners sent them to His Majesty; his grandson, a fine boy of about eight years of age, has been so severely tortured that he has lost his right arm.

No news from the rebels; they seem all quiet in their own governments. Tissat Gobazey was, it is said, looking out for Flad, but now that Bob is supposed to be going in that direction, the biggest coward of the two, and I believe it is Tissat, will decamp and leave the road open to the other. On the 4th of April—it is a pity it was not on the 1st—a nice trick was played on our friend Bob, quite in the neighbourhood. Between Debra Tabor and Dahonte there is a small but rather strong amba called Koït, garrisoned by about 300 men. It is of the greatest importance, almost essential to the free communication between this Amba and Dahonte, the granary of Magdala. On the day in question, one of Bob's runaway chiefs, accompanied by a few soldiers and peasants, the latter carrying bags, apparently filled with grain, presented themselves at the gate of the fort. They said that they came from the King to provision the Amba. The tale was naturally believed; the commander of the fortress, knowing the officer to belong to Bob's army, ordered the gate to be opened. No sooner had the rebel chief, his soldiers, and the would-be peasants, passed the door, than they suddenly fell on the astonished garrison and made them all prisoners. The soldiers joined the new self-made commandant, the former one was allowed to leave unmolested, accompanied by his family, but empty-handed. Fearing, however, that should Bob come in this direction they would be between two fires, Bob and this Amba, they removed all the muskets (100), stores, provisions, &c., set fire to the place, and damaged it to such an extent as to render it useless for the future. About a fortnight ago, Samuel was one day called before the Council, and informed that no sick person in future would be allowed to come near the Hakim, as they were afraid that the influence thus created amongst the petty chiefs was too strong. I was, to tell the truth, not very sorry, as I am pestered all day long, and if I don't keep servants on my own private account, I would be at the same time doctor, dispenser, sweeper, hamal, &c., so I thought I would save a little money by discharging several of my servants, kept solely for dispensing purposes, when, unfortunately, a counter order came. It appears that all my patients had gone in a body to the Council, and as in many respects Abyssinia is a democracy, the chiefs were obliged to give in, and I was requested to go on as before.

We had also a little excitement up here since we last wrote. On Saturday, the 6th, two prisoners, one who had killed his mother by accident some three years ago, and who had never been tried, together with Lij Barié, the son of a great Shum of Tigré, managed to open their chains, dressed themselves in women's clothing (in this country only a long shirt), and taking advantage of the market day, when all the servants go down to the Salumgee (the market-place), they succeeded in evading the guard, and got on unmolested as far as our place. The young murderer having contrived to get out both rings, walked faster than his companion, and passed the gates before any search was made after him. As nothing has been heard of him since, it is probable that by this time he has reached Shoa, his native country. Lij Barié was less fortunate. He could only open one ring, and was therefore obliged to fix the chain on the other leg by means of a piece of cloth. A young warrior seeing at a distance a good-looking young girl, approached to try on her, his powers of fascination. Whilst looking to see if the ankles corresponded in elegance to the brightness of the eyes, he was somewhat surprised by seeing a leg completely bandaged; a few yards further, a puff of wind throwing up the shirt, exposed to his horror-struck gaze the unmistakable rings peeping here and there through the folds of the bandage. He called on some soldiers at a distance, and with their help he recaptured the prisoner. I need not say how brutally he was treated, kicked, beaten until his life was almost despaired of. The woman who

gave him her shirt was literally cut to pieces, having received more than 200 lashes on her bare back. All the jail prisoners were for some days more strictly guarded. It never affected us, and by this time, even in the other prison, matters go on as before. I must now finish this long letter.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) H. J. BLANC.

Inclosure 2 in No. 759.

Meteorological Register kept at Magdala from January to April 1867.*

JANUARY 1867.

c., clouds; r., rain; z., calm; c.s., clear sky; ×, hurricane; and underlined with red for route.

Day of Month.	Sunrise.		Noon.		Sunset.		Remarks.
	T.	W.	T.	W.	T.	W.	
	°		°		°		
1	48	z. c.s.	72	z. c.	58	z. c.	Mild afternoon.
2	48	z. c.	70	z. c.	55	s. c.	A little rain in afternoon.
3	50	z. c.	61	z. c.	58	s. c.	Rained a little last night.
4	51	z. c.	67	z. c.	59	s. c.	Ditto, ditto.
5	51	z. c.s.	69	z. c.s.	60	s. c.	Cool afternoon.
6	48	z. c.s.	67	s. c.	60	s. c.	Ditto.
7†	48	z. c.	67	s. c.	59	z. c.	Ditto.
8†	49	z. c.	67	z. c.	60	s. c.	Rained a little in afternoon.
9	54	z. c.	66	z. c.	56	s. c.	Ditto.
10	51	z. c.	65	s. c.	55	s. c.	Ditto.
11	47	z. c.	65	s. c.	55	s. c.	Rained a little last night and this afternoon.
12	47	z. c.s.	72	z. c.	57	s. c.	Cool afternoon.
13	47	z. c.	65	z. c.	57	z. c.	Ditto.
14	51	z. c.	63	z. c.	56	z. c.	Rained a little in morning; cool afternoon; ×.
15	50	z. c.	65	z. c.	60	z. c.	Rained heavily last night, and a few drops this afternoon.
16	49	z. c.	66	z. c.	62	z. c.	Mild afternoon.
17	48	z. c.s.	70	s. c.s.	61	s. c.	Cool afternoon.
18	46	z. c.s.	71	z. c.	63	z. c.s.	Mild afternoon; ×.
19	50	z. c.s.	76	z. c.	62	z. c.	Ditto.
20	49	z. c.	74	s. c.	61	z. c.	Ditto.
21	52	z. c.	67	s. c.	54	z. r.	Hail storm in afternoon.
22	50	z. c.	61	z. c.	54	z. c.	Fog in morning.
23	51	z. r.	64	z. c.	55	z. c.	Rained last night, and had a small shower this morning.
24	51	z. c.	62	z. c.	56	z. c.	Ditto, ditto.
25	48	z. c.	57	z. c.	54	z. c.	Very cold day; regular hurricane last night with plenty of rain.
26	50	z. c.	59	z. c.	54	z. c.	Very cold day.
27	49	z. c.	63	z. c.	59	s. c.s.	Mild afternoon.
28	50	z. c.s.	73	z. c.	60	s. c.s.	Ditto.
29	50	z. c.s.	73	z. c.	60	s. c.s.	Ditto.
30	47	z. c.s.	73	z. c.	59	z c.	Ditto.
31	48	z. c.s.	74	z. c.	62	z. c.	Ditto; ×.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† Received letter from Emperor.

FEBRUARY 1867.

Day of Month.	Sunrise.		Noon.		Sunset.		Remarks.
	T.	W.	T.	W.	T.	W.	
	°		°		°		
1	45	z. c.s.	74	z. c.s.	59	s. c.s.	Mild afternoon.
2	45	s. c.s.	71	z. c.s.	56	s. c.s.	Cold afternoon.
3	41	s. c.s.	67	s. c.s.	55	s. c.s.	Very cold night, and strong southerly wind all day.
4	44	s. c.s.	79	z. c.s.	59	s. c.s.	Ditto, ditto.
5	45	s. c.s.	73	z. c.s.	59	s. c.s.	Mild afternoon.
6	47	z. c.s.	76	s. c.s.	59	s. c.s.	Cold afternoon.
7	47	z. c.s.	76	s. c.s.	59	s. c.s.	Ditto.
8	47	z. c.s.	79	z. c.s.	60	s. c.s.	Ditto.
9	47	z. c.s.	75	z. c.s.	61	s. c.s.	Mild afternoon.
10	47	z. c.s.	75	z. c.s.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
11	47	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	64	s. c.s.	Ditto.
12	47	z. c.s.	78	z. c.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
13	51	z. c.	76	s. c.	60	s. c.s.	Ditto.
14	48	z. c.s.	79	z. c.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
15	48	z. c.s.	79	z. c.s.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
16	49	z. c.s.	79	z, c.s.	62	s. c.s.	A warm day.
17	50	z. c.s.	81	z. c.s.	61	s. c.s.	Ditto.
18	50	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
19	50	z. c.s.	84	z. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Ditto.†
20	48	z. c.s.	83	s. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
21	51	z. c.s.	83	s. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
22	52	z. c.s.	82	z. c.s.	62	s. c.s.	Ditto.
23	51	z. c.s.	81	z. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Ditto.
24	51	z. c.s.	78	z. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Ditto.
25	50	z. c.s.	80	s. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Cold afternoon.
26	51	z. c.s.	80	z. c.	61	z. c.	Mild afternoon.
27	51	z. c.s.	80	z. c.	61	s. c.	Cold afternoon.
28	51	z. c.s.	80	z. c.	63	s. c.	Mild afternoon.

MARCH 1867.

Day of Month.	Sunrise.		Noon.		Sunset.		Remarks.
	T.	W.	T.	W.	T.	W.	
	°		°		°		
1	53	z. c.s.	81	z. c.s.	64	s. c.s.	Mild afternoon.
2	52	z. c.s.	81	z. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
3	50	z. c.	79	z c.	63	s. c.	Ditto.
4	52	z. c.s.	78	z c.	62	z. c.	Rained a little last night.
5	52	z. c.	75	z c.	60	z. r.	Rained a little last night, and we had a small shower this afternoon.
6	52	z. c.s.	72	z. c.	57	s. c.s.	Hail shower this afternoon.
7	52	z. c.s.	72	z. c.	61	s. c.	Mild afternoon.
8	52	z. c.s.	75	z. c.	61	s. c.	Ditto.
9	49	z. c.s.	68	z. c.	54	s. r.	Rained a little in afternoon.
10	48	z. r.	64	s. c	51	s. c.	Rained last night and also this morning, with fog
11	49	z. c.	65	z. c.	51	s. c.	Cold afternoon.
12	48	z. c.	69	z. c.	51	s. c.	Ditto.‡
13	48	z. c.	72	z. c.	56	s. c.	Rained heavily this evening.
14	51	z. c	72	z. c.	63	s. c.	Mild afternoon.
15	51	z. c.	72	z. c.	64	z. c.	Ditto.‡
16	52	z. c.	72	z. c.	62	z. c.	Had a small shower last night.
17	51	z. c.	67	z. c.	60	z. c.	Mild afternoon.
18	50	z. c.	69	s. c.	55	s. c.	Cold afternoon.†
19	48	z. c.	71	z. c.	58	s. c.	Mild afternoon.
20*	49	z. c.	70	z. c.	59	z. c.	Heavy rain last night.
21	50	z. c.	70	z. c.	62	s. c.	Mild afternoon.
22	53	z. c.	79	z. c.	61	s. c.	Ditto.
23	49	z. c.	80	z. c.s.	62	s. c.	Ditto.
24	53	z. c.	81	z. c.	61	s. c.	Ditto.
25	51	z. c.	80	z. c.	61	z. c.	Ditto.
26	51	z. c.	78	z. c.	61	s. c.	Ditto.
27	52	z. c.	72	z. c.	59	s. c.	Cold afternoon.
28	51	z. c.	70	z. c.	60	s. c.	Mild afternoon.
29	53	z. c.	71	s. c.	62	z. c.	Ditto.
30	53	z. c.	73	z. c.	65	s. c.	Ditto.
31	49	z. c.	74	z. c.	65	s. c.	Ditto.

* Received letter from Emperor.

† Messengers to coast.

‡ Messengers from the coast.

APRIL 1867.

Day of Month.	Sunrise.		Noon.		Sunset.		Remarks.
	T.	W.	T.	W.	T.	W.	
	°		°		°		
1	47	z. c.	78	z. c.	67	z. c.	Mild afternoon.
2	49	z. c.	78	z. c.	65	z. c.	Ditto.
3	49	z. c.	78	z. c.	65	z. c.	Ditto.
4	49	z. c.s.	80	s. c.	63	s. c.	Ditto.
5	49	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	65	s. c.	Ditto.
6	50	z. c.s.	78	z. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
7	53	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
8	50	z. c.s.	81	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto
9	53	z. c.s.	81	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
10	51	z. c.s.	82	s. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
11	52	z. c.s.	80	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
12	53	z. c.s.	80	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
13	53	z. c.s.	78	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
14	50	z. c.s.	78	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s	Ditto.
15*	49	z. c.s.	81	s. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
16	51	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	68	s. c.s.	Ditto.
17	52	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Ditto.‡
18	52	z. c.s.	79	s. c.s.	64	s. c.s.	Ditto.†
19	52	z. c.s.	78	s. c.s.	63	s. c.s.	Ditto.
20	53	z. c.s.	81	s. c.s.	65	s. c.s.	Ditto.
21	54	z. c.s.	82	s. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
22	55	z. c.s.	82	z. c.s.	66	s. c.s.	Ditto.
23	55	z. c.	77	z. c.	65	s. c.	Ditto. Rained a little last night and this evening.
24	53	z. c.s.	75	z. c.	65	z. c.	Rained heavily this afternoon.
25	53	z. c.s.	74	z. c.s.	64	z. c.s.	Mild afternoon.‡
26	53	z. c.s.	75	z. c.s.	63	z. c.s.	Ditto.
27	53	z. c.s.	78	z. c.s.	65	z. c.s.	Ditto.
28	53	z. c.s.	77	z. c.s.	65	z. c.s.	Ditto.
29	53	z. c.s.	80	z. c.s.	65	s. c s.	Ditto.
30	56	z. c.s.	81	s. c.	63	z. c.	Ditto.

No. 760.

Dr. Davis to Lord Stanley —(*Received July* 6.)§

My Lord, 25, *Via dei Pandolfini, Florence, July* 2, 1867.

YESTERDAY I wrote to the India Office, begging for a settlement of my claim relative to the Abyssinian Coal discovery; and I now take the liberty of addressing your Lordship on the subject of the British captives in Abyssinia, to which I feel confident your Lordship will give the consideration it merits.

In an interview I had with Earl Russell at the Foreign Office in 1863, I informed his Lordship of intrigues which had been set on foot at Gondar, with a view to frustrate British influence. I stated that the servants of the British Consul at Massowah were in the pay of the hostile party, and that the despatches which the Consul received from the Foreign Office, before coming into his hands, were invariably first taken to that party, opened, copied, translated into Amharic, and, when the contents were prejudicial to the Government of Theodore, that despatch was forwarded to the King. Copies of these documents are now in a public office of a European Government.

Now, it appears that the Consul favoured the rebel who attempted to supplant Theodore on the Abyssinian Throne, and promised to aid him with arms and ammunition. The Consul wrote to the Foreign Office on the subject, and it seems that Earl Clarendon, under whose auspices I excavated the ruins of Carthage, seconded the views of the British representative at Massowah. His Lordship's reply, promising supplies of arms, underwent the regular manipulation, and by that channel reached the eyes of the Abyssinian King. His Majesty swore vengeance; and what other vengeance than that which he has taken was within the reach of Theodore?

All this I explained to Earl Russell, and at the same time suggested a plan for remedying the evil, and this before any British subject was seized by the Abyssinian Government.

I failed to make impression I desired on his Lordship's mind, and no notice was taken of what I said.

* Received letter from Emperor.

† Messengers to coast. ‡ Messengers from coast.

§ Laid before Parliament, 1867.

On my return from Abyssinia I had occasion to correspond with the India Office on the coal discovery; and in one of my letters (which your Lordship can see, page 26 in the pamphlet which I forward by this post), I suggested a simple and certain way of liberating the captives, and, at the same time re-establish a good understanding between Her Majesty's Government and King Theodore. But though Sir Charles Wood replied to my letter, he carefully avoided saying a word about the Abyssinian captives.

Private friends have repeatedly urged me to appeal to the public press, but I have invariably declined doing so, on account of the esteem and respect I have for Lord Clarendon, whose share in this transaction might be misconstrued by many; and, besides, I hoped all along, that Her Majesty's Government would adopt some successful plan for effecting the object in view.

I now understand that it is proposed to send an armed force to Abyssinia; and if this information is correct, I beg to offer my services to Her Majesty's Government, feeling perfectly certain that I shall be able to secure a peaceful victory by a simple demonstration of force. My travels in different parts of Africa, my having been connected with African expeditions composed sometimes of 30,000 men, my knowledge of African character and habits, as is evident from my published works, and my being accompanied by Professor Sapeto, who has lived fourteen years in the very country to which the expedition is directed, and to whom Theodore himself is indebted for his own life. All these considerations induce me to offer my services, and to speak with the utmost confidence of the result I anticipate. I have no hesitation whatever in saying, that we shall succeed in releasing the prisoners (if still alive), some of whom are my personal friends, and of stipulating an advantageous Treaty with the Ruler of Abyssinia.

Trusting that Her Majesty's Government will accept my services, I have, &c.

(Signed) N. DAVIS.

No. 761.

Captain Snow to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 8.)*

My Lord, 11, *Grove Place, Brompton Road, July* 8, 1867.

THE accompanying extracts (which please return) will explain who I am. I have just arrived from a five years' residence and travel in America.

Captain Cameron, the Representative of the English flag in Abyssinia, is, I find, still held a captive. He was my room-mate at Manchester during the meeting of the British Association in 1861.

I have long conceived a plan for the deliverance, in a friendly manner, of him and his companions. The plan will not incur much expense comparatively. I believe it will be more effectual than making war, or any further negotiations with a barbarous Monarch.

When Dr. Wolff went in search of the Bokhara captives, I volunteered to accompany him. I volunteered and went in search of the unfortunate Franklin expedition. I did the same in reference to Captain Gardiner's untimely end by starvation among the Fuegians. I propose the same now as regards my friend Captain Cameron.

If your Lordship will grant me an interview I can soon explain my plans. My time in England being, however, limited, as my wife is at home at her residence on the Hudson, New York, I would request the favour of an early answer, and am, &c.

(Signed) W. PARKER SNOW.

No. 762.

*Mr. Murray to Colonel Haly.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 8, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, offering your services,† and making suggestions with reference to procuring the release of the British captives in Abyssinia; I am to thank you for this communication, but I am to add, that suggestions with regard to military operations should rather be addressed to the Secretary of State for War than to this Office.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 757.

No. 763.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Hearsey.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 8, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant,† suggesting a mode of obtaining the release of the British captives in Abyssinia, and I am to thank you for this communication.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 764.

Mr. Petherick to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 8.)*

My Lord, *The Tookul, Henley-on-Thames, July 7,* 1867.

IN conformity with the wishes of your Lordship, expressed to me by letter on the 5th instant, that it would be more convenient if I would put my suggestions with respect to the relief of the captives in Abyssinia in writing. I beg to submit the following brief statement of the most inexpensive and, to my mind, according to the present position of our relations with Theodore, the safest means to coerce him to release the prisoners in his possession.

Your Lordship is aware of the absence of salt in Abyssinia, and that it has to be imported from the coast. Of the importance of salt as an article of consumption I need not dwell, but, perhaps, it may not be so well known that in Abyssinia proper, and many of its dependencies and neighbouring territories, it is so valuable as to form an universal object for barter, and is equivalent in value to coin.

The plan that I have the honour to suggest for the consideration of your Lordship, is that Her Majesty's Government, in concord with His Highness the Viceroy of Egypt, should establish and entertain a small, but efficient, naval and military force at Massowah, so disposable as to establish a blockade for the prevention of all communication between Abyssinia and the coast, on the one hand, and with the Egyptian dependencies of the Soudan on the other.

It would be a matter for consideration whether the blockade should be so stringent as to annul all possible intercourse between the above-named points, and comprise the seizure of merchandize and individuals as counter hostages to guarantee the safety of the prisoners; or, whether it should be confined to prevent the transit of salt into Abyssinia.

It seems to be beyond a doubt that Theodore of late has met with many reverses, and it is to be concluded in proportion that he is losing power, the several native chieftains must acquire it.

Therefore, as soon as the avowed object of the blockade shall have become apparent, and that it will last until the conditions thereof shall have been complied with; in my humble opinion the effect will be that, not only the energy of the chieftains, but that of entire populations will be directed to consummate the safety and release of the captives.

The limits of a letter necessarily restrict me to brevity, and it was with a view to a more elaborate communication of my ideas that I ventured to solicit an interview with your Lordship.

I can only add that, in the event of the foregoing being deemed worthy of your Lordship's consideration, I shall be happy to contribute any further information in my power in connection with the subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN PETHERICK.

No. 765.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 9.)*

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, July* 8, 1867.

THE following is a copy of a letter from the Rev. H. A. Stern, just received by his wife, and I thought it important that your Lordship should see it.

I am, &c.

(Signed) C. H. PURDAY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 758.

Inclosure in No. 765.

*The Rev. H. Stern to Mrs. Stern.**

My dear Charlotte, *Magdala, May* 2, 1867.

I JUST add a line to my letter of yesterday, as it is doubtful whether the opportunity for writing will not, before many days have elapsed, become exceedingly difficult, if not utterly impossible. The return of Mr. Flad, the disappointment of the King in not obtaining the requested accession to his white victims, and the consciousness that neither intrigue nor cunning will avail him to extort fresh concessions from the British Government, or the generosity of British Christians, all, I believe, combine to bring, ere long, our melancholy and doleful history to a crisis. Every day, nay, every hour, we expect to be transferred to the common prison, and to get hand-chains again. Only a week ago upwards of 200 prisoners, among whom are persons of high rank, were ordered to be executed. This indiscriminate massacre, which has probably been prompted by the want of guards, indicates no improvement in the tyrant's temper. We fear that wilful, wicked misrepresentations, and cruel, unpardonable selfishness, united in concealing the true state of our position, and the well-known designs of the King.

God in his infinite mercy may interpose and deliver us; and if not, our separation will only be for a short period, and our union in glory for ever and ever. God bless you, my love, and the darling children; and that we may both receive strength according to our need, is the prayer of your ever affectionate husband,

(Signed) HENRY H. STERN.

No. 766.

*Mr. Murray to Dr. Davis.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 10, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant,† offering your services to endeavour to obtain the release of the British captives in Abyssinia; and I am to thank you for this offer, but to inform you that his Lordship does not think it likely that Her Majesty's Government can make your services available.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 767.

*Mr. Murray to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 10, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your despatches of the 11th, 17th, and 24th of May, and 15th ultimo,‡ containing further accounts from the captives in Abyssinia; and I am to transmit to you, for your information, copies of letters to and from the War Office§ in regard to the course to be adopted by Her Majesty's Government in this matter.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 768.

Mr. Statham to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 11.)*

The Memorial of John Lee Statham, F.R.G.S., L.D.S., R.C.S., &c.,

Humbly showeth,

THAT your Memorialist believes that an imperative message from Her Majesty, demanding the release of the Abyssinian captives, may be of service; and your

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 760. ‡ Nos. 741, 749, 750, and 759.
§ Nos. 751 and 754.

Memorialist prays that he may be allowed to convey such missive to the Emperor Theodorus of Abyssinia.

And your Memorialist will ever pray, &c.

(Signed) J. L. STATHAM.

P.S.—Memorialist had the honour of commanding a company of volunteers for six months in the field, and afterwards, for nine months, was in command of Fort Grey during the last Kaffir war.

No. 769.

*Mr. Murray to Captain Snow.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 11, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant,† requesting his Lordship to grant you an interview in order that you may explain to him a plan for liberating the British captives in Abyssinia; and I am to request you to have the goodness to put your suggestions in writing.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 770.

*Mr. Murray to Mr. Lespard.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 11, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant,‡ and to thank you for the suggestions therein made regarding the means to be used for procuring the release of the British captives in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 771.

*Mr. Murray to Mr. Petherick.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 11, 1867.

I AM directed by Earl Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant,§ relative to the best means of procuring the release of the British captives in Abyssinia; and I am to thank you for the suggestions made by you which shall be duly considered.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 772.

*Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 11, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant‖ relative to the British captives in Abyssinia, and I am to thank you for this communication.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 761. ‡ No. 756. § No. 764. ‖ No. 765.

No. 773.

Captain Russell to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 13.)*

My Lord, 24, *Marsham Street, Westminster, July* 12, 1867.

I THIS morning did myself the honour to call on your Lordship, and I now lose no time in complying with the directions I received at the Foreign Office to furnish your Lordship with a statement, in writing, of my views and propositions. I must inform your Lordship that I am now at this moment exceeding my leave, having made arrangements to sail for Calcutta about the 22nd instant. I have seen long and active service with the Irregular Cavalry in India, and during the mutiny was constantly engaged, and frequently made sudden dashes upon forts and walled places, invariably with success. I have taken a great interest in the Abyssinian captives, and am ready, should my proposal be accepted, to devote myself to the task of rescuing them, about which I entertain little doubt. But I must impress on your Lordship that my success in such an attempt will entirely depend on the way in which it is arranged and carried out. In the first place to send an officer (as I understand is proposed) to Massowah to make arrangements for the commissariat and prepare for the arrival of troops, would, in my opinion, prove the most insane and disastrous step that could be taken, and the most at variance with the strategy necessary to, and inseparable from, such a service. It would, I feel assured, be the cause of every one of the captives being instantly put to death, glutted as the Emperor Theodorus is at this moment with the blood of numbers of the few adherents he has left. The only sure way would be by making the most sudden dash practicable, and this could only be effected by Cavalry and Horse Artillery. I do not think Infantry would render much aid, as it would be from first to last a question of speed. I do not think that English Cavalry would be so effective as Indian horse, because both native men and native horses would better endure the campaign in such a country as Abyssinia. If Infantry are sent they should consist of Beloochees. I should propose that a force of three regiments of Sikh or Pashan Cavalry be at once ordered to Aden, supported by three troops of Bombay Horse Artillery; with this force landed at Massowah, I will engage to penetrate the country surrounded, and make a dash at Magdala; and if, as I understand, an officer is already at Massowah making commissariat arrangements, the sooner active measures are taken the better. Native troops require far less commissariat incumbrances than European troops. They are well officered, and would be more qualified and better handled.

I should also be glad that the naval aid should be under the command of such an officer as Captain Cecil Westbrook, of Her Majesty's ship "Victoria," B.M., who has been long on the Aden station, under the immediate orders of Colonel Merewether, and who has acquired a perfect knowledge of the Abyssinian coast and country, and is a good Oriental linguist.

My proposal, if accepted, could be accelerated by telegraphing to Bombay for the necessary troops to be forwarded to Aden while the commissariat arrangements might be proceeded with. In the event of its being decided to trust to me the command of this expedition my leave would have to be extended at once, as my time for sailing for Calcutta is fixed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. J. RUSSELL, *Captain,*
Her Majesty's Bengal Army.

No. 774.

Captain Snow to Lord Stanley.—(*Received July* 13.)*

My Lord, 11, *Grove Place, Brompton Road, July* 12, 1867.

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 11th instant,† and herewith reply.

In speaking of a plan for the deliverance of our countrymen detained in a painful captivity by the Abyssinian Monarch, I ought more strictly to have said, a variety of plans according to circumstances, without being confined to any specific plan. But the leading feature in my ideas is as follows:

You are aware, my Lord, that all medicine men, wizards, demented persons,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 769.

cunning men, skilful craftsmen, &c., are, in a measure, held sacred in the East. I have found it so among all the many wild tribes visited by me in various parts of the globe, and a reference to any of my works or to official reports will show that I have invariably succeeded among even the most savage races of mankind. I simply study them, and then adapt myself to their ways, (without entirely losing my own self respect), until I win their good-will and carry my point.

It may appear absurd to relate how sometimes as an acrobat, then a medicine-man, next a grave reader of the stars, a laughing merry-andrew, but always kind and gentle as well as firm, I have got on. Playing with the children, admiring the women, no matter how ugly, and humouring the men (who are often but big babies), I have passed scathless through wild people who, before and afterwards (most remarkably in two cases, Australia and Tierra del Fuego) murdered the white men visiting them. A bold fierce dash with no shadow of timidity is, however, necessary, and they respect it.

But to sum up all on this point, let me simply say that a man must be a student of human nature in all its variety, and with a shrewd, penetrating mind, work upon it as he finds best at the time. To this there must be an eye which never quails, and though I profess no adherence to any particular dogma of spiritualism or mesmerism, yet I add that magnetic power can be tried, and, as I well know, tried successfully.

To you, my Lord, and to thinking minds of experience these remarks will not on consideration appear rhapsodical or visionary. I have no visionary ideas at all in me. Real matter of fact is ever before my eyes. But I do believe that in a good and righteous cause (and what can be more good and righteous than the trying to save others, especially in connection with the honour of our beloved flag), God designs to manifest His countenance and support to whomsoever may have Faith in Him, not omitting manly self-reliance and courageous trust in a strong mind, with a supple arm.

This, then, coupled with what I propose.

I would suggest that I be sent out armed with full authority (secret) to demand support from British officials wherever found. That I take upon myself such character as I may find best suited to ingratiate myself with the Monarch and his people; and, as I do not speak the language, a faithful interpreter be found to act as a sort of connection to me, a partly dumb-man.

I would enter Abyssinia from the East as an Arab, and not appear unless afterwards necessary as a European.

My after plans would be guided by circumstances, but the main object should be to make myself serviceable to the Ruler of the people and his courtiers; then strive, of course it would be at the risk of my head or my freedom—to effect the escape of our friends, if I failed in securing the Emperor's good graces and so obtaining their release. In other words, I am willing to go and try to be of use to this Monarch, so that, while myself perhaps an hostage, my boon for the release of the poor captives might be granted.

Ward, Chief Mandarin in China, and Burgevine, Generalissimo of the Army, were both originally humble American sailors.

Of course there are numerous other details which might be mentioned, but, my Lord, I am but just breathing from a two years' laborious task in writing an historical work, and I feel myself almost unable to sit down again for any time to the pen.

If, my Lord, this offer is accepted, I am bound to say that I should need some provision for my poor wife during my absence. Moreover, as I am actuated by no other motive save that of humanity, and the honour of our native flag; I must beg that no misunderstanding of my position in the matter be made. If the Government accepts my services in this attempt, I feel hopeful that the nobility of soul which characterizes those in power in England as occasionally contrasted with much of a different kind I find abroad, will comprehend me aright, and make me feel that trust and respect is given me.

As for my return, I have that same faith, religiously, and an incomprehensible something else mentally, which inspires me onward with the belief of success, and which years before we knew the fact, told me (see how truly prophetic I was by examining the Arctic Blue Books, March 1850), where Franklin's companions were and how they could be saved, and also which made me successful in Tierra del Fuego, and elsewhere.

And now, my Lord, having briefly imparted my ideas, I will merely add that, should the Government accept me, I would suggest that I be sent out as a Special Messenger with such instructions as you may deem best, and with no more publicity than actually required.

As to securing perfect obedience to such instructions, I can say nothing more than

that it would be absolutely necessary for me to be in as frequent communication with your Lordship as possible.

As I am now busy in reading over my work for the press, I trust, your Lordship, will kindly favour me with as speedy reply as possible, that I may arrange my movements while here.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. PARKER SNOW.

No. 775.

*Sir S. Baker to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 15.)**

My Lord, *July* 13, 1867.

HAVING been requested to offer a written statement of the difficulties that would attend an attack upon Abyssinia to effect the liberation of the captives, I have the honour of laying before your Lordship an outline of the principal features of the frontier, followed by certain suggestions that would reduce those difficulties to a minimum.

The east and west coasts of the Red Sea are claimed by Turkey and Egypt. They are arid and desert, generally devoid of fresh water, with a burning temperature from March to the end of September of 105 to 120 degrees Farenheit in the shade. The two principal ports on the west coast are Souakin, north latitude 19°; and Massowah, north latitude 15° 35′; both afford good harbours. Souakin is the most central station, from which radiate the regular caravan routes to Kassala, the capital of the Taka province, from sixteen to twenty days' journey for a heavily laden camel, and the same distance to the town of Berber on the Nile, in latitude north 18°.

Souakin is under an Egyptian Governor, who can collect any number of camels from the Arab tribes, with the necessary water-skins for the desert journey; thus, it is the direct route to Kassala for all military operations from Egypt. The troops are delivered in four days from Suez, with their supplies prepared in Cairo; thus, in four days and a-half they can be supported from head-quarters with stores and reinforcements, transported by railroad to Suez, and from thence by steamers to Squakin.

The water at Souakin is brackish (similar to that of Aden), therefore a large supply of Nile water should be brought in tanks from Suez, at which place the fresh water canal delivers an inexhaustible store.

As the Egyptian authorities are in the habit of transporting troops direct to Kassala by Souakin, that route is free from all difficulty.

Throughout the desert route fodder for the camels is afforded by numerous mimosas; thus, a supply of corn is unnecessary. Water is found every second or third day.

Kassala, the capital of the Taka province, is on the extreme limit of the Egyptian frontier, bordering the Basé (enemies of Abyssinia), through which country the route is practicable into the heart of Abyssinia. The town of Kassala is fortified, as the principal arsenal and garrison of eastern Upper Egypt. From 6,000 to 8,000 troops are usually quartered in that district. The surrounding country is inhabited by numerous tribes of warlike Arabs, subject to the Egyptian Government.

Kassala is situated upon the river Gash or Mareb, which, although dry during the hot months affords an unlimited supply of good water from wells dug in its sandy bed. During the dry season, from 15th November until 1st June, the climate is healthy, but at all other seasons the country is extremely dangerous.

The rainy season commences early in June, and continues until the middle of September. A peculiar fly appears with the first rains, that destroys all domestic animals, and would utterly vanquish an army by annihilating the beasts of transport. The Arabs migrate with their flocks and herds at the commencement of the rains, and congregate in the desert about Gozerajup, ninety-six miles north of Kassala, which at that season abounds in pasturage and is extremely healthy, and free from the fatal fly.

The great Nubian desert ceases at Gozerajup, which is the southern limit of sterility; from that point, the country is under the influence of the periodical rains. The soil is extremely rich as we approach the south, but in the wet season it becomes utterly impassable, the mud being several feet in depth.

At the cessation of the rains, on about 15th September, the country is a dense mass of high grass and rank vegetation; the torrents are serious obstacles, and no

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

military operations can take place until November; at that time the grass becomes parched, and the prairies are cleared by fire.

From 1st November until 1st June the entire country is most favourable to military movements; no tents are required, as there is no rain for seven months. The ground is perfectly dry, and so free from dew from December until May that the guns do not rust when resting at night upon the ground. The men simply require a light blanket to protect them from the chill of the night breeze.

Throughout this country any number of camels can be procured for transport. Cattle, sheep, and goats are plentiful. Corn, "dhurra" (sorghum vulgare), is abundant, at the low price of 15 piastres per "rachel"—3*s*. 1*d*. for 500 pounds. Thus, throughout the southern frontier of Upper Egypt there are abundant supplies, and a favourable climate for an army from November until June, after which a residence in the fertile countries would be fatal to man and beast, accordingly they must fall back with the Arabs to the healthy deserts.

Accepting Kassala as the base of operations the communication would be as follows:—

Letter Post:—To Souakin, five days; ten days post to Cairo.

Supplies and reinforcements—twenty or twenty-five days from Cairo.

Khartoum, the capital of the Soudan provinces, is situated at the junction of the Blue and White Niles. The population is about 30,000, and it generally contains a a garrison of about 8,000 troops, while 5,000 or 6,000 additional regulars and irregulars are scattered throughout the province.

From July until October, the Blue Nile is navigable for large vessels to the 11° north latitude at Fazoklo.

There are five steamers at Khartoum, and numerous vessels that would in a few days transport an army of 3,000 men to a position within about five days' march of Gellabat (Matemma), the principal market-town of the west of Abyssinia; thus Khartoum would be a base from which ammunition, &c., could be supplied, either to the camp at Gellabat, or to a point still farther south of Fazoklo, that would cut off the retreat of Theodorus.

The difficulties and the advantages of climate enumerated in the description of Kassala are equally applicable to the position of Gellabat and the Blue Nile, with one important exception:—should operations be necessary during the rains, there is no healthy retreat for the troops, such as the desert of Gozerajup, but they must push into the high and healthy lands of Abyssinia for the wet season.

It will, therefore, be apparent that great advantages are afforded for the invasion of Abyssinia from the entire line of the Egyptian frontier, *i.e.*, seven clear months of dry weather, with a healthy climate, and two distinct bases of operations,—Khartoum and Kassala, both of which are free from interruption, and are in direct communication with Cairo. Thus, the entire forces can be engaged in offensive movements, as no protection is required to preserve the line of communication in the rear; while the entire frontier is rich in supplies, beasts of burthen, and friendly Arabs. On the one hand, there is water commuication between Suez and Souakin; on the other, a navigable river (Blue Nile) and a line of steamers between Khartoum and Fazoklo.

Massowah has been suggested as a favourable base of operations.

I cannot see the slightest advantage in this position to counterbalance the numerous and serious obstacles presented to an invasion from that point.

Upwards of 300 miles from the capital, this entire distance must be traversed through an enemy's country. An immense force will be necessary to keep open the communication with the rear; there will be no means of transport, neither supplies, as the natives will drive off their flocks and herds to the interior upon the approach of our troops; and the King Theodorus will be daily apprized by spies of their advance. His first movement will baffle the expedition; with his rear open, he will retreat with the captives to mountainous fastnesses in the distant Galla country, as a fox will steal from a covert.

An invasion of Abyssinia may be effected in three methods:—

1. By an alliance with Egypt.
2. By independent British forces.
3. By the employment of 4,000 Indian troops, in conjunction with a paid Egyptian contingent, commanded by a British officer. The Viceroy to hand over 6,000 troops to British service.

In all cases the attack must take place from the Egyptian frontier. Souakin to form the *point de départ* for troops acting from the East.

1. "Alliance with Egypt." This would secure the object of the expedition without delay. Troops would be sent from Khartoum to Fazoklo and Gellabat, and at once cut off the retreat of Theodorus to the Galla, while a division from Kassala would cross into Tigré, and place the King between two fires; at the same time a British division would occupy a position in advance of Massowah, and send an ultimatum, allowing a specified time for the safe delivery of the captives at head-quarters, or, in default, the combined forces would invade the country, and close in upon the army of Theodorus from three points. In case of an alliance with Egypt, a British Commission should accompany the Egyptian forces to treat with the King Theodorus, to guarantee the retreat of the Egyptian troops should the captives be liberated; but to order their advance into Abyssinia should harm befal them. The threat of letting loose the Turks (as they are called) upon Abyssinia, would compel Theodorus to terms, as the entire country would unite in revolution against him should he incur the risk of an Egyptian invasion for the sake of the prisoners.

The reward for the co-operation of Egypt should be that portion of Abyssinia hitherto contested between them,—the great chain of mountains that forms a natural boundary, and the Atbara river on the west.

2. "Independent British forces" would succeed in conquering Abyssinia by an advance as proposed through Souakin, and the occupation of a position inland of Massowah, but I do not think they would succeed in liberating the captives, as, the rear being open, Theodorus would retreat with them to the interior. They would also have many difficulties to contend with, as the Egyptians would not afford them that active assistance in procuring supplies and means of transport that they would, if themselves allied in action.

3. "The employment of 4,000 Indian troops in conjunction with 6,000 men of an Egyptian contingent in British pay," would render the expedition entirely independent, and would avoid all ulterior complications with Egypt.

Orders would at once be sent to Khartoum to prepare boats and stores, and to expedite 6,000 men in two divisions to arrive in the last week of October, 2,000 at Gellabat, and 4,000 to the east of Fazoklo, in the rear of Magdala, the head-quarters of Theodorus and the captives. The troops at Gellabat would be supported by thousands of the Dabaina, Shookeryiah, and Kunana Arabs, with unlimited means of transport in camels, and supplies of all kinds; while the Indian forces at Kassala would be equally supported by the Haddendowa, Hallonga, Bishareen, and Hamran Arabs, the latter being the most magnificent swordsmen of the border tribes.

The Indian force would consist of 4,000 men landed at Souakin, and marched to Kassala as a base for future operations. Should re-inforcements be necessary, they could at once be forwarded from Aden, three days steaming from Souakin.

A division of 2,000 men (Indian troops) would be disembarked on the coast opposite Massowah, and would afford a demonstration upon the eastern frontier.

Abyssinia would thus be commanded at three points. Theodorus would be taken in the rear by the division at Fazoklo, and his retreat cut off, while an advance of the 4,000 Indian troops from Kassala into Tigré would form a nucleus for the rebels already in arms against the King to rally around. Arrived in Tigré, the division from Kassala could march to the west upon Magdala, as the 2,000 division on the coast of Massowah would hold the rear and keep open the communication.

Theodorus would at once be surrounded; the Egyptian division from Fazoklo would march direct upon Magdala, from which there would be no retreat. Abyssinia would be in the possession of the British forces, before the expiration of the dry season.

A British Commissioner would accompany the Egyptian Contingent to direct the operations, and to treat for the liberation of the captives, prior to the general advance of the three divisions.

Abyssinia would be compelled to pay the cost of the expedition, and would be occupied by a portion of the British forces as a material guarantee until the final settlement of our claims.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SAMUEL BAKER.

No. 776.

*Lieutenant Hearsey to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 15.)**

My Lord, *July* 12, 1867.

BEING aware that private correspondence often gives fuller intelligence than official, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, in a private letter from Lieutenant Carew, commanding the "Dalhousie," (who has been sent to Massowah by Colonel Merewether for some political reason respecting the Abyssinian prisoners), that officer states "that it is the belief of all there (Aden and Massowah) that the Emperor Theodore will give us the trouble of landing a force on the shores of Abyssinia, and that, when he sees we are really in earnest, he will give up the prisoners, and not murder them as is generally supposed, as he, in reality, dreads the power of England.

Seeing in yesterday's paper that the Honourable the member for Aberdeen was going to ask some question on this subject on Monday next, I thought that this reliable private information might be of use to your Lordship,

"About fifty miles south of Massowah is a place called, I believe, Stavely Bay. A range of hills of upwards of 9,000 feet in altitude run down to within ten or fifteen miles of the coast at the bottom of this bay. Very little difficulty or expense would be incurred to have this bay explored, and soundings taken, as to whether ships of large size could sail up it and a small expedition sent into this range of hills to explore as to whether any use could be made of them as a cantonment for a military expedition, for the climate of Massowah and the adjacent coasts is terrible. Lieutenant Carew concerning this states 'Aden, in comparison to this place, is cool, and India, after my stay here will be a perfect paradise. But if these hills were found practicable (water and provisions, &c., obtainable) one of the greatest of the difficulties, in case that an expedition is deemed necessary, will be overcome, and our troops could be located in a comparatively cool climate.'"

If I receive any further information on this subject from Lieutenant Carew (as I hear of him every mail) I will, if agreeable to your Lordship, forward to you any intelligence I may hear or receive.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. W. HEARSEY.

No. 777.

*Mr. Murray to Sir S. Baker.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant,† offering suggestions as to the best means to be adopted for securing the liberation of the captives in Abyssinia; and I am to express to you his Lordship's best thanks for the valuable information therein contained.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 778.

*Mr. Murray to Mr. Statham.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant,‡ offering to proceed to Abyssinia to effect the liberation of the British captives detained in that country; and I am to thank you for this offer of service, of which, however, Her Majesty's Government will not avail themselves.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 775. ‡ No. 768.

No. 779.

*Mr. Murray to Major-General Sir E. Lugard.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1867.

WITH reference to my letter of the 24th ultimo,† and to your reply of the 2nd instant,‡ respecting Abyssinia, I am directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you a copy of a letter which his Lordship has received from Sir Samuel Baker,§ treating upon the question of the plan to be adopted by Her Majesty's Government for endeavouring to effect the liberation of the captives.

Any suggestions from such a well-known explorer of the regions bounding on Abyssinia must necessarily be deserving of consideration.

A copy of this letter will be sent to the India Office.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 780.

*Mr. Murray to Mr. Merivale.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 16, 1867.

LORD STANLEY has been informed by the Secretary of State for War that Sir Stafford Northcote has been requested to take steps with a view of ascertaining, through Indian officers, what measures it may be advisable to adopt, in order to secure the liberation of the British captives in Abyssinia; and I am directed by his Lordship to transmit to you, for the information of the Secretary of State for India in Council, a copy of a letter, with its inclosure from Sir Samuel Baker,§ which has this day been addressed to the War Office.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 781.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 16.)*

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, July* 15, 1867.

I WAS duly favoured with Mr. Murray's letter of the 4th instant,‖ acknowledging the receipt of the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 29th ultimo, referring to a previous one of the 13th ultimo.

I now feel it to be my duty to direct your Lordship's attention to a letter in the "Pall Mall Gazette" of the 11th instant, from "a correspondent," who, from the manner in which he expresses himself, may be imagined to have had access to official sources of information respecting the contemplated expedition against Abyssinia. If this be the case, I can only hope that the opinions entertained by him are not those of the authorities having the direction of such an expedition, inasmuch as some of those opinions are manifestly founded on erroneous or quite insufficient data.

The writer states, that the nearest and best road from Massowah to Gondar or Magdala, is by Dobarwa, Axum, and Shiré, and that on this road two ranges of mountains, and two considerable rivers have to be crossed.

A reference to the map of Abyssinia, forming inclosure No. 2 in the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 12th of April last,¶ will show that the road thus recommended, which in my said letter is spoken of as "the middle road," is neither the nearest nor the best to Magdala, whatever it may be to Gondar; on which latter place, however, it would be useless to march, because it is no longer the capital of the Emperor Theodore, he having destroyed and abandoned it, and it being now (if I mistake not) in the occupation of Tessu Gobazye, one of the insurgent Chiefs. The crossing of two range of mountains and two considerable rivers—the Mareb and Takkazye—would not merely be a work of supererogation, but (to repeat the words of my said letter), "the selection of that road for the march of an invading army, would be attended with a considerable loss of time, might occasion the illnes-

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.
† No. 751.
‡ No. 754.
§ No. 775.
‖ No. 755.
¶ No. 712.

or death of a large number of men, and might even place in jeopardy the success of a campaign."

In the second place, the correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette" says, that mules and camels are the animals best adapted to the country. On this point I would beg leave to quote a passage from Major Harris' work, "The Highlands of Ethiopia." Speaking of the arrival on the frontiers of Shoa of the Mission from the British Government to King Sahela Selasye, that officer says (vol. ii, page 325, 2nd edition) :—"As well from the severity of the climate as from the steepness of the rugged mountains of Abyssinia, the camel becomes useless as a beast of burden; and none being ever taken beyond the frontier, many of the Walasma's retinue now gazed on the ungainly quadrupeds for the first time. Consequently," (as he states in page 352), "the presents for the King and the baggage of the Mission were consigned to the shoulders of 600 grumbling Moslem porters."

In like manner, the baggage of Mr. Rassam and his party, as long as they travelled through the frontier districts between Massowah and Matemma, was carried on camels; but when they started from Matemma for the Emperor's camp, "they had no less than 1,200 porters."

My own three years' personal experience of travelling in Abyssinia is, that whilst camels are used in the low and desert countries, and bullocks in part of Tigré near the coast, the general means of transport on the tableland—that is to say, through Abyssinia, properly so called—are mules, asses, horses, and men.

When I went to Shoa in 1840, my baggage (like that of Major Harris' Mission in the year following), was conveyed by camels across the deserts of the Danakil, between Tajurrah and the frontier of Shoa; but in all my subsequent perigrinations through most of the provinces of the Empire, I used mules and horses, with occasional porters for light weights. And on leaving the country in 1843, I took my mules down with me down to 'Mkulla, opposite Massowah.

On my recent visit to Abyssinia, my baggage was carried by camels from 'Mkulla to the foot of Mount Shumfaite, in the valley of the Hadas, whence it was taken up to the tableland on bullocks sent down for that purpose by the inhabitants of Halai; and on my return to Massowah, the same people brought it down all the way to Arkiko on bullocks and asses (with also a few porters), without employing camels at all.

As the success of any warlike expedition into Abyssinia will depend on the preparations and arrangements made for it, far more than on the general efficiency and conduct of the army itself, I am sure that your Lordship will not be displeased by the observations which I have thus taken the liberty of making.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 782.

*Mr. Murray to Captain Russell.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 18, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant,† offering to proceed to Abyssinia to procure the liberation of the British captives, and making suggestions as to military operations in that country. I am to thank you for this communication, and to inform you that any proposals on the subject of military operations should be addressed to the Secretary of State for War.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 783.

*Mr. Murray to Captain Snow.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 18, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant,‡ and to thank you for your offer to proceed to Abyssinia, in order to endeavour to liberate the British captives detained in that country. Her Majesty's Government will not avail themselves of your offer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† No. 773.

‡ No. 774.

No. 784.

*Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 20, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant,† and to thank you for your useful and practical observations on the best means of transport and on the routes in Abyssinia.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 785.

Major Leveson to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 20.)*

My Lord, *The Ship Hotel, Charing Cross, July* 18, 1867.

IN April 1865, I volunteered my services for the purpose of negotiating the release of Captain Cameron and his companions, but other arrangements having been made my offer was declined.

More than two years have now elapsed and the captives are still in chains, all negotiations having been simply treated with contempt. This result might have been prognosticated, as an Armenian, or Levantine, was the very last person to have been sent, those races being distrusted and looked down upon by other nationalities in "the East," on account of the general character they bear for deceit and duplicity.

At last, wearied out with the fruitless attempts that have hitherto been made to negotiate, the nation at large seems to have determined that either the captives shall be set free by force, if necessary, or that Theodorus the King shall be punished.

The chances are, that when hostile measures are commenced, that the lives of all the captives will be at once sacrificed, as the King, who is said to be at the head of about 40,000 men at Debra Tabor, would most likely immolate them out of mere bravado.

Nearly four months must elapse before any troops can take the field so as to act with efficiency, and before any threatening or hostile measures are carried into effect I ask permission of your Lordship to be allowed to attempt by mediation to rescue a brother officer and his companions in trouble.

I want no aid, and but very little means; all the risk is my own, and I will cheerfully run it.

Should I succeod, a great expense of life, treasure, and perhaps even prestige, will be spared the country. Should I fail, a single life is the only penalty that can be exacted, and that will be paid without a regret. "Le jeu vaut bien la chandelle."

This is the worst view of the case; but I hope and believe that, with tact, the release of the captives might be arranged before any troops were landed at Massowah.

Under the present circumstances, now that a part of his territory is in open revolt, under different leaders, King Theodorus may find it to his interest to keep on friendly terms with this country. He was once very partial to Englishmen, as Plowden and Bell were his most trusted friends and intimate companions for a long series of years, and I know the former gentleman had a very high opinion of him, as some years ago he invited me to join him in Abyssinia for the purpose of hunting large game with the King, and had I not been suffering from the effects of severe wounds, I should have wandered over the country simply for sport. I do not anticipate much danger to myself were I to go now.

A fair Oriental linguist, I have often travelled alone in Africa, having made several expeditions quite as dangerous as the one I now wish to undertake. I am accustomed to a tropical climate, having returned three times from the west coast of Equatorial Africa, besides having made long exploring trips into the interior from the east coast.

I would make my way, viâ Massowah or Tajurah, to the camp at Debra Tabor, and present myself to the King as the friend of Plowden, and, like him, ready to serve his interests. I would endeavour to persuade him to send back Cameron and the other captives, offering to remain myself in their stead.

If your Lordship should see fit to entrust me with this Mission, it shall be carried out, if possible.

If, on the other hand, it should be determined to commence hostilities, I would

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 781.

still volunteer my services, as great assistance could be rendered to an invading force by creating diversions in different parts of the country. Several provinces are said to be in insurrection, under different leaders, at the present time; and, were a contingent of their followers armed and organized they would spare our regular troops much harassing work.

The Arab tribes of Beni Um'mr are now said to be holding their own against the troops of Theodorus, in the Province of Shiré; whilst Menilĕk in Shoa, Tadla Gwalu in Godjam, Waksham Gobezi in Tigré, and Tussoo Gobezi in Samien, are in open revolt.

Should the troops of his Highness the Viceroy of Egypt take any part in the campaign, I would again venture to suggest that my services might be useful, as I commanded some of them during the Russian war, when on the Staff of the Ottoman army. Since then I have served as Colonial Secretary and Lieutenant-Governor of Lagos, where I was superseded on account of a severe wound received in an engagement with the natives, and have taken part in the campaigns of Italy, Denmark, America, and Austria.

I beg to forward a couple of my works upon Exploring Expeditions in different parts of the world, to show that I am accustomed to similar adventures and hard work, and I have left with Mr. Wyld, of the Foreign Office, a book full of certificates and testimonials given to me by different commanders, under whom I have served, any of whom will bear testimony in my favour.

Should your Lordship see fit to entertain my proposal, I am ready to start at three hours' notice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. LEVESON.

No. 786.

*Mr. Murray to Major Leveson.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 26, 1867.*

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant,† offering your services to proceed to Abyssinia to effect the release of the British captives there, and containing remarks on the present state of that country, and I am to thank you for your communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 787.

*Sir J. Fergusson to Mr. Murray.—(Received July 27.)**

Sir, *India Office, July 27, 1867.*

WITH reference to your letter to the War Office of the 25th June,‡ a copy of which was forwarded to this Department by the War Office, requesting that information might be procured from India with a view to possible operations in Abyssinia, I am directed by Sir Stafford Northcote to state, for the information of Lord Stanley, that he has instructed the Government of Bombay, by telegraph, to obtain all necessary information, and to dispatch competent officers to the Red Sea, with a view to the most thorough inquiry being made in communication with Colonel Merewether.

Sir Stafford Northcote has further, by telegraph, directed that he may be informed, as soon as possible, how long a time all the necessary preparations will require, in order that any operations in Abyssinia, which may be determined upon, may be conducted within the limits of the ensuing cold season.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES FERGUSSON.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 785. ‡ No. 751.

No. 788.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 27.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, July 26, 1867.*

I AM favoured with Mr. Murray's letter of the 20th instant,* conveying to me your Lordship's thanks for the observations relating to Abyssinia contained in the letter which I had the honour to address to you on the 15th instant.

Your Lordship being pleased to regard those observations as useful and practical, I am willing to hope that the following remarks may prove not less serviceable; they are occasioned by an article in the "Morning Post" newspaper of the 13th instant, emanating (as I have reason to believe) from a person of distinction, whose opinions could not fail to have great weight with Her Majesty's Government, on account of his antecedents and position, for which reason it becomes a matter of imperative duty with me to show that such opinions are erroneous, and, if acted on, might be attended with fatal consequences.

The article in question says:—"It will, therefore, be of the first importance, before commencing a campaign, to inquire into the advantages and the disadvantages of the expedition. From whom are we to obtain the necessary information? Few travellers have had long experience in Abyssinia, but from their reports we gather the following important data. There are seasons that would be favourable and seasons that would be fatal to an expedition. There are vulnerable points of the frontier that could offer a weak resistance; and there are positions rendered impregnable by natural obstacles. There is a peculiar fly that, at certain seasons, forces the Arab tribes upon the Nubian frontier to emigrate with their flocks and herds to the distant desert, as no domestic animal can survive its venom. This alone would vanquish an army by annihilating the means of transport. There are impassable torrents until the cessation of the rains. There are malignant fevers that would destroy the native and the stranger, should they remain in the fatal locality during the unhealthy months; whilst on the other hand there are vast advantages to an invading force if guided by one experienced in the country.

"It is not our intention to suggest a plan for an Abyssinian campaign; neither is it our determination to throw difficulties in the action of the Government by opposing any plans of operation upon which they may decide; but it is our duty, in conjunction with that of the entire press of Great Britain, to caution the Government against the commission of such errors as have led to our failure in former wars. We must 'look before we leap.' If we are ignorant of the localities, we must study the experience of others. There are travellers still living who can afford all the necessary information. To them we must turn, and thoroughly investigate the physical conditions of the country before we commit ourselves to an invasion.

"From practical authority we have learned that the rains commence in June and cease in September; during that period no military operations are possible. From the middle of September until about the middle of October the intense heat of the sun acting upon the sodden ground and rank vegetation produces the most fatal diseases; therefore this unhealthy month must be avoided. The grass is of that Brobdignagian growth that it is impossible until it is sufficiently dry to burn. This is in November, at which time the fire clears all before it, the country becomes healthy, and troops are free to act, &c."

Whilst unhesitatingly endorsing the sentiments of the writer as regards the necessity for "caution against the commission of such errors as have led to our failure in former wars," and for "studying the experience of others," I am forced to assert most unequivocally and unreservedly that, however practical and however high in other respects the authority may be on which the statements in the foregoing extracts are based, those statements prove him to be totally misinformed as regards Abyssinia, that is to say that portion of the high table-land of Eastern Africa, which during the last few centuries has been under the rule of the sovereigns known as the Kings or Emperors of Abyssinia, to the exclusion of the neighbouring low countries comprised by the Mahometans under the general designation of Habesh.

Abyssinia thus restricted, as I have publicly explained on numerous occasions, though apparently to no purpose as regards such practical authorities, is a high table-land, of which the climate and atmosphere are remarkably and even exceptionally healthy; it is inhabited by a settled agricultural people, living on grain and pulse of various sorts of their own cultivation, and on the flesh of their flocks and herds and domestic fowls, all of which they possess in large numbers, together with horses, asses,

and mules; their cattle are not infested by a peculiar fly any more than those of the equally settled agricultural people of the Peninsula of India, whom in general habits the natives of Abyssinia may be said to resemble; and consequently they are not forced to emigrate to avoid any such fly.

As regards the seasons of the year in Abyssinia, I should have thought that the most cursory examination of any of the numerous works of travellers in that country would have prevented such statements as are made in the foregoing quotations. I will refrain from using my own practical authority, but will appeal to that of Mr. Salt, as recorded in Lord Valentia's "Travels." That gentleman who, as your Lordship is aware, was Secretary to Lord Valentia, and afterwards Consul-General in Egypt, was sent in the year 1805 on a Mission to Ras Walda Selassie, then the Ruler of Tigré and Vizier of the Emperor.

Mr. Salt left Arkeeko, on the coast of the Red Sea, on July 18th, and arrived at Antalo, the Ras's residence, on August 18th. From this place he went on an excursion to Adowa and Axum, the ancient capital, returning to Antalo in time to be present on September 26th—the feast of "Maskal" or Holy Cross day, with us falling on September 14th, new style—at a grand muster and review of the Ras's troops, who "had for several days past been assembling from all parts of that Prince's dominions"; and on October 10th, he left Antalo, on his return to the coast, which he reached in perfect health on November 7th.

From these particulars it will be perceived that Mr. Salt visited Abyssinia, and there travelled freely in all directions, without in the least suffering from fever or other ill-effects of the climate, precisely during the period in which the "practical authority" of the "Morning Post" asserts that "no military operations are possible;" and I may further draw attention to the single fact, without deeming it necessary to appeal to other authorities, that the great battle in 1542, fought by the Emperor Claudius and the Portuguese followers of Don Christopher da Gama against Ahmed Granye, King of Adel, which freed Christian Abyssinia from the Mahometan yoke, took place on the 30th of the month of August.

I beg leave to annex a cutting from the "Times" newspaper of the 18th instant, containing a letter to the Editor, in which I gave an account of that battle, together with other particulars, which I would hope may be interesting and useful to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 789.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received July 30.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, July 29, 1867.*

IN the debate in the House of Commons on the 26th instant, on the subject of the unfortunate captives of Abyssinia, and the means of liberating them, your Lordship is reported to have said that "it would be madness to throw a British army into an unknown country, in a tropical climate, far from the sea, very far from its resources and its supplies, without a full previous investigation as to the means of moving, feeding, and keeping them in health;" and you added that you had been in communication with the War Department and with the India Office as to the best means of making such investigation, and that the Secretary of State for India had telegraphed to the Indian Government to send over an officer or officers, on whom they could rely, to meet Colonel Merewether at Aden, and with him to examine minutely the points on which information is necessary.

I would respectfully beg leave to offer my services to aid in such investigation and examination. In doing so, I do not seek to interfere in any way with the direction of affairs, but simply to afford assistance, through my local knowledge and experience, to those to whom the direction may be confided. There are questions relating to the routes, especially as regards the physical geography of the country, which is perhaps more important than anything else as influencing the march of an army, supplies, currency, &c., upon which points I believe I possess exclusive information.

My peculiar qualifications for the task are (I am willing to believe) apparent from the communications I have had the honour to make at various times to your Lordship's Department. But, lest I should be considered as not acting with proper respect were I not to lay before your Lordship some specific testimonials in my favour, I presume to submit to your consideration an extract from a Memorandum communicated by Major-

General Sir William Coghlan to the Secretary of State for India, on December 16, 1864, in which that distinguished officer spoke of me in the following eulogistic terms :—

"It appears to me that in England, or I might say in all Europe, there is only one man who has a very intimate personal knowledge of Abyssinia. The learned Dr. Beke stands quite alone. He is at once a profound scholar, an enterprising traveller, a skilful geographer. His journey to Shoa, his long residence in Abyssinia, his accurate map of the country, and his numerous letters on its commerce and politics, all testify to the ability and the zeal which he has for more than a quarter of a century past applied to questions which have excited only a faint interest in England, and which now owe their importance as much to the accident which has befallen our Consul as to any concern which the authorities and the public here take in the remote region on which an accomplished author and traveller has expended so much learning and energy."

Of the map of Abyssinia alluded to by Sir William Coghlan, I beg leave to inclose a copy for your Lordship's inspection, with the request that it may be returned to me, as it is the only copy I have for my own use.

It may not be strictly in order to refer to an anonymous writer, even in a journal of such eminence as the "Athenæum;" but a review of my work, "The British Captives in Abyssinia," which appeared in that periodical on March 30th last, displays such general knowledge of the subject, that the judgment of its author cannot but be accepted as possessing considerable weight. His words, which are scarcely less flattering than those of Sir William Coghlan, are :—

"There is no man living whose opinion on the subject is so valuable as that of Dr. Beke, seeing that he has himself travelled throughout the length and breadth of Abyssinia with safety and success, has had large experience in dealing with Eastern Chieftains, and is a thorough Englishman, having the welfare of his country at heart; not one who, under the cloak of cosmopolitan sympathies, disguises indifference to all but self."

It is proper for me to state that the name of the author of the review in the "Athenæum" is entirely unknown to me.

Should your Lordship think fit to avail yourself of my humble services, I am prepared to leave England for Aden at a moment's notice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 790.

Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 31, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th instant respecting Abyssinia.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 791.

Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 1, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th instant,† requesting to be allowed to accompany the expedition which is about to be sent to explore the coast of Abyssinia, and inclosing a map of that country; and I am to inform you that the arrangements connected with the expedition in question are exclusively under the control of the India Office.

The map of Abyssinia is returned to you herewith.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* No. 738.

† No. 789.

No. 792.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 6.)**

My Lord, *Aden, July* 20, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to report that I left Massowah on the 12th instant. On the way down Kaheita was visited, to see if it would be a suitable place for landing troops should such be required. It is on the African Coast about 16 miles west 16° north from Perim—a perfectly open roadstead, with the village some three miles inland. Very often during the cold season there is a very heavy swell in this part of the Red Sea, making landing most difficult. The place is, therefore, useless.

2. Passing out of the Red Sea, course was made for Tajoora; keeping close to the coast a good view was obtained of Obokh. Nothing appeared to have changed from what was seen when I visited it in May 1866. The French evidently have no intention of utilising their purchase, at present at all events.

3. At Tajoora I was visited by the Sultan of the place, of the Dunkelli Tribe, and questioned him as to the state of the country. He informed me that another part of the Dunkelli Tribe—the most powerful portion—living at and around Aussa, had taken offence, and, coming down last year in great force, had captured and burnt Tajoora. The greater number of the inhabitants had fled to Zeylah on the opposite side of the gulf; only about 100 men remained with him, and they were day and night in fear of attack by the Aussa branch again. They kept boats ready to carry them all off, in case of the enemy appearing. He described the interior as in great disorder, the Somalies plundering on the Abyssinian road from the south side, while the Dankellis and other tribes made it unsafe by their attacks from the north. The heat at Tajoora was very great—as bad, if not worse, at night than by day. It is surrounded on all sides but one by volcanic hills, tumbled about in the most confused manner, which, baked by the sun in the day, give out intense heat at night. Though we were two miles out at sea, the wind came off the shore as from a glowing furnace. Tajoora was left about midnight of the 14th, and Aden reached by the evening of the 15th.

4. During my absence a messenger had arrived from the King of Shoa, Menelek, who escaped at confinement in the Magdala prison two years ago, and has since established himself in Shoa independent of the Abyssinian Emperor. The messenger brought two letters; one he said was for me, the other he did not know for whom, but believed for England. I opened them both, had them translated, and forward the translations herewith. The second proved to be for Her Majesty the Queen, and I inclose the original in Amharic. I regret to say it got much soiled in transit, from being over-carefully preserved by the carrier.

5. Of the presents alluded to only a portion have come safely. The messenger, who was accompanied from Aukolur by the son of Aboo Bekr, Chief of Zeylah, was attacked by a large body of Eisah Somalies when about four days' journey from Zeylah. The articles which have arrived have been packed and will be forwarded to your Lordship by this mail, viâ Southampton. They consist of a silver-mounted sword, a silver-mounted shield, a dress worn by an Abyssinian lady, a piece of cloth of Abyssinian manufacture, three skins mounted to wear as kind of over-coats.

6. The messenger will remain here until an answer or instructions are received from your Lordship. He expressed himself willing to proceed to England, but I informed him that was quite unnecessary.

7. It is supposed that on the death of Theodorus, Menelek will aspire to be Emperor of Abyssinia. But though he is perhaps the most powerful of all the opponents to the present Emperor, it is not at all certain that he has sufficient influence or capacity to establish himself master. From all accounts that I have been able to collect, his arrangements since he managed to return to his own country have been good, and it is almost the only part of Abyssinia that may be said to be in any state of order or in which any good form of government exists.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Inclosure 1 in No. 792.

*Sultan Negoos Menelek to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

(Translation.)

SENT by Sultan Negoos Menelek. May it arrive at the ruler of Aden!

We salute you. We are well. After having been eleven years absent from our country, we returned, and took our father's place: when this happened I was much pleased and rejoiced; you also rejoiced on our account.

We have sent our servant: he has some work; when it is finished please send him back without fail. For God's sake do what he desires. His name is Mekeb. We have sent with him presents for you, a horse and a mule.

(Signed) NEGOOSA NEGESH MENELEK.

Inclosure 2 in No. 792.

*Sultan Negoos Menelek to Queen Victoria.**

(Translation.)

IN the name of the Trinity.

From Negoos Menelek to Queen Victoria, many salutations. I thank God greatly that I am well. After having been absent from my country for eleven years, I became possessor of my father's place. Since I returned to my country I and all my relations are well, thanks be to God. And I ask you how you are, and your relations and countrymen. I send this letter to you for friendship's sake, in like manner as there was friendship between you and my grandfather Sahela Selassie. I hope your people will come to me in like manner as they came to my grandfather; but I heard afterwards that your people did not leave this country bearing love. At that time I was a child—I don't know, but I heard so, and hearing so I got very angry; and the reason of your people leaving in anger was, that my grandfather heard long before, that a people coming from a long distance would come and take his country, Shoa. But how can this be the case when you sent in friendship guns and muskets?

The councillors of my father advised him to keep you away from our country, and your people left the country in anger; if my grandfather had not behaved so badly towards your people, our country would not have passed from our hands; if you had been our friend, our country had not become bad; your flag was in our country. I hope my country will not again be lost. My country is your country, and your country is my country. Become my friends, and do not think that I will behave like my grandfather, and forget all my grandfather's acts, and make me like your son for God's sake—for God s sake. Two bangries (silver), one necklace, one jambia (silver), one frontlet (silver), one shield (silver mountings), two spears, one bangrie, one skin (lion) called gissilla, one skin (leopard), one tobe, a shirt, and a tobe. I have told you I am well; you also tell me how you are. Send my people quickly, in the month of Miskerram.

The things I have sent are as a remembrance that you may know that my father's country has come into my hands.

No. 793.

Acting Consul-General Reade to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 8.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, July 29, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship a despatch I have this day received from the Political Resident at Aden, which is dated Massowah. the 11th instant, and communicates intelligence from the prisoners at Magdala up to the 12th of the past month.

Your Lordship will perceive that the position of the prisoners at Magdala has not undergone any particular change since the last reports, except in as far as it may be affected by the extension of the rebellion, and the closing up of all communication between that place and Debra Tabor. It was, however, on the other hand, rumoured that Mr. Flad's party, including the ladies, had again been placed in chains.

A report to the same effect communicated to me two days ago by my Italian

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

colleague as having reached him from a Roman Catholic Missionary in the upper country, inclines me to fear that the intelligence is substantially correct.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. F. READE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 793.

Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(*Received August* 8.)*

My Lord, *Massowah, July* 11, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to report, for your information, that I arrived here last night, and found letters from Magdala up to the 12th ultimo. All the captives were well up to that date, and, as will appear from the intelligence, in a more favourable position than when they last wrote. But I regret to say that the situation of the Europeans at Debra Tabor, including Mrs. Rosenthal, Mrs. Flad, and their children, was most perilous.

2. M. Munzinger had returned the evening before from his trip viâ Amphilla, bringing very valuable information, which I shall have the honour of submitting in a separate despatch.

3. Mr. Rassam writes first on the 20th May: "I have very little to say by this opportunity, as the inclosed note from Mr. Flad to me will give you all the news. The messenger I had dispatched to the Emperor at the end of last month has not yet returned, and I am most anxiously awaiting intelligence about his reception after the late interview of His Majesty with Mr. Flad. I hope and trust we shall be allowed to spend next winter (the rainy season) in our present position; otherwise I fear we shall have to endure great privations and discomforts during the rains. It is quite evident now, after what has transpired at the interview of Mr. Flad with the Emperor, that there will be no release without coercive measures. Our friend is always ready to trump-up grievances."

4. The letter alluded to by Mr. Rassam as having been received from Mr. Flad is as follows, and dated Debra-Tabor, 3rd May: "I suppose you will already have heard of my arrival at this place. Allow me to give you in a few lines a short description of my interview with the King. After I had been placed on Laa Amba, in Tchelja, for a few days, the King sent three officers to me as an escort to him. His camp was at that time in Arbia, in Dimbra. Early on the 26th April I arrived in the camp. His Majesty was absent in Dagoosa. At 3 in the afternoon he came back from that place; about 4 o'clock he sent for me. The reception was a very cold one. I handed over to him the Queen's letter, and afterwards delivered the others I had from Colonel Merewether, Dr. Beke, and the relations of Consul Cameron, Messrs. Stern, Rosenthal, and Kerans. In giving him the letter of Colonel Merewether, I informed His Majesty that that gentleman had sent him a good telescope (I told His Majesty you—Mr. Rassam—had written for it to England, and that it was expressly made for far distances) as a present sign of friendship. Immediately His Majesty asked me to send for the telescope, as he was very anxious to see it. In a hurry it was taken out of the box, and I was ordered to put it in order, and to show him the right point to suit his eyes. As I had not seen the telescope before, it took me some time to put in order, and I was unable to find out at once the right place by which His Majesty could see. The King got angry and tired of it, and sent the whole in his tent, saying, 'We will try it to-morrow; but I know it is not a good telescope—it is not sent to me for the good.'† After this I was ordered to sit down again. All the bystanders were sent away, and I was questioned. 'Have you seen the Queen?' To which I answered in the affirmative, saying that I had a very gracious reception from Her Majesty the Queen, who gave me a message to His Majesty by word of mouth. 'What is it? what is it?' he asked. Her Majesty the Queen said, 'If you see the King tell him from me that, if he does not at once send out of his country all those he has detained so long against their will, he has no right to expect any further friendship from me.' This royal message he made me repeat from time to time. After a pause he said, 'I asked from them a sign of friendship, which is refused to me. If they wish to come and fight let them come. By the power of God I will meet them, and call me a woman if I do not treat them.' He was then going on for a long time boasting, when I said that if he had not sent Mr. Rassam, &c., to Magdala, the workmen and machinery would have been sent to his Royal Court at once, and that Her Majesty the Queen then had sincere intentions to

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† The objection to the telescope was a mere pretence. He wanted something to vent his anger upon, and selected this as the earliest. The glass is a most excellent one, and was sent to him as an earnest of what there was in store for him if he complied with Her Majesty's demands. But he did not intend to release the captives, so showed rage.

form a friendly alliance between England and Abyssinia, and that still now Colone Merewether was at Massowah with the workmen waiting for His Majesty's orders at what place he would decide to exchange the prisoners for the workmen and the machinery. I also assured His Majesty that England at present had no intention of going to war with him, but desired to settle the affair amicably; but if he should refuse to comply with Her Majesty's request England would be compelled to go to war with him, and not only this, but as England hitherto protected Abyssinia against the Turks, 'I fear,' I said, 'that if England should go to war with your Majesty France will do the same, and Egypt will be only too glad to make the most of the opportunity for her. Up till now England prevented Egypt from making war on Abyssinia, but as soon as your Majesty forces England to go to war it could not prevent Egypt from doing the same, and so you will bring a war on yourself not only with one but with three powerful nations.' On the 27th I was called to give up the baggage I had brought. First, I separated the things I had bought for his own 2,000 dollars. I wished to read and give to him the account, but he refused it. 'By my death don't tell me how you spent the money and what you paid for the articles.' Secondly, I presented to His Majesty the presents sent by the relations of Captain Cameron, Mr. Stern, &c., through Dr. Beke, consisting of a flour mill, double-barrelled breechloading gun, four revolvers in cases, files, a case of saws, and some carpenters' tools. I was asked who it was who sent these things. I said, the relations of Captain Cameron, &c., as His Majesty would find in the letter I brought from them. After that I had to separate your (Mr. Rassam's), and the things of the Gaffat people and my own. Everything was counted and remained near the royal tent. The 1,000 dollars* I had brought with me for you (Mr. R.) I had to count to one of his officers. After this I was sent to my own tent. Friday and Saturday I received nothing to eat and nothing to drink from him. On Sunday, Easter-day, he gave me ten cows, but of these one only was sent, and killed for my servants. On Sunday evening the telescope was sent to me again. I put it all right, and went with one of his officers to him. The officer who had tried it himself, and found it excellent, told him that it was a good telescope, and he could see distinctly through it. 'Let me see it,' he said; 'I cannot see anything, it is not sent to me for the good: it is the same story as it was some years ago, with that carpet sent me by Pasha Falaya (Mr. Speedy) through Kerans; but I chained the bearer of that carpet by the power of God. This man who sends me the telescope wishes only to vex me; he wishes to tell me, Though you are a king, and I send you an excellent telescope, you cannot see anything through it.' I did all I could to assure him that Colonel Merewether was not a man for such an act, and that time will show that it was a good telescope. I asked him to send it to his European workmen. At last he got so angry that I found it better to keep silent. On Monday morning he sent to me that I should prepare myself, as he wished to send me to my family at Debra Tabor. Before I took leave, I said that I had still some more to tell him. He took me alone with him into his tent. I informed him of the French proceedings with Menelek in Shoa;† of the friendly messages between Wagshum Gobezie and the Roman Missionaries at Massowah; of the message Wagshum Gobezie sent to M. Munzinger to make him a friend with England,‡ but that the offer had been refused, telling Wagshum that only King Theodorus could be acknowledged, all others being rebels to him, and no communication could be held with them. I informed him that Egypt was just now building a new fort at Kufil, and that they had about twenty-five steamers in the Red Sea. I tried to convince him that it would be to his own and his country's gain to yield to Her Majesty's proposals, and by releasing and sending away the captives to make England his friend. To all this he replied, 'Don't fear. The victory comes from the Lord. I trust in God, and He will help me, &c., &c.' I was astonished that he listened to all I told so very coolly and indifferently. At last he said, 'I don't fear. I don't trust in my power; I trust in God, who says, if you have faith as a mustard grain, you can remove mountains. You don't know all. I know that if I had not chained Mr. Rassam, the workmen would never have been sent to me. Not only at the time of Captain Cameron, when they gave no answer to my letter, in which I had asked for friendship, I found out they were not my sincere friends; but I saw it even at the time of Plowden and Bell—

* Four thousand dollars were given to Mr. Flad to deliver to Mr. Rassam, but he very wisely left 3,000 dollars with Mr. Eipperle at Kedaref. These are safe, though, from the stoppage of communication between Magdala and Kedaref, I am afraid will be of no use to Mr. Rassam. Had Mr. Flad taken them on they would have been appropriated also.

† This refers to an application made by Menelek to the French Consul in Aden in 1865 for cannon and muskets to enable him to act against Theodorus. These, at my recommendation, the French Consul very properly refused.

‡ M. Munzinger informed me that Wagshum Gobazie sent a letter to him last November; but as he had learned from me that no communication with the rebels could be allowed as long as treating with Theodorus was going on, he simply sent a verbal message to Wagshum Gobezie, saying that no letter could be recieved except through King Theodorus.

those were my friends; and out of friendship to them, I treated them well. I leave it to the Lord, and He shall decide between us when we are fighting in the battle-field.' He gave me an order for 500 dollars, of which I received 120, and said I should go to Debra Tabor, where he would come soon. Your (Mr. Rassam's) articles, he said, Mr. Waldmeier would know what to do with them. I was to give them to him. Mr. Waldmeier put them in the King's Treasury. The few things I had packed with my own I send you now. The 1,000 dollars, the King said, as the road was very unsafe to Magdala he would keep, and send you an order for the amount to Magdala as soon as he returned to Debra Tabor; for that reason he wished Nona Mahomed (Mr. Rassam's messenger) to wait here. Our present position here (Debra Tabor) is a very bad one; we are all anxious for the days, and what they will bring us when His Majesty comes back from Dembea, which is now utterly ruined."

5. Mr. Flad further writes to Mr. Rassam from Debra Tabor on the 16th May:—

"We are in pretty good health, but sickness is all round us. His Majesty has been here for one night. He was very kind to every one. Your letter and messengers have been received kindly by His Majesty. He ordered them to await here his arrival, as he wished on his return to send you your stores, and an order for the 1,000 dollars. We hear that his camp is near the Bepp. When His Majesty was here he inquired about the telescope. Mr. Waldmeier said that he and Mr. Sander had tried it and found it to be a good and excellent telescope. It has been proved before the Ras that it is far better than all the telescopes the King possesses. About His Majesty's intentions we know nothing. Mr. Sander is very ill. Messrs. Brandeis, Essler, and Schiller are also suffering from illness. His Majesty has not sent an answer to the Queen's letter. He had only written a letter to me, saying—'If they give me a sign of friendship, bring it by the way of Matemma, and after I have seen it I will release Mr. Rassam and Consul Cameron, and send them to their country.' I forwarded the letter to Colonel Merewether."*

Mr. Flad managed the interview exceeding well. His firm manner and straightforward speaking would appear to have had good effect; for though the King was evidently angry at the workpeople and presents not having accompanied Mr. Flad, he had not directly resented it on that gentleman, as all at Debra Tabor and elsewhere in Abyssinia expected he would. How long this effect would last remains to be seen.

6. On the 3rd of June Mr. Rassam writes:—

"You will be sorry to hear that we shall soon be hard up for money, because we find it impossible to obtain any from Matemma in consequence of the general anarchy between this and Tchelga. The 1,000 dollars brought by Flad he made over to the Emperor, and it is doubtful whether we shall ever receive them. Six messengers whom I sent to Matemma a few days ago for the purpose of bringing us money thence have been seized by the rebels within a day's journey of Debra Tabor, and we have not yet heard what has been their fate. Unfortunately they were travelling in company with Royal messengers, and a cavalry officer who had decamped from the Royal camp at Debra Tabor the evening before met them the next morning and pounced upon them. Our messengers had six mules with them, but of course they were all plundered by the new rebel. I have now only 800 dollars left, and as I have to support every European, and all their servants, I fear we shall be in distress during the fast-approaching rainy season unless we receive relief before the middle of next month. It is reported that all the Europeans at Debra Tabor have been chained, not excepting Flad, and that even the ladies are now imprisoned. The disturbances on the road between us and them have so increased lately that it is quite impossible for us to get any authentic news. I have tried no less than three times to communicate, but without success. The last communication I had from Flad was dated 16th ultimo."

7. Again he writes on the 12th June: "On the 3rd instant, I wrote to you and informed you of our difficulty in money matters in consequence of the total blocking up of the roads between this and Debra Tabor, and between the latter place and Matemma. Of the 4,000 dollars you kindly sent to Matemma I have only received 100 through Flad. Besides those 4,000 dollars, I have 1,000 with the Gaffat people, which, I fear, will be as difficult to procure as the 1,000 which His Majesty received from Mr. Flad on my account. The country could never be in a worse state of anarchy. There is no district in Abyssinia now which has not revolted against the enemy of mankind, and His Majesty is sinking into insignificance daily, though his vicious propensities are on the increase. The rebels between this and Debra Tabor have so determined to stop all communication between the Royal camp and this fortress that they do not allow a soul to pass through. Consequently, we cannot obtain authentic information regarding the fate of the Gaffat Europeans and Mr. Flad, but the rumour of their all being in chains has not been contradicted. We

* Already transmitted.

have now no less than nine servants missing, but whether they are killed or detained by the rebels of Begemder it is difficult to know. The last we heard of them was that they had been stripped naked by the rebels; but as it is rumoured that my head servant Oubie managed to save the letter I gave him for Mr. Eipperlie to send me some money, I have great hopes that he has gone on thither with my other servants. However, it is quite problematical whether he will ever be able to return with any money, especially as we now hear that even Tchelga has rebelled against the power of Theodorus. His Majesty has now got so weak that it would be quite impossible for him to put down the rebellion; and his troops have now so little faith in what he says, that whenever they have a good opportunity large companies desert. Yesterday a great Ras passed below this mountain on his way to his own country with all the Yajoo part of the Royal troops who had abandoned their Royal Master, as hundreds of others are doing. It is also reported that all the soldiers of Dawrout and Dalanta (the only remaining districts in this vicinity which have kept faithful to the Emperor) have returned to their country without taking leave.

"I shall not be surprised if we yet leave Abyssinia without the aid of war from without, for, I believe, if our friend fall—which fall must be quite sudden—the Prelate will be of great help to us; and I am certain he will try his best to see us safe out of the country as soon as possible.

"We have had an epidemic on this mountain, something like typhus fever, but happily it has not reached our part of the fortress. It has played great havoc among the native prisoners, of whom it has carried off a great number. Some great men have met their death; and one of the chiefs who guards the prisoners has died of the malady. The last time I heard from Debra Tabor I was told that a good deal of sickness pervaded the Royal camp. As soon as I hear of important news from the camp I will despatch a special messenger to Massowah with it. In the meantime I shall be looking with anxiety for what any day may bring forth after this."

8. From a letter of Dr. Blanc's dated 19th May, I extract the following. After stating that he had heard from Mr. Flad that the latter had sent messengers* to the coast with a full account of his meeting with the King, Dr. Blanc says:—

"Flad's reception was cool enough, such as we expected. I believe that the firm tone used by Flad had a good effect, and made His Majesty reflect: at all events, he has not come to any conclusion as yet, though more than three weeks have elapsed. No one can form the slightest conjecture as to what course he will follow. The storm may burst upon us any minute, and no human sagacity can foretell what the future has in store for us. When we wrote a fortnight ago we were all much out of spirits; we expected great things, and, instead, found to our great disappointment that the old system of letters and messengers was still going on. We knew how the one was useless, and feared with reason that the arrival of Flad would bring on a crisis. We were not wrong in both cases. The Europeans of Gaffat have already suffered; what is in reserve for us, we are not as yet able to know,—still I believe it is nothing good. Now that the matter is beyond remedy, we take a much more quiet view of the state of affairs, awaiting the smash with the greatness coolness, and bid him do his worst. The King is a rare fish. The misfortune of your telescope and the way he received your present were quite amusing. But no one must be deceived. He vented his rage on the telescope, because he was obliged to abuse or criticise, and preferred doing so on a subject which might find credit in the eyes of his people. I am certain that after the failure of the first day he had made up his mind not to see through it; his answer, so full of meekness, is one also that would please his troops; they are superstitious and ignorant, and until the eleventh hour he will speak of battles, and the God that gives the victory, all the time well-determined not to try the venture. He has been recruiting his army on quite a new principle. As I said before, he could not carry even the few things Flad would bring unless he went himself, or sent the greater part of his remaining troops. He did not trust to the latter course, so went himself, and not to waste time he plundered at the same time Degassa and Dembea so utterly that these two provinces are now no better than the Sahara. This heroic deed accomplished he told the peasantry, 'You have now no home, no food, no cattle. I have not done it. God did it. Follow me; and I will take you where you will find plenty to eat, cattle in abundance, and punish those who have brought God's anger on you.' He issued the same proclamation to the peasantry of those portions of Begemder he had lately plundered. All these starving and homeless creatures were only too glad to accept, and have come *en masse* to swell the unwarlike host of the former conqueror. With these he may march from place to place, carrying them with him like a cloud of locusts to destroy the very land, but will not venture in any of those parts of Abyssinia where any serious resistance may be offered; he is well aware that this new levy can only sack and plunder, and

* These have not arrived, and I fear must have been intercepted.

that to the few gunmen left he must trust to resist the numerous armed rebels that surround him on all sides. Still he can do a great deal of mischief. The future of Abyssinia, deprived of such a large amount of its husbandmen, is pitiable enough, and must soon again feel all the horrors of severe famine and its accompanying epidemics."

9. With the above letters came a fragment in cipher, giving the following important intelligence:—"King of Shoa wrote Bishop some days ago, saying,—'If you like, I will come and take Magdala.' Bishop answered, 'Come, by all means.'"

Not much faith was placed in this offer by the captives; but there may be something intended by Menelek, as he has sent a messenger with a letter for me to Aden. There is no doubt he could do it if he liked, and I believe there are many inside the fortress who would gladly aid his entrance. Successfully carried out, it would undoubtedly be the death-knell of Theodorus.

10. I annex copy, *in extenso*, of another letter from Dr. Blanc, containing information which I think will prove interesting to you as elucidatory of the state of affairs up to the latest date. On the whole the accounts, as far as regards those confined on Amba Magdala, may be considered far more satisfactory than the previous ones up to the 3rd of May. The King's power is at the very lowest; the best of his troops have left him; and he has now merely a rabble of starving creatures who will only remain with him as long as he can give them unopposed plunder. The communication between Magdala and Debra Tabor being completely closed, shows the rebels must be there in force, and sufficiently so, it is to be hoped, to prevent the King falling back on the former should he desire to do so. It is most probable, though, that he will cling to Debra Tabor, and his end come upon him suddenly there. Sudden it will be if it does come. There is a prophecy that he will meet his death in the Abyssinian month commencing on the 10th of June and ending on the 10th of July. In previous years he has secluded himself during that month; this year he cannot; and the prophecy may prompt the deed which will rid the country of one who has "wearied" it by his late atrocities.

11. Such a result is, however, uncertain, and it is impossible to say what may happen. I therefore still earnestly hope that I may be at an early date favoured with your Lordship's instructions to proclaim to the King and all Abyssinia, should a suitable opportunity offer, that Her Majesty will exact some retribution from King Theodorus should the lives of any British subjects in his country be lost through any acts of his, and that he will be held personally responsible with his throne and life in this matter. I trust that such instructions may be awaiting my return to Aden; for, used at the proper moment, such a measure would almost certainly be conclusive.

12. The position of the Europeans at Debra Tabor—consisting of Mr. Flad, the lay missionaries, the hunters of His Imperial Highness the Duke of Saxe Coburg, the two Frenchmen Bardel and Mackerer, and the two poor ladies Mrs. Flad and Mrs. Rosenthal, with their children—is undoubtedly most critical, and we can only hope for the best for them.

13. Of the three messengers sent up separately on the 16th of May with Lord Stanley's letter to the King, two, who went by Hamazeyn and Tigré, were, I regret to say, seized by the rebel Chief Tishoo Gobezye in Woggara. He took the letters from them with his own hand, but as yet I have no information what he did with them. The third messenger went via Lasta; and as nothing has been heard of him since, he has probably been more successful.

14. A thousand dollars go by these return messengers to Mr. Rassam. They are trustworthy people, and should reach early next month. More money will be sent a month hence should it appear advisable so to do.

15. The heat here is very great, proving the utter impossibility of bringing troops at this season of the year. Even if they were only detained a few days in it, perfect prostration and disorganization would be risked.

16. Captain Fletcher, R.A., and Lieutenant Abbott, Assistant Resident, accompanied me on duty to assist.

I have, &c.
Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 793.

*Dr. Blanc to Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, June* 10, 1867.

NOTHING is more unsatisfactory than to write on vague rumours and untruthful reports; this time it cannot be helped, as we have but little correct information of what has latterly taken place. Since we wrote last no messenger, either private or Imperial, has reached this place. The Begemder people have at last risen *en masse*. The unheard-of cruelty and the utter ruin brought upon them by their Sovereign have at last roused the spirit of this enslaved race. It takes a long time to stir up the African blood; but when once they shake off their fetters, it is difficult to bring them back to their former apathy. The impossibility at present to communicate from the camp to this amba, is no doubt the explanation of our present *statu quo*. The King may have decreed our deaths; even that we would know nothing about; no messenger can possibly bring any order, good or bad; and unless the King comes himself, at least as far as the Djeddah, there is but little chance of hearing either from him or from the Europeans.

On the 27th last month, about a dozen of our servants were proceeding to Debra Tabor, some of them in order to bring here some of the kit Flad brought with him, others *en route* to Matemma, when they were suddenly pounced upon by a party of horsemen, commanded by one of the King's officers Zalula, who had only a few hours before deserted with the troops under his command, all Begemder men, well armed, and pretty well mounted. They had reached Gatuide, a district about five hours' march south-east of Debra Tabor, a short time before our servants; the peasantry, since a long time mutinous, hailed the arrival of their countrymen with joy, unburied their lances and swords, and declared themselves in open rebellion. As you may well expect, all was at the time excitement and turmoil; our servants evidently arrived at a very unlucky moment. Generally prisoners' servants are allowed to pass everywhere unmolested; but on this occasion they were seized and plundered of everything they had,—those only who had old trousers were allowed to keep them. We lost on this occasion six mules, and a good amount of other property. I came in for my share, as my servant was one of the number; my loss came to about 52 dollars, no trifle for people hard up as we now are. Some of the servants were left to the tender mercies of the peasants, who did not allow them either to proceed or return, through fear that they would reveal their whereabouts; others, with the King's messenger Lig Lee (a relation of Ras Kidano Mariam, the now imprisoned former Chief of this amba) were taken away by Dejajmatch Gullder, to the low country between Clucheo and Zebit.

They started in the evening. Soon after dark, whilst crossing a small stream, a certain confusion arose amongst the horses and mules; Lig Lee, and two of our servants who were with him, took advantage of this to make their escape. Lig Lee managed to evade all pursuit, but our servants were not so fortunate; they were overtaken, and soundly flogged, to make them confess the road Lee had taken. They could give no information, as they knew nothing themselves, having lost one another in the darkness. Some of the soldiers proposed killing them on the spot; others to let them go. After another thrashing, this milder counsel fortunately prevailed. Bruised, naked, half-starved, they managed to reached the amba, and gave us the tale of their adventures. Another servant, belonging to Mr. Stern, escaped soon after the plunder; he was the first to bring us the news. Though both our servants and Mr. Stern's agree as to the plunder and the principal events, they are at variance regarding the fate of the other servants. Mr. Stern's servant says that all are still in the houses of the peasants; the others, that they have most probably been killed, as they met on the road the bodies of five or six of the servants of Aito Dargen, brother of Sahala Selassie, late King of Shoa, a prisoner on this amba. I believe, however, this report to be unfounded, as, if correct, it would no doubt have been confirmed before this. The servants also disagree as to the fate of the Europeans. Mr. Stern's servant states that he heard that they had all been chained, and two days afterwards Flad and his wife had shared the same fate, and that all their property, as well as all that Flad had brought with him, had been confiscated. The others report, that on the King's return to Debra Tabor, he called the Europeans before him, and told them not to be afraid, that he was their friend, and that they must take care of the guns; that the King had ordered a strong hedge to be built around their tents and huts, and that they were strictly-watched prisoners without chains, as ourselves at Zegay. It is quite impossible to say which of the two accounts is the correct one, probably both; first, the hedge, afterwards the chains, is a common practice of the King's.

The newly-levied army of peasants did not last long; as soon as they saw the King on his way back to Begemder, expecting little profit, more likely hard blows, they melted

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

away in the most wonderful manner. Desertions amongst the soldiers are on the increase. Zalula, with his men, left the camp in the open day; many more would have followed if the King himself had not arrived on the spot. He forbade all pursuit, being afraid that most likely many of the prisoners would join the runaways. He placed a line of musketeers around his devoted soidiers, with orders to shoot any one who ventured beyond the camp limits.

In the Province of Begemder there cannot be less than 20,000 men in open rebellion, partly peasants, the majority runaway soldiers, all anxious to rid themselves of the tyrant who destroys their homes. Luckily for the King they are not acting together; all the petty Chiefs are jealous of one another; it requires a brave and clever man of good family to unite all these small independent rebels with a strong united force. Should this take place, the King would be done for. I know enough of the natural jealousy of the natives to feel assured that this will not take place, as yet at least. The King, with his small band of ruffians, will be allowed to go on plundering, torturing and burning wholesale fashion, not so much through his own strength, as through the want of unison amongst the rebels. The last we heard of the King himself is that he has been plundering several of the districts in the neighbourhood of Debra Tabor, Ormra Gadea, and Amuz Waroz.

On the 19th of last month, everybody at Debra Tabor was surprised by the sudden and unexpected return of the King. It appears that he had heard that the rebels had assembled in large numbers at Ormra Gadea, about five hours' march from Debra Tabor. The rebels believing that the King was still in Dembea, had intended to make a sudden attack on Ras Tagu, and release the prisoners, the majority of them being Begemder men. The King came on them so unexpectedly that the rebels at first believed that Ras Tagu had come to attack them, but the great number of silver shields and ornamented saddles made them suspect the King himself; all their courage vanished, the Chiefs gave the example of the "Sauve qui peut;" being better mounted than their followers they managed to escape; the peasants threw down their arms and begged for pardon. Need I say how useless their appeal for mercy and that to a man they were all slaughtered on the spot; at Amuz Waroz, however, it is said he met with a semi-defeat, his plundering parties were very roughly handled by the peasantry. The King managed to seize some of these brave men, and to prove to them his ardent love had them burnt alive. Little reliance can, however, be placed on any of these reports. Abyssinians are famous for their power of invention, and, according to your friendship or enmity to the powers that be, come with the most contradictory tales. Still these facts are pretty certain: The King is losing ground daily, he is worse and worse, and more cruel, as he feels more disappointed; thirdly, he can still hang on a long time unless the peasants and runaway soldiers unite under a common leader. All Abyssinians are superstitious, all believe in the horoscope, astrologers, &c. A popular belief exists, in which the King himself shares, that his death is to happen in the month of Saumî, and at no other time; Saumî begins on the 6th June, and ends on the 6th July: during that period the King seldom ventures abroad, never engages in any war or plundering expedition. Well, a few days ago, on his return from a good lift of cattle, he heard at night a proclamation being made at a short distance. Peasants follow the soldiers who have plundered them, and present themselves before the King and sometimes succeed in getting back part of their property; it is true that they often get the stick for their trouble, but Abyssinians will run great risks where their property is concerned. The King inquired, and was told that a man was addressing the peasants who had followed their stolen cattle. What does he say? asked the King. He says that the month of Saumî being near, his countrymen must not fear, as on that month your Majesty will die and they will get back their property. The King called some of his officers and told them, As far as I am concerned, I must submit to what destiny keeps in reserve for me, and the fellow's prophecy concerning myself can still turn out to be correct; but to prove to him that he is only an impostor, have all the cows and mules killed immediately. Should I die, at all events he will still be wrong and not get back the cows. Ten thousand cows and mules were shot at once, to the utter mortification and disappointment of the prophet, the peasantry, and the soldiers. Here on our amba we are pretty quiet; we have had our house repaired for the rainy season, and have made a small garden in front: we endeavour to banish as much as we possibly can all idea of prison and uncertain future. Sickness is considerable on the mountain. Cholera seems to have broken out in the common jail last month, together with a kind of typhoid fever, or fever. I have not heard of any cases of cholera lately, but many deaths take place daily from the other disease. One of the Council died from it a few days ago. Samuel had a bad fever the other day, but is now all right again; none of us are very sick, none quite well. Rassam has been suffering from headache and diarrhœa, Prideaux from a slight bilious attack, Stern and Rosenthal

are pretty well, Cameron more or less unwell, myself bronchitis and neuralgia: evidently the season is not a healthy one; it is due, I believe, to the great heat of the sun compared to the temperature of the houses, a difference of nearly 40 degrees. The vaccine matter you kindly sent up at last succeeds, and for the last three weeks no end of little niggers have enjoyed the privilege of preservation. It is quite astonishing how soon the people accepted it, [?] bringing their children: the only difficulty is to obtain the lymph from the previously vaccinated children; they have an idea that opening the pustule will cause the death of the child. As none luckily have died, it is to be hoped that the prejudice will before long disappear. The Gallas are the great terror of the Amhara garrison of this amba; they are consequently very fond, when they have a chance, to delude themselves and make others believe in their courage and desire to fight them. A few days ago 100 or so made their appearance; at once, one of the chiefs with several hundred musketeers made a sortie and returned in triumph, having gone in the opposite direction to where the Gallas had been seen. It is rumoured that the two rival Queens will shortly come to blows. Waikiti is still in Shoa, and is supposed to be backed by the ruler of that kingdom, whilst Wastiak (the looking glass) is the favourite of the Galla chiefs, and is supposed to be at the head of 20,000 warriors. A short time ago she made her appearance in the neighbourhood, but seems to have gone in the direction of Godjam. Our servants are evidently frightened, not one will go to Gaffat; one named Worku agreed to go a few days ago, but ran away, it is said, to Tigré, taking our letters with him. The news that the Europeans had been chained hands and feet, that all their servants have either run away or are in chains, the state of the road, have quite damped their courage. To-day, a messenger from this mountain sent by the chiefs is going to try his luck, and until now we have not been able to find a servant to accompany him. It is a pity that every messenger did not bring with him a good revolver with ammunition; with a dozen of them we might have long ago made our escape, but without arms it is not possible.

There is nothing to be gained by lamentations, no good crying over spilt milk; so the less said the better. The Irishman drags the tail of his coat, and requests any gentleman to be kind enough to tread upon it; but the British lion lets his be trampled upon with the greatest meekness. Let us hope that he will soon awake from his lethargic slumber, and give a few healthy roars in this country. I have written, I am afraid, a rather absurd letter, but it is not so much my fault as the difficulty to obtain anything like correct information. However, here is a summary of our position,—a telegram you can send to the "Times:"—Europeans probably chained hands and feet, deprived of their servants, all communication stopped; no possibility of obtaining anything from either Gaffat or Matemma. Epidemic on the mountain, rainy season close at hand, hardly any money, supplies very scarce and dear, and every minute in expectation of something bad from our friend the King. We expect every day to hear that Dalanta has rebelled; the Gallas come no more to bring supplies. Should Dahoute go over to the rebels, Dalanta would shortly follow; then, indeed, it will be hard to get even the most common supplies of the country. Add to this that our friend the King may come here shortly to add to our comfort, what can we do? Like Cassandra, our warnings have been laughed at; all that is left to us is to hope and trust for the best.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) H. BLANC.

P.S.—Samuel begs to send you his respectful compliments. He has just told me that he and Waldemeier, Gandar [?], and Moritz Hall were not chained; all the rest hands and feet.

Yesterday afternoon, some of the servants staying in Dalanta to look after some mules, came with a brother of the Chief to inform us that all the Yagoo troops under Ras Adilon had left the camp, and had passed through Dalanta, *en route* to their native country: that the soldiers from Dalanta, Nadelo, and Dahoute had also abandoned the King, and returned to their respective provinces. Apart from the musketeers, few men remain near the King. The Yagoo formed his best cavalry, and were considered always as his bravest and most faithful troops. Before long Yagoo, Dalanta, and Dahoute will place themselves under the protection (nominal) of the Wakshum. The cause of this great desertion is due to the cruelty latterly practised by the King. Some five or six days ago he executed about 100 of his chiefs on mere trivial pretexts. After the audience, Ras Adilon consulted with his chiefs; they decided to leave the King in the open day, then and there, and fight if attacked. They departed unmolested. The King is falling so rapidly that there is much fear that he will come here before the rainy season sets in. A conspiracy is said to have been discovered on this amba. One of the seven chiefs, by

name Hailo, made arrangement to open the gates to the Gallas. It may be true, or simply an invention of some "friend" of his. Tchelga has gone over to the rebels. No hope, if any before, of anything coming viâ Matemma.

H. B.

No. 794.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(*Received August* 12.)*

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, August* 10, 1867.

THE intelligence just received from Abyssinia is such as will doubtless lead Her Majesty's Government to decide not merely in breaking off now and for ever all friendly relations with the usurper of the Throne of Abyssinia, but also on adopting for the future, with respect to that country, the policy recommended to your Lordship's predecessor in office in my letter of April 4, 1848. Had that policy been adopted at the time, there would have been no room for the misfortunes and disgrace to which England has been subjected during the last few years, and the extreme complications which exist at the present moment.

We have paid a heavy penalty for our interference in Abyssinian politics; but there are still the means of setting ourselves right; and if only we can extricate ourselves from the existing difficulty without loss of honour, we may have done for ever with this mischievous and unprofitable interference, and may thenceforth trust to the establishment and development of commercial relations with that most important part of Eastern Africa, for a compensation, and more than compensation, for all the losses we have sustained, without appealing to any higher motives in this utilitarian age.

As long as Her Majesty's Government continued to recognize the whole of Abyssinia as one State, under the sovereignty of the Emperor Theodore, there was an incompatibility in regarding the rulers of the several provinces otherwise than as rebels. But now that he is disowned, the state of things reverts to what it was in 1848, when I wrote—"Each provincial Governor in Abyssinia (and the King of Shoa is *de jure* nothing more) is *de facto* an independent Sovereign; and the true policy of England clearly is to recognize each separately within his own dominions."

In my letter of April 27, 1866,† to the Earl of Malmesbury, printed in the Blue Book on Abyssinia, just presented to Parliament (pages 143 and 145), I enumerated and described the principal chiefs in arms against Theodore. Without adverting to the claims set up by some of them to replace Theodore as the ruler of the whole empire, it will be sufficient on the present occasion to refer to the offer to undertake the liberation of the British captives, which I understand has been made by two of the insurgent Princes; namely, the virtually independent rulers of the provinces or kingdoms of Tigré and Shoa, Waagshun Gobazye and Negus Ménilek.

Should such offers really have been made, I would respectfully submit to your Lordship that they should both be accepted without hesitation, and without loss of time, and that arms and ammunition, a subsidy of money, and, if necessary, a small body of soldiers, should be supplied to them both.

In making this suggestion I would, however, express the fervent hope that Her Majesty's Government may not be induced by any consideration to relax for one single moment in their own exertions to effect the liberation of the captives by the employment of a British force, independently of all local aid whatever. To relinquish this duty to the agency of any native chief or chiefs, however friendly disposed, would have the appearance of being unable, through weakness, to accomplish the task ourselves, and would assuredly be so understood; and it could not fail to be attended with most injurious results, not merely as regards the loss of prestige throughout the East, but not improbably also as affecting the fate of the prisoners themselves, who might after all be detained by their liberators, with a view to obtain better terms for their ransom, whereby a fresh and yet more indelible stain would be cast on the honour of the British nation.

It might be unnecessary to march a British army as far as Magdala, or indeed any where into the interior of Abyssinia. It would be sufficient, at all events in the first instance, to land the troops and let them ascend to the edge of the table-land, and there encamp, in expectation of the arrival of the captives, but ready to march forwards should it become necessary to do so. Should happily the force have to return in consequence of the delivery up of the captives, the moral effect of such a demonstration would be incalculable.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† Inclosure 4 in No. 717.

In such a case, the spot which I would suggest for the encampment of a British force is Senafé, which place is alluded to in my letter to your Lordship of April 12th last* (Blue Book, page 140), and in Colonel Merewether's despatch of January 15th last† (Blue Book, page 100, where the name is printed Tenafee).

Before proceeding to submit to your Lordship the reasons for this suggestion, I would beg leave to premise that in my said letter of April 12, I mentioned that on my journey to Abyssinia last year, I discovered that the River Hadas falls into Annesley Bay, near the site of the ancient city and port of Adulis, thus establishing the correctness of the opinion long entertained by me that in this direction we should look for the key of Abyssinia. I ought to have added in my said letter that at the same time I discovered that the Hadas is joined by a considerable stream named Aligaddi, which was crossed by my wife and myself on May 7, 1866, near where the former turns off westwards to the sea, between Adulis and its modern representative Zulla. Two months previously, on our journey up country, we had crossed a sandy and stoney valley without a drop of water in it; but at the moment of our return a sudden fall of rain in the upper country had rendered it a muddy torrent twenty-five or thirty yards in breadth, and about two feet deep, the water, as we were informed on the spot, coming from sixteen villages in Hamaseyn, as far north as Asmara.

In the map accompanying M. Munzinger's work "Ostapi Kavesche Studien," published at Schaffhausen, in 1864, the Hadas is not marked as turning off eastwards to the sea, whilst all the watercourses to the north of 15° north latitude, between Kaiyakher and Asmara, are laid down as running northwards instead of southwards; and as this map was constructed by the well-known geographer and cartographer, Dr. Petermann, it must be taken to have been based on the latest and best authorities. Consequently, on my arrival at Massowah, I thought it only right to point out to M. Munzinger these errors in his map.

In the map accompanying my own work, "The British Captives in Abyssinia," published in December, 1866, I introduced for the first time these important changes in the hydrography of this portion of the Abyssinian coast, which, notwithstanding its vicinity to Massowah, had remained so imperfectly known. Of course the Aligaddi could only be laid down approximately, as I had only seen it when I crossed it.

I am happy to learn from M. Munzinger's sketch of the road to Kayakhor, dated March 1, 1867, contained in the Blue Book, page 136, that these my corrections are confirmed and adopted by him. As is only natural, the Aligaddi, written Alygwadey by M. Munzinger, in whose former map Alligidi is a village on a water-course running down to Massowah, is much more correctly laid down in my map of December 1866, as resulting from an actual survey of its whole course. It is not a little singular that exactly twenty-three years before I thus crossed the Aligaddi in the lower part of its course, namely, on May 4, 1843, I crossed the upper portion of the same stream near Kaiyakher; but from its extraordinary winding course in that vicinity, as is so clearly shown in M. Munzinger's present sketch, I fell into the error of other travellers of supposing it to be the head of the Midinbar, a water-course marked in my map of 1844, contained in the 17th volume of the "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society," as running towards Massowah. In briefly noting the road I then took, I said ("Journal," p. 64), "After quitting the table land of Seráwe at Gura, I descended from Kaiyakher to Massowah by a gradual and easy road, well watered, and occupying two days and a-half very gentle travelling. This is so much superior to the steep way up the Taranta, that it is now generally chosen by Europeans; and another important advantage is gained by taking it, which is, that Arkiko is avoided, together with all the annoyances and extortions to which the traveller used there to be exposed."

Whilst now fully confirming what I thus said three and twenty years ago as to the superiority of the road by Kaiyakher over that of the steep mountain pass of Taranta, it is necessary to explain that this must not be understood as meaning that the former road is preferable to that up the valley of the Hadas altogether.

This explanation is imperatively called for, not merely by what I have stated above, but likewise by an observation of Colonel Merewether, in his despatch to your Lordship of January 15, 1867 (Blue Book, page 100). When speaking of the roads into the interior from Annesley Bay, that accomplished officer says: "There are two, one to Halai, taken by Dr. Beke last year, and which is not a good one for laden camels. The other, the old caravan road from Adoolis to Tenafe (Senafe). This last has not been frequented of late years, and is overgrown with jungle, but it was much used when Adoolis was a Greek colony, and I cannot help thinking, will, on further enquiry, prove as good as any, at any rate well worth examination hereafter, should entrance into Abyssinia become necessary."

* No. 717. † No. 700.

On what is thus said I would beg permission to remark, that the better opinion would seem to be that the original Greek caravan road, as described in Arrian's "Periplius of the Red Sea," was from Adulis, up the valley of the Hadás, to Coloë, of which Halai (the same name slightly corrupted) is the modern representative; and that it was not till the Greek merchants were forced to abandon Adulis and retire to the island of Orine (the mountainous), now Dissee (or properly Dissyet, meaning, in Amharic, the island), at the entrance of Annesley Bay, that they adopted the road from Orine, along the western shore of the gulf, to Buré, and thence ascended to the edge of the table land by the pass of Senafé, where they founded a city, of which the ruins still exist.

However this may be, it is not to be supposed that the road up the valley of the Hadás is not a good one for loaded camels, because of the steep ascent which is usually chosen by merchants and travellers, by the pass of Taranta to Diksa, or by that of Shumfaito (taken by myself) to Halai. As far up the valley as the foot of those passes, loaded camels go with perfect ease. There the baggage has to be taken from the camels and placed on bullocks sent down from the villages on the table land. But if, instead of this, the direct course of the valley southwards be followed as far as Tokonda, about ten miles beyond the foot of Taranta, there is a road which appears to be quite equal to that by Kaiyakher, as it ascends gradually, and is said to be practicable for camels all the way up, if only a few rocks were removed out of the way.

The road by Buré to Senafé appears to be equally good, if not even better; the height of the latter place is equal to that of Halai, 8,400 feet above the ocean, but the ascent is much more gradual. By Buré and Senafé is the direct road from the north end of the great salt plain of Harko, which supplies Abyssinia with its present currency, pieces of rock salt; and a military force stationed at Senafé would have the command of the pass and the control of the supply of this valuable and essential commodity.

When Mr. Salt was in Abyssinia he was very inquisitive about this road by Buré, which his friend Ras Walda Selásye told him was the best approach from the coast, it being not more than four days' journey from Antalo, and well supplied with water and cattle. I have not been able to find any definite result of Mr. Salt's enquiries; but it is not unlikely that some record of the same is preserved in the archives of the Foreign Office, in connection with the negotiations entered into about forty years ago for the cession by Dedjatj Sabagadis to the English of a portion of the Abyssinian coast at Hanfila (Amphilla), and again about ten years after for the cession of Haréna (Arena), in Howakil Bay, by Sabagadis's son, Shum-Aga'mye Kassai.

As is shown in the enclosed sketch, the distance of Senafé in a direct line from the sea at Harkiko (Arkeeko) is 53 geographical miles; at Haréna, 48 miles; at Zulla, 33 miles; and at the south-west end of Annesley Bay only 30 miles. So that, if necessary, a communication might be kept up with the sea-coast in more than one direction. On the road from Zulla, as I know from personal investigation, there is water all the way down to close to the sea-shore. Zulla is about four miles from the sea. About a mile nearer the coast I saw wells sunk in the sandy channel of the Hadas, which afford a copious and constant supply of water; and when it is considered that this channel drains the joint basins of the Hadas and the Aligaddi, of which the area may be roughly estimated at 1,000 square miles, it is manifest that far more water must be accumulated in its bed than in that of any watercourse in its vicinity; and hence we can understand why the Greeks should have founded their emporium Adulis at this particular spot, which has however been described, on high authority, as being without water.

The desirability of getting away as quickly as possible, not merely from the intensely hot shores of the Red Sea, but likewise from the intermediate districts, 2,000, 3,000, or even 4,000 feet high, to the bracing climate of the tableland, at upwards of 8,000 feet above the ocean, does not require to be insisted on.

I cannot say from actual experience how long it would take to go from the coast to Senafé, but the time could not be but very short. My wife and I, in travelling on mule-back the whole way between Arkeeko and Halai, employed twenty-five hours in going and twenty hours and three-quarters in coming back, of which five hours were consumed in the ascent and three hours and a-half in the descent of Mount Shumfaito. From near Halai, at a perpendicular height of a mile and a-half above the ocean, we perceived the sea beyond Arkeeko and heard the firing of cannon at Massowah. The distance from Zulla to Senafé is much less than from Arkeeko to Halai, and the road being much better could he travelled in less time. From the south end of Annesley Bay to Buré the distance and time would be considerably reduced. From Senafé I have no doubt the sea is visible, both at the end of Annesley Bay and at Haréna.

A very great advantage of Senafé, by whatever road it may be reached, is that it is much further south than any other point at which the tableland may be reached, it being

only 200 miles from Magdala in a direct line; and it would therefore effect a considerable saving both of distance and of time in the march of an army on that place by the "upper road," recommended in my letter of April 12th (Blue Book, p. 140),* and mentioned in my letter of July 26th† (which I am sorry to perceive has not been included in the papers laid before Parliament), as having been that taken by Don Christopher da Gama's brave little army in 1542.

I am glad to see that Dr. Blanc's testimony is in favour of this upper road. He says (Blue Book, p. 103), "The road through Talanta to Lasta and Socota is said to be much easier than the one from Debra Tabor, a large portion of the intervening tract between here and the Tacazze being a low plain." Only in speaking of a "low" plain, Dr. Blanc falls into the common error of travellers in Abyssinia, pointed out by me in page 147 of the Blue Book, who not unnaturally imagine that the plains must be below and the mountains above! A glance at the map will convince the most cursory observer that a region in which are the sources of rivers running east, west, north, and south, cannot possibly be a "low" plain. Besides, I have myself been at Socota and beyond, and can therefore speak with authority as to the nature of the country.

Before concluding. I would take the liberty of again referring to the alternative plan suggested in my letter of April 12th last‡ (Blue Book, p. 141), of landing a small force at Rahéita, to proceed directly to Magdala by force marches, and carry it by a *coup de main*. In addition to what is there stated, I would beg leave to suggest that it might be well for a vessel of war to remain off Rahéita, and to retain on board some of the chiefs of that place and of the tribes on that road as hostages for the good treatment of the expedition; though at the same time, there needs not to be fear of treachery on their parts, if well paid. In addition to what is said in the Blue Book on this subject, I would beg leave to refer to my Report of December 17th, 1864,§ communicated by Sir William Coghlan to the India Office, with his Memorandum of that date, printed in page 146; and in doing so, it is proper I should remark that in consequence of the concluding paragraph of that Memorandum being placed within inverted commas, it might seem as if the words of that paragraph were mine, whereas they are Sir William's own closing observation.

Of my Report of December 17th, 1864,‖ no portion whatever is given in the Blue Book, which is to be regretted; because it so plainly points out the physical objections to the road between Tadjourrah and Shoa, and the advantages of that between Rahéita and Magdala.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 795.

Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 13, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant,¶ and to inform you that all arrangements connected with inquiries in regard to Abyssinia, are made under the orders of the India Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 796.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 13.)**

My Lord, *Aden, July* 26, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that further letters have been received from Magdala, brought by native boat from Massowah, but only of one week's later date than those transmitted by last mail. The news now received is up to the 19th June, and is much of the same tenor as the last. The captives were all well, but owing to the money forwarded by Mr. Flad unfortunately not having reached them, they were getting into great difficulties rom want of it: 1,000 dollars were sent up on the 12th instant, and 600 will be dispatched by these return messengers. The communication with the King's camp was still completely closed.

2. Mr. Rassam writes that "since the last note I received from Mr. Flad, dated the 16th ultimo (May), no communication has been received by me or any one else from Debra Tabor. I have tried no less than eight times to communicate, but my messengers

* No. 717. † No. 788. ‡ No. 717. § See Inclosures 2 and 3 in No. 717.
‖ See Inclosure 3 in No. 717. ¶ No. 794. ** Laid before Parliament, 1867.

were either seized or frightened back by the rebels of Begemder. I have, however, tried again through the assistance of the Bishop, and I hope that this time my messenger will succeed in reaching Debra Tabor and communicating with Mr. Flad. As no messenger has reached this place for the last thirty days, of course all reports we hear cannot be depended upon, and we are obliged to receive all intelligence with caution.

"There is one thing certain, however, that the rebellion has now become quite general, which is proved by the fact that the communication has been lately stopped between the Royal camp and this garrison. It is rumoured that the Emperor has killed all the prisoners; but whether the Europeans have also forfeited their lives or not, it is more than I can say. I might write to you two or three sheets full of different rumours, but it would be only wasting time, and might deceive you and Government; so I hope you will be cautious as to what you hear from Abyssinia. I shall try my best to get out with my party; but whether I shall succeed to do so without assistance from without, it remains to be seen. I fear not. There is no Chief in the Royal camp now of any importance; they have either decamped or got imprisoned. The Bishop and Samuel are of great service to me, and indeed there is no Chief near me who would not do his best to see us safely out of the country if he could only have a little pluck. I only wish I had money to enable me to be more hospitable. It is quite impossible for His Majesty to send us our things now. If he is obliged to take refuge in this mountain, he will have scarcely people enough to carry his own things hither. Rumour says that he is quite besieged at Debra Tabor, and will not be able to pass through the rebels if he wants to come here. My opinion is, that he can any day come through the enemies' country with a handful of followers, as I believe his very figure frightens thousands of rebels. Why, he has now rebels around him consisting mostly of his own runaway soldiers, who more than double his own followers, and yet they are afraid to attack him, though every day he imprisons and kills their relations."

3. Dr. Blanc, in a letter (copy of which is appended), gives a fuller account of the state of affairs; also of the chances respecting themselves. As regards the prospects of release in the event of King Theodorus's death I consider them more favourable than Dr. Blanc does, for I believe that any of the minor rebels would be glad to give their help for the reward they feel sure they would obtain, and the more powerful Chiefs would hope to gain future advantages by showing their desire to be on different terms with the British Government to those King Theodorus has maintained, and they would consider the best means of effecting that would be the liberation and safe-conduct of the captives to the coast. Believing that such result might be brought about in the event of the King's death, I would again beg most strongly to urge the desirability of a firm and unmistakeable tone being adopted towards King Theodorus; that the course I have so frequently recommended may be adopted, viz., a distinct announcement from Her Majesty's Government that friendly relations would no longer be continued with a Sovereign who had shown such faithlessness, and acted in a manner so contrary to the recognised laws existing among civilized nations, and that he would be held responsible for the safety of those he so unjustifiably held in confinement. Until this announcement is made I am precluded from communicating in any way with the powerful Chiefs who are entirely opposed to the King, and whose good offices might now be of inestimable value. The King may be killed by this time, or he may hold on for months; whichever proves to be the case I would most earnestly plead that a decided course be at once proclaimed, so that all Abyssinia may know Her Majesty's Government had hitherto acted only with a desire of maintaining friendly relations with the Sovereign of Abyssinia, that the very great forbearance which had been shown arose from the supposition that the King's actions were owing to a misunderstanding, not to an intentional insult; but now that it was clear that the latter was designedly offered, full retribution would be promptly executed.

Dr. Blanc's present letter, as well as all previous correspondence, will have shown that in Abyssinia the opinion has become very general that England is its inferior in power, and cannot resent insult. I regret to say that that opinion is not confined to Abyssinia; and though not so openly expressed, there is undoubtedly amongst the people in the neighbourhood here, a feeling of surprise at the long-continued endurance of the British Government, a feeling which has been repeatedly expressed. The only fear I have is, that the decision of Her Majesty's Government may be too late; that before it is announced, the King may be removed from the scene, and the effect be in a measure lost. It is this that makes me so urgent.

4. No letter has been received from Mr. Flad. The bearer of the third copy of your Lordship's letter* to the King reached Debra Tabor safely on the 13th of June. He remained eleven days before he was dismissed, and then returned, in twenty-two days, to

* Inclosure in No. 72.

Massowah without any answer. He delivered the despatch into the King's own hand. The King took it, and saluted it by conveying it to his head; a few words were addressed to the messenger. He was then told to retire, with an order that he was to receive two dollars at once, and daily two sheep and five breads. After ten days he was dismissed, at the same time with several other messengers from Tigré. No letter was delivered to him, and when he purposed asking the King about it, he was prevented doing so by the bystanders. This is the man's own statement. It is evident the King has no intention of sending any reply, or of acting in accordance with the demand contained in your Lordship's letter. Such being the case, and there being the chance of the King succeeding in maintaining himself in power till October (when the season for operations commences), I would also earnestly urge the advisability of immediate measures being adopted so prepare a force to be despatched from India, for the purpose of punishing him and releasing the captives.

5. I have received a Government telegram viâ Egypt, from Bombay, desiring my immediate presence there. I should have left accordingly by the steamer which will pass this about the 1st proximo, but I think it most desirable that I should take down with me M. Munzinger's report of his journey from Amphilla, which has not yet been furnished, as also that another fortnight's intelligence from Magdala may be received. I have therefore decided on sending up Her Majesty's ship "Dalhousie" to Massowah first, and on her return proceed in her to Bombay, arriving there about the 14th proximo.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 796.

*Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, June* 18, 1867.

COMMUNICATIONS between this amba and the King's camp are still suspended; no servants will venture on the road; no reward will induce them to risk falling into the hands of the numerous rebels who infest the road, or, should they be fortunate enough to escape that danger, to penetrate into the tiger's den, where life is held so cheap. However, a priest who arrived here a few days ago, having accompanied Ras Adilon in his flight, states that 650 Wadela men were executed on the day previous to the desertion of the Yadja people. A follower of the King accused them before His Majesty of intending to run away. The Wadela Chiefs denied the charge; the accuser brought nine witnesses. The case heard, the Wadela people were all conducted into an inclosure prepared beforehand; logs of wood were tied round their necks; their arms and legs bound with leather thongs; helpless and innocent they fell easy victims to the executioner's sword. One of the Chiefs, whilst awaiting his turn, shouted at the top of his voice, so that the King, who was at no great distance, might hear himself the dying words of his former staunch follower: "Oh, King, you murder me in cold blood; is that the reward of my long and faithful services? I am going to die, but, before long, will meet you before a just judge, where I and my innocent companions will become your accusers. Believe a dying man; you will not survive us more than a few days."

It appears that these words made a temporary impression on the superstitious and cowardly mind of the despot. He has since then, it is rumoured, turned over a new leaf, is constantly in prayers, calls himself the "slave of Christ," and will probably build a church to obtain absolution from the priests, and wash off, if possible, from his conscience, the innocent blood in which he daily carouses.

The wife and child of Zalula fared even worse than the Wadela people. This poor woman and her child were wrapped up in wax cloths and burned like candles. Their cries were heard for many miles around, and increased, if possible, the hatred and desire of vengeance of the already exasperated peasantry.

In the history of the world there is no parallel case. It is true tyrants and despots have wantonly spilt human blood, great conquerors have overrun large tracts of country: out of 3,000,000 inhabitants he has destroyed more than a third by war, famine, and murder. Nero, Attila, Tamerlane, were lambs when compared to Theodorus. No man was ever so false, so treacherous—no man held friendly or family ties so cheap. His own son, Ras Meshisha, is in chains. Ras Taga, whom he left in charge of his camp during his late expedition, was chained; a reward for his fidelity on the return of his ungrateful master. We are not therefore astonished when we daily hear of fresh desertions. Basha Koulitch, commanding, it is said, a thousand gunmen, deserted with the greater part of his men;

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Ras Engeddah, the favourite, has, it is reported, abandoned his master, and will raise the Agans; Lij Abitou, also a favourite, son of the Chief of Belissa, has followed the same example, and with his father has raised the standard of rebellion in that already disaffected province. The Agan and Damat troops have gone over to Godjam. It is difficult to make out the number of men that will remain near him; they cannot be many—of spearmen hardly any, of gunmen about 1,000; but how long will even these few remain it is impossible to say. We hear but of murders, either in the King's camp or in the rebel ranks; blood is poured daily on both sides in such excess that, with the impending famine and consequent epidemics, the fate of this unfortunate people is fearful indeed to contemplate. The want of unison amongst the rebels is as great as ever; the Godjam people were plundered of even their clothes by the Begemder peasantry; and if Basha Koulitch had not shown a brave front, he and his gunmen would have shared the same fate. Since some time it was expected that the Province of Dahoute would on the first opportunity throw off its allegiance to the King: when Ras Adilon left, numbers of the Dahoute and Dalanta soldiers accompanied him; as soon as they reached their respective provinces, they called upon the peasantry to arm, defend their homes, and have nothing more to do with the murderer of their relatives. The appeal was responded to on all sides; the Chiefs formerly appointed by the King were seized, chained, and their property divided amongst the rebels. In Dahoute 1,000 cows belonging to the King, 150 horses and mules, the property of soldiers of this mountain, as well as large flocks of sheep and stores of grain, have been confiscated by the rebels; they sent word to the Chiefs of this amba informing them of what they had done, and bidding them defiance: "Come and take your property, if you dare," was the conclusion of their message.

It is said that the Dahoute people are destroying the passes up the Djeddah, and have called upon the Gallas Queen to protect them. Dalanta has also declared its independence. A message was also sent to this amba to inform the Chiefs of the decision. They were told, If you have money come and buy, we will not molest you. However, the Chiefs here are not so confident; so they answered, Come and sell. They would be afraid even should the Dalanta people keep to their word that the soldiers would avail themselves of the opportunity to return no more. One of my servants was in Dahoute on the first rising of the peasantry; he was seized and plundered of some sheep he was bringing, and of some money he had with him. They fortunately allowed him to return hither. Some of the King's messengers were also seized at the same time, and sent back naked, minus mules, arms, &c. I also lost on the same occasion 10 dollars worth of honey that the former Chief had purchased for me and kept in the house until I should send mules.

Concerning the Europeans at Debra Tabor we know very little. None of our servants have returned, nor do I believe ever will. The Chiefs of this mountain are quite at their wits' end to know how to communicate with their master. They speak of sending a beggar, and of secreting a letter in his trousers. I do not think that they will succeed; the peasants are up to all their tricks, and to avoid being imposed upon, murder every one, man, woman, or child, who attempts to cross their country. It is said that some time ago the King called Makerer before him, and asked him why he had attempted to run away after he had of his own free will applied to be admitted into his service? Makerer tried by soft answers to turn away the King's wrath; he succeeded so far that the King, who had already cocked his pistol to shoot him, put it aside and told him to "go away, another day I will kill you." Should he carry his threat and wish into execution the fate of all the Europeans in this country would be sealed; he has done every kind of injury to the white men except spilling their blood: but the day he throws away all restraint, and gives full licence to his passions, he knows then that he is done for—that blood calls for blood, and that he has not even pity to expect; he will, therefore, before seeking for safety in flight, murder every white man in his power. It is also said that Bardel is chained with the five he betrayed. The King saw him one day coming out of Flad's tent. He called him and said, "You go to Flad to tell him my secrets, you tell me theirs; you want to make mischief—chain him."

From all accounts I do not believe that any of the Gaffat people are in chains, only prisoners. Mr. Rosenthal is very anxious about his wife. A few days ago a plan struck him which might be used should anything sudden happen to the King. It was to communicate through the Bishop with the priests of a church near Debra Tabor held in great sanctity by the natives. The priests were to be offered a good reward should they in time of danger be willing and able to carry off Mrs. R. to their sanctuary. The Bishop answered: "You must know very little of the customs of this country, and less of our friend in particular, if you believe that he will either run away or be killed before he has previously made a larger wilderness around him, and first murdered all prisoners, white men included."

A few months ago, the King still had a few provinces left—small remains of his former conquests, still he had something; now he cannot even call himself Monarch of all he surveys when he gazes on the surrounding plain from the summit of Debra Tabor. The camp and Magdala constitute his kingdom—ruffians and executioners his army. The small power he still retains he owes to the terror of his name and to the cowardice, weakness, and jealousy of his enemies. What will he now probably do? Is he so far gone that we need not fear him? Would his fall insure our deliverance?—are questions of such importance to us that you will no doubt excuse me for troubling you a little with them. What he will do can only be surmised. According to the general belief of the natives, friends and foes, only two courses are open to him:—one to strengthen his position at Debra Tabor, erect a strong palisade around his camp, and spend there the rainy season at least; he has plenty of food, more than for a-year; the peasants will at last get tired of being continually in arms, many will return to their villages, and the King taking advantage of any want of vigilance on their part, will pounce upon them, kill, burn, and plunder. He has no fear of being attacked. Abyssinians do not like palisades, especially when a Theodorus is behind.

Secondly. He can come here; but unless weaker than we believe, he will not give up his present position in the open field, however bad it is, for the desperate one of shutting himself up. He cannot bring here the grain he has since several months accumulated at Debra Tabor. Here the supply on hand will not last more than four or five months for the garrison alone, and Magdala, it must be remembered, is now in the centre of the rebel country. He would also have to bury or destroy his guns, to kill all the prisoners, and finally to fight his way through the rebels and peasants in arms, who occupy all his country between his camp and Magdala. As far as he is personally concerned, he would probably not see a rebel. His name alone is worth 10,000 men, but they would attack his army, already so reduced, on all sides. Many would run away, so that should he even reach Magdala, he would only have a few hundred men left. He is always in time to resort to such extremities; for the present he will most probably fortify himself, and wait where he is. Some day, when he finds himself abandoned by all but the few outlaws and ruffians that will by necessity always remain with him, he will, with their help, murder prisoners and others, mount his horse, and quietly canter to this amba. At any time he can come here, unless the mountain is invested by a strong force. The Abyssinians are such cowards that, mounted on a donkey, with not even a stick in his hand, he would frighten away the whole rebel host of Begemder, Dahonte, and Dalanta: the bravest could not stand the mere mention that Theodorus is coming. But if he can always come, even as a fugitive, will the Chiefs and soldiers of this mountain remain faithful to him and keep their trust? I have not the slightest hesitation in saying, Yes—as far, at least, as the Chiefs are concerned, and they will take care to humbug the soldiers. They will some of them run away (a few have already done so), especially if food becomes scarce; but there will always remain enough to keep both amba and prisoners in safe custody. All the Chiefs—Ras, Ritwaddads, Dejajmatche, &c., with the exception of Hailo, who is of good family (and lately, as I told you, suspected of intriguing with the Gallas, false accusation prompted by jealousy)—are a low set of bragging fellows, formerly servants or peasants—all men of the King's making, without any standing or stake in the country. With the King's fall they lose all, even the empty title he has conferred on them. They have no private means; all are well known as the King's worst creatures, and would stand but a poor chance at the hands of either rebels or peasants.

All Abyssinia has abandoned the King, the whole land now curses and abhors him, his best and oldest friends positively loathe his presence, and fly to distant provinces to save their lives. But at Magdala he is still the God they adore, the being they worship, by whom they live, with whom they will die. They still speak of bright days to come, of fresh victories, of new laurels to be gathered. Only wait a little, said one of them the other day; the Lion will again come forth and crush his enemies. The King is not a fool; he well knew what he was about when he confided the guardianship of his treasure, his wives, his bishop, his great prisoners, to the Magdala Chiefs; he may remain away for months, he may leave the garrison to starve or fight for mere existence: still unless mighty events do not [*sic*] take place, he will always be able, before he becomes an outcast, to visit a last time his faithful Magdala, and mix with the blood of the murdered Gallas, that of all the great men of Abyssinia, and that of his English guests of that race he so intensely hates. To the second query, therefore, one can boldly reply, We may hope for the best, but fear the worst.

The most important question of all is, would his fall insure our deliverance? No! Let us admit for an instant that the King is dead; that this mounain has after all proved unfaithful or been compelled to surrender; that the King, though still alive, has run away

to Konara or the Shankalla country, in a word that the King is out of the way, a mere thing of the past: even then our position would be quite as critical,—more so, if possible, than it actually is.

All Abyssinians are bad, all cruel, all treacherous; all they require is the opportunity. Every one has in him the qualities of a Theodorus; give one power, he will as a rule soon show himself in his true colours. The first thing he will do will be to cut off the hands and feet of even his best friend if he believes that at any time he may prove "dangerous." They follow to a nicety in that respect the maxim that "prevention is better than cure." It is natural that an Abyssinian prefers shortening his friend's extremities to undergoing that process himself. Every one seeks to be the best man, and will often struggle hard to obtain the supremacy. Should the King be no more, every petty Chief will be in arms; hundreds of pretenders will be on all sides, and until one is strong enough to make himself respected and impose his will on others there will be no safety for life or property. Abyssinia will be deluged with blood, and anarchy reign supreme over the whole land. Before Abyssinia again accepts a ruler it would necessarily take some time; during that period what would become of the Europeans in this country? All those in Debra Tabor, if spared by the King, would be murdered by the peasantry; their chance is poor indeed. If the mountain remained in the hands of the present Chiefs, the prospect of reward, not to call it ransom, might induce them to treat us well; but should the master disappear there is very little likelihood that the soldiers would sustain a siege, no doubt before long the amba would pass into other hands. Let us admit the best and suppose that Menelek or Wakshum are the conquerors; what assurance have we that they will allow us to leave the country, even that we would not be worse treated than we are now? None at all! Since many years Abyssinians have been accustomed to see Europeans bullied and in chains: nothing bad came from it; on the contrary, presents ("tribute" as it is here called) have repeatedly been sent from England. Why should not another man do the very thing that succeeded so well with the King?

The Bishop would interfere, would be of great use? Alas! vain thought! Where is his influence? Has he not also been a prisoner for some years; he is as helpless as ourselves? What have Menelek, Wakshum, Gobezi, or others done for him? Did they ever make the slightest effort in his favour? Is not now the time most propitious—the King weak, country all in rebellion? What do they do? They humbug him and nothing else. Trust not in bishops! If a big man gets hold of us and he is not of the worst kind, he will perhaps treat us well; but under some excuse, friendship perhaps, keep near him the valuable strangers his predecessor prized so high. If we fall into the hands of the Gallas or of some small chieftain it is hard to say what might happen; or even what the soldiers of this amba may do when once the fear of the King is lost. Speculating on the future would only be ridiculous: only one thing appears pretty certain, that, King or no King, without help from home there is no getting out. What I fear the most is that some of those men who, without reasoning, jump at conclusions, will come forward and say: "The King is going down; before long he will be out of the way, and then the captives will get out." Error!!! The King is alive and kicking, and there is no saying how long he may yet last; he is falling, but not fallen. We are in the midst of an ignorant people, hundreds of miles from the nearest seaport: it would be folly to leave us to our own resources. It is certainly very gratifying for us to see the treacherous host who so unjustly keeps us in chains falling; it would be more so to hear he is no more, and that whatever we may have to fear, we are no more in the power of the most bloodthirsty man the world ever produced. But even should this fortunate event take place, let no one be deceived—we would be as far as ever from deliverance and liberty. Then, as well as now, nothing but an army can release the captives. A few thousand men would do it. Europeans have lost caste in this country, and unless convinced by evidence the prestige of the white man is gone for ever. An interesting campaign! A fine country annexed to the British Crown! Innocent men released from their fetters! Are these not enough to stimulate to action? Why wait? Why have waited so long?

I hope you will be able to read my letter; the ink is most abominable, I regret to say of my own making—not very creditable, as you see, to my scientific attainments.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) H. BLANC, M.D.

No. 797.

Lord Clinton to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.—(*Received August* 19.)*

Sir, *India Office, August* 17, 1867.

I AM directed by Sir Stafford Northcote to transmit to you, for the information of Lord Stanley, a copy of a letter which the Secretary of State for India has addressed to the Governor of Bombay on the subject of the proposed measures for the release of the Abyssinian captives; and I am to observe that Sir Stafford Northcote, in proposing to place the whole conduct of the operations in the hands of Sir Robert Napier, has had no intention to offer any slight to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether, of the value of whose services as Political Agent, he is very sensible. But it appeared to him that great advantage would result from placing the conduct of the political negotiations in the hands of the chief military authority. Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether's rank is not sufficient to entitle him to take the supreme command of such a force as it is in contemplation to despatch for the release of the prisoners. It is proposed, therefore, to place the entire expedition under the charge of an officer of such high rank, as to set at rest all questions of authority, and of such eminent services as cannot fail to be universally recognized.

Sir Stafford Northcote trusts that the Commander-in-chief of the expedition will have the advantage of Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether's services in such capacity as may be found most advantageous.

I am, &c.
(Signed) CLINTON.

No. 798.

*Lord Stanley to Sultan Negoos Menelek.**

Foreign Office, August 19, 1867.

To His Highness Sultan Negoos Menelek.

I AM commanded by the Queen my Sovereign to inform your Highness that she has received the letter which you lately sent to her through Colonel Merewether, her Agent at Aden.† That officer also forwarded to Her Majesty the presents which accompanied your letter, and for which she thanks you.

The Queen is well pleased to hear of your return to your country, and of the good health of yourself and your family. She desires me to assure you that she entertains the most friendly feelings towards yourself and your country, and that it is her sincere wish that the territories over which you have been called to rule may continue in peace and advance in prosperity. Her Majesty requests you to accept, also, her best wishes for your uninterrupted health and welfare, and so she recommends you to the protection of the Almighty.

Your sincere friend,
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 799.

*Lord Stanley to Acting Consul-General Reade.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 19, 1867.

THE accounts which have passed through your hands, as transmitted to this Office by Colonel Merewether, will have prepared you for learning that Her Majesty's Government, after having exhausted all peaceful efforts to induce King Theodore to release the European prisoners detained by him in captivity in Abyssinia, have resolved, should it be found necessary, to use force for that purpose; but as that country can only conveniently be reached by passing through Egyptian territory, I have to instruct you to apply to the Egyptian Government for permission to do so, and for such facilities as they may be able to afford to the officers who will be entrusted with the superintendence and management of the expedition, and with the purchase of supplies and of means of land transport.

Certain functionaries have already been ordered to Massowah for that purpose; and you will request that the Egyptian authorities at that port may be instructed to render them every assistance.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † Inclosure 2 in No. 792.

The object of Her Majesty's Government being merely to release the prisoners and to punish King Theodore for his conduct in detaining and imprisoning Her Majesty's officers, the expedition will leave the country so soon as these objects are effected.

It is needless to say that Her Majesty's Government have no designs of conquest in that district.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 800.

*Lord Stanley to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 19, 1867.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 20th ultimo,† inclosing a letter addressed by Sultan Negoos Menelek to the Queen; and I now transmit to you the reply which, by the Queen's directions, I have returned to that letter.

You will cause my letter to be forwarded to the Chief by an early and safe opportunity, and you will send to this country the presents which he has made to the Queen by the first convenient opportunity.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

P.S.—I inclose a copy of my reply to Sultan Negoos Menelek.‡

No. 801.

*Lord Stanley to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 19, 1867.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 26th ultimo,§ from which I learn that my letter to King Theodore of the 16th of April last‖ had duly been delivered by the messenger despatched by you for that purpose, who, however, after having been kept waiting for ten days, was dismissed without a reply.

Her Majesty's Government are thus forced to the conclusion that King Theodore rejects the friendly advances of this country, and declines to comply with the demands of the Queen, that her officers, whom he detains in captivity, shall be released.

Under these circumstances, Her Majesty's Government, who have exhausted all peaceful efforts, have resolved to resort to force; and it has been decided to leave the management of the expedition and of all arrangements therewith connected to Her Majesty's Indian authorities, with whom, therefore, you will communicate on the subject.

I cannot conclude this despatch without expressing to you the warm thanks of Her Majesty's Government for your unwearied zeal in endeavouring, though fruitlessly, to effect the liberation of the captives, and for all your valuable services in this distressing case.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 802.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received August

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, August* 20, 1867.

IN the Blue Book on Abyssinia just laid before Parliament, is a letter from Mr. Rassam to Colonel Merewether dated Magdala, September 17, 1866,¶ which contains (at page 91) the following passages:—

"Dr. Beke's foolish mission it is believed has done us all great mischief; it is very curious that no sooner did my friend (namely, the Emperor) receive his letter than he took it into his head to detain us all in this country, and ask me to send to England for artisans for him. There is no one in this country who approves of the steps which Beke took in the Abyssinian matter; and as our friend is of a suspicious character,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 792. ‡ No 798. § No. 796.
‖ Inclosure in No. 721. ¶ Inclosure 2 in No. 679.

of course he could not understand how, after the great Queen of England wrote to him upon a matter, private individuals came forward to beg of him upon their knees to grant him the same favour. Had Beke communicated to me before he addressed our friend in reference to his mission, I would have certainly advised him not to make his appearance. However, it is now no use talking over the past; the mischief has been done, and now we must bear.

"It is surmised that his abrupt departure has put myself and party into this fix. It is also believed that the false rumour which reached our friend, that I had been sent on false pretences by the British Government, came from Massowah; some fools or mischief-makers I have no doubt are at the bottom of it.

"The second messenger who came from Beke (and who was half cracked) reported amongst our friend's followers that he had heard a captain of an English steamer abuse the Abyssinians for having Englishmen in prison, and that he had . . . . them and their King."

As what is thus alleged against me by Mr. Rassam is a gross and unfounded calumny, the falsehood of which can be established by the simple collocation of facts in the regular order of their dates, I feel assured that your Lordship's sense of justice will allow my confutation to be placed officially on record in the Foreign Office, especially as it is through your Lordship's department that Mr. Rassam's letter to Colonel Merewether has been laid before Parliament, and made known to the public.

Fortunately for me, the dates and particulars of all the material occurrences are well known and established on the authority of Mr. Rassam himself, and they have already been put together by me in two letters which I was under the necessity of addressing to the editor of the "Times," and which appeared in that journal on July 29th and August 2nd, in refutation of charges similar to the present one which had been brought against me by Mr. Layard, Mr. Rassam's friend and patron in the House of Commons, and by Mr. Badger, Mr. Rassam's brother-in-law, in the columns of the "Times." The readiest mode, therefore, of laying the facts succinctly before your Lordship will be to give here my said two letters as they appeared in the "Times."

"THE ABYSSINIAN PRISONERS.*

"To the Editor of the 'Times.'

"Sir, "*Bekesbourne, July* 29, 1867.

"In the debate last night in the House of Commons, Mr. Layard is reported by you to have said that 'Mr. Rassam had stated that from the moment of Dr. Beke's arrival the King's conduct towards him changed.'

"In direct contradiction to this is the following delaration of Mr. Rassam himself, contained in a letter addressed to Colonel Playfair on March 22, 1866, which is published in the 'Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society,' vol. x, p. 229:—

"'At one time we were afraid that Dr. Beke's mission would spoil the good understanding happily subsisting between us, but it does not appear to have had any evil effect.'

"And at the still later date of April 9, as is recorded in the 'Times' of July 8, 1866, Mr. Rassam despatched to me the following message:—

"'The letter he (Dr. Beke) sent to the Emperor arrived on the 15th ultimo, and the day after His Majesty received it he sent it to me to read, with the petition from the relatives of the captives. I believe the Emperor wishes to consult me about the answer when I go to see him this week, and I have no doubt that Dr. Beke's messenger will be dismissed when we leave the Court. In that case I shall send a messenger with him to inform you of our departure hence to Matemma and Kassala.'

"This was written by Mr. Rassam twenty-five days after my letter with the petition had reached the King's hands, and the good understanding was evidently still subsisting between them, and yet Mr. Layard asserts that 'Mr. Rassam has stated that from the moment of Dr. Beke's arrival the King's conduct towards him changed."

"What really occasioned the great change which unhappily took place only four days afterwards has yet to be seen.

"Trusting to your sense of justice to give publicity to this statement, which I feel called on to make in self-defence,

"I am, &c.

(Signed) "CHARLES BEKE."

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

"THE ABYSSINIAN CAPTIVES.*

"To the Editor of the 'Times.'

"Sir, *Bekesbourne, August* 2, 1867.

"Most reluctantly do I ask you to afford me the means of answering, as publicly as it has been made, Mr. Badger's unlooked-for attack in the 'Times' of this morning. But the columns of your influential journal are always open to those who are unjustly accused.

"In my letter which appeared in the 'Times' of the 29th ultimo, I said nothing whatever from myself, but simply quoted Mr. Rassam's own words as contradicting those imputed to him by Mr. Layard. As the words now imputed to him are equally inconsistent with those quoted by me, which were laid before the public more than a twelvemonth ago, I must ask Mr. Badger to have the goodness to give the date of that gentleman's letter to him.

"Meanwhile, as dates are essential to the proper understanding of the subject, I would ask permission to record those of a few of the most important facts.

"In his letter to Mr. Badger, Mr. Rassam says that 'the day after they (the liberated captives) reached Korata it was rumoured that an Englishman had arrived at Massowah,' and 'a day or two after it was confirmed by the arrival of a letter from Dr. Beke himself.'

"Now, it is well known that the captives arrived at Koráta on March 12, 1866; that my letter reached the Emperor's hands on March 15; and that on the same day a complete reconciliation took place between the monarch and his white prisoners.

"On March 22, a week afterwards, Mr. Rassam wrote to Colonel Playfair that my letter 'did not appear to have had any evil effect.'

"At the same or even a later date Mr. Rassam sent home a report to Government, of which a compilation, made by Colonel Merewether, was published in the 'Times of India' of July 21, 1866, and has been published by me verbatim in my work 'The British Captives in Abyssinia.'

"In this report are given full particulars of the reconciliation on March 15, and it thus proceeds:—

"'Afterwards . . . the Emperor ordered the translation of Her Majesty's letter, and his answer thereto, to be read publicly by the chief scribe. Then all heard what had been written in his letter. In the letter His Majesty asks what has been done may be forgiven, and says——'

"But I need not quote the words of the letter, as it will appear in the papers about to be laid before Parliament. Mr. Rassam's report concludes by announcing that 'he and his party would leave after the Abyssinian Easter, which fell on the 8th of April.'

"On April 9, Mr. Rassam sent his message to me that he believed the Emperor wished to consult him about the answer to my letter, when he went to see him that week, and he repeats the same in his letter to Mr. Badger, adding, however, 'I was never consulted on the subject, but thenceforward political combinations began to show themselves.'

"What those political combinations were are stated in an 'Authentic Narrative' (of which probably Mr. Badger knows something), which appeared in the 'Pall Mall Gazette' of February 19 last, and from which I would ask you to insert the following extract:—

"'The King being still at Zágye, Mr. Rassam asked and obtained permission for the captives to precede him into Dembea, while he and his party would pay His Majesty a final visit according to appointment, and then join Cameron and the rest on the way to Chelga. The mission started on the 13th of April, 1866. On reaching Zágye it was received by the chief minister with the usual honours; but on entering the hall of audience they were suddenly seized by a dozen of the native officers there assembled, and Dr. Blanc and Mr. Prideaux were forthwith disarmed. They could only account for this violent proceeding by supposing they had omitted some of the usual ceremonies in approaching the Royal residence. Shortly after, however, a messenger arrived from the King, who bade them to be under no apprehension, as all that His Majesty desired to know was why the captives had been sent away without being previously brought to him.'

"I will not occupy more of your valuable space by repeating what further took place, but sufficient has been said to show that whatever occurred was not caused by my letter, on which and on myself it seems to be now desired to shift the blame which was previously thrown on poor Consul Cameron and Mr. Stern.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

"With reference to Mr. Badger's own charge against me, I can only say that I am not aware of having made in my book any malevolent or unwarrantable insinuations against Mr. Rassam personally. If I have I should be obliged by his pointing them out to me.

"I am, &c.
(Signed) "CHARLES BEKE."

The facts stated in these two letters might of themselves suffice to refute the charges of Mr. Rassam and his supporters, Mr. Layard and Mr. Badger. But from the documents printed in the Blue Book I am happy to have it in my power to adduce much corroborative evidence.

The first of these documents is the letter from the King to Mr. Rassam, dated Sunday, the 10th of Megabit (March 18), in which he says (Blue Book, page 116), "the relatives of Cameron and his imprisoned companions have written to me in sorrow about them. By the power of God and for the sake of my friend, the great Queen Victoria, I have been reconciled to them; and by the power of our Creator, we will consult on all matters when we meet."

In the same page of the Blue Book we find that on the 12th and 13th of Megabit (March 20 and 21), the King wrote to Mr. Rassam apologizing for not being able to see him and his companions on account of his absence. On Friday, the 15th of Megabit (March 23), he wrote in the most affectionate terms, desiring Mr. Rassam and his party, with the European workmen, to come to him at Zagye, and sending boats for them.

On this Mr. Rassam makes the following note (Blue Book, page 116): "After the receipt of this letter Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, and myself repaired to Zagay. His Majesty gave us a most magnificent reception. He consulted with all his nobles and his best advisers about our leaving Abyssinia, and it was determined that we should all depart hence." On this occasion nothing appears to have been said respecting me, and indeed, from Mr. Rassam's message of April 9, the subject of the answer to be given to me was not to be discussed till he went to take leave.

After Mr. Rassam and his party had returned to Korata, the King continued writing to him the most friendly letters (Blue Book, pages 116, 117) on the 20th, 22nd, 25th, 27th, and 30th of Megabit (March 28 and 30, and April 2, 4, and 7). Passion Week was during this interval, when the King, according to Abyssinian custom, fasted strictly and could not receive his friends; but in the second of these letters, written on March 30th, he informed Mr. Rassam that after some work had been completed by the European artisans (apparently intended as presents) he "wished them to hold themselves in readiness to start (for Europe) by the power of God."

The Abyssinian Easter fell on Sunday April 8th, and on Monday the 9th (the 2nd of Miazia) the King sent Mr. Rassam a complimentary note on the commencement of the holidays. On the same day (April 9th) that gentleman despatched to Massowah his messenger with the good tidings of his approaching departure and his message to myself, in consequence of which I felt it to be unnecessary to proceed further on my mission, and therefore returned from Halai to Massowah just in time to take my passage in the Government steamer "Victoria" which had arrived at Massowah on May 11th with Colonel Merewether on board on his way to Suez.

As may be well understood, the joyful intelligence from Mr. Rassam formed the chief topic of conversation on our passage to Suez. At the same time Colonel Merewether occupied himself in making an abstract of Mr. Rassam's despatches to the Home Government for the information of the Government of Bombay, which abstract subsequently appeared in the "Times of India" of July 21st, with the intimation that it had been made by Colonel Merewether, and it was thence copied into the "Jewish Intelligence" of October 1st. I have also given Colonel Merewether's abstract verbatim in my work, "The British Captives in Abyssinia."

Mr. Rassam's despatches to Government, from which that abstract was made, have, however, not been printed among the papers laid before Parliament.*

From everything that occurred down to the 9th of April, twenty-eight days after the report of my arrival at Massowah had first reached the King's Court, and twenty-five days after the receipt by the King of my letter, with the petition from the relatives of the captives, it is manifest that there is not the slightest ground, nor even pretence, for Mr. Rassam's assertion, as repeated by Mr. Layard in the House of Commons, that "from the moment of Dr. Beke's arrival the King's conduct towards him (Mr. Rassam) changed:" nor for his statement in his letter to Colonel Merewether, printed in the Blue Book, that "it is very curious that no sooner did my friend (the Emperor) receive

* See No. 593.

his (Dr. Beke's) letter than he took it into his head to detain all in this country, and ask me to send to England for artizans for him."

When the subject of the artizans was first mooted between the Emperor and Mr. Rassam, it is not for me to say, but it was no new matter, for it had been in contemplation as long ago as December 1863—eight months before Mr. Rassam's first arrival at Massowah with the Queen's letter—that Mr. Flad should "go to England with letters to procure machines, and one or two gunpowder makers," as is stated in Mr. Stern's letter of April 1865, published in the Appendix to my work (page 344).

As to Mr. Rassam's statement in his letter to Mr. Badger, published in the "Times," that "His Majesty sent me (Rassam) the letter to read, and said he would consult me before he answered it. I was never consulted on the subject; but thenceforward political combinations began to show themselves." I think I have shown to your Lordship's satisfaction that the time for consultation had not arrived, and, what is of far more importance, that no "political combinations" had yet "begun to show themselves."

I have now to relate what took place in the interval between the departure on April 9 of Mr. Rassam's harbinger of good tidings—unhappily not realized—and the day in the same week ("this week") when that gentleman was to go and see the King, consult about the answer to be given to myself, and to "leave the Court."

In page 117 of the Blue Book is given a letter from the King dated the 3rd of Miazia (April 10), in answer, apparently, to one written by Mr. Rassam, which is not given, wherein His Majesty says, "Very well, as you say, Lij Abitów shall take them [whom or what?] by the lower road, and your baggage will cross to any spot which you may choose. I have directed Agafari Goolam and the party of Aito Kasa to convey it for you."

Mr. Rassam's report of what occurred between the 10th and 13th of April is not given in the Blue Book; but it is well known that he sent the released captives away from Korata without letting them take leave of the King, and that they were arrested and brought back to Zagye in chains. I do not think of discussing what led to this step; I speak simply of the fact, which is notorious. Indeed, Mr. Rassam himself adds the following note at the foot of the King's letter of April 10: "After the receipt of this letter Dr. Blanc, Mr. Prideaux, and myself repaired to Zagay, according to appointment, on the 13th of April, when we were all arrested on the pretence that we did not take the released prisoners with us."

These, then, are the "political combinations" which now first "began to show themselves;" and as on April 13th Mr. Rassam and his party were arrested immediately on their arrival at Zagye before they reached the King's presence, there was evidently no thought of consulting about me then.

The released captives, who had so fatally been sent away from Korata, having been brought back to Zagye, where Mr. Rassam and his companions had likewise been put in chains, the whole party were brought before the King on the morning of April 16th (misprinted the "10th" in page 38 of the Blue Book), when Mr. Rassam was questioned respecting the unauthorized departure of the liberated captives. The conversation, as reported by Mr. Flad to the Earl of Clardendon in his Memorandum of July 10th, 1866, ended in the King's saying to Mr. Rassam, "Now you see for your sake (that is to say, on your account, Mr. Flad's English not being always quite correct), they are again in chains. From the day you said you wish to send them by another road I got suspicious, and thought that you wished to do so in order that you may say in your country you have released them by your prudence or by your power. Who are you? Are you a King? Are you not only (anything) but the servant of the Queen of England?"

Mr. Flad then relates (Blue Book, page 39) how the King subsequently forgave Mr. Rassam, but on condition that he made satisfaction; saying, "I require it from you, Mr. Rassam, because you are my *balderabá*, given to me by the Queen of England. She says in her letter everything I wish Mr. Rassam will do for you." On this passage in the Blue Book there is this strange note,—"There was one sentence in Her Majesty's letter which was just contrary to its meaning translated." What this may signify I will not pretend even to guess; but it evidently alludes to matters altogether removed from the sphere of my insignificant mission.

The cause of the disgrace into which Mr, Rassam fell is manifest, however, beyond all question. Consul Cameron placed the whole matter in a nutshell when he wrote to Mr. Danby Seymour, M.P., in his letter printed in page 55 of the Blue Book,

"Mr. Rassam, after having got a wigging in public for his having wished to get us out of the country, is again in favour."

On the morning of April 17th the chains were taken off from the released captives, and they were all, together with Mr. Rassam and his party, admitted to an audience of His Majesty. What took place on this occasion is related by Mr. Flad (Blue Book, page 39), and it is so important as regards myself that I am called on to extract the whole of this portion of the narrative:—"As soon as we (the prisoners) had approached near His Majesty and received his salutation, we fell down to the ground, asking His Majesty to forgive and pardon us. We were ordered to get up, and come nearer. We had the honour to take a seat on a carpet. The King brought forth the petition of the relations of the English prisoners, which had been sent from Massowah by Dr. Beke. Captain Cameron was asked to read it. After that the King said, 'It is the devil who made me angry with you, and who tempted me to destroy the friendly feelings existing, since the late Mr. Plowden, between myself and England. From my childhood I like the Europeans, especially the English, and God knows that from morning to evening I had no other desire than to get in alliance with the English nation. It is true that, by the power of God, I will fight the Turks; but there never arose a thought in my mind to fight with the English. What I wish is, that they shall love me and be my friends. 'Mr. Stern,' said he, 'you are quite innocent; it is not you who abused me; it is that Copt, who calls himself a monk and a bishop. He made me angry with you, and he abused me. And, Mr. Flad, God knows I never had any bad feelings against him. He never committed anything that could make me angry with him. And Mr. Rassam, you are the best man I ever saw in my life, and you did nothing which could make me angry with you. The other day, it is true, my suspicion arose, but it was the devil; and now we will make peace, forgetting everything past, and by actions of love we will renew our friendship. Now I pray you all forgive me.' The King immediately fell down to the ground before us. We asked that His Majesty might arise and forgive us, but he refused; so we said, according to the custom of the country, 'For God's sake we forgive you.' And immediately we kneeled down before him, begging him to forgive us; on which he answered, 'For God's sake I forgive you.' After this ceremony we had to sit down. Then the King said that each of us should write a letter to his relations, and give them the news that His Majesty, by the power of God, and for the friendship's sake of the Queen of England, had pardoned and released us, and that we hope to see and meet them soon. After this we were dismissed."

From what is thus stated to have occurred at this remarkable interview it would really seem as if the petition from the relatives of the captives of which I was the bearer was the immediate cause of the King's thorough reconciliation with the latter, instead of being, as Mr. Rassam pretends, the beginning of "political combinations." Be this, however, as it may, a result of this reconciliation—subject only to the "satisfaction" demanded under the alleged pledge given in Her Majesty's letter of which Mr. Rassam was the bearer—was that the King wrote on the same day the letter to the "Families of the European Prisoners" contained in page 34 of the Blue Book, in which His Majesty thus expresses himself:—"The petition which you have sent me has reached me. I have felt the grief which has distressed you. For the sake of my friend Victoria, the Queen of England, I have released the prisoners at Magdala, and delivered them into the hands of Mr. Hormuzd Rassam. May this give you gladness." At the same time he wrote to me the letter which is published in pages 395 and 396 of my work "The British Captives in Abyssinia," giving me permission to come to him, and adding, "At what time suits you, come by Matemma."

Meanwhile, however, my wife and I had left Massowah for Halai, where we were arrested by some of the "rebels," on which I immediately despatched my trusty messenger, Gebra Musye, with a letter to the King, informing of it, which letter reached His Majesty's hands on May 26. This occurrence is reported by Mr. Rassam in his letter to the Earl of Clarendon, dated Zagye, May 27 (Blue Book, p. 54), in the following terms:—"Yesterday a letter arrived from Dr. Beke, in which he informed the Emperor that after he had gone up to Hallai, in Abyssinia, to await a reply to his letter which he had sent up to His Majesty about three months ago, the rebels of Tigré had placed a restriction upon his movements. Dr. Beke, therefore, begs the Emperor to send and have him released, in order that he may be enabled to prosecute his intended journey to the interior of Abyssinia with the presents he had brought for him from England.

"His Majesty sent me a message immediately after the receipt of the above

communication to say that he would write to the Chiefs of Hallai and the adjacent districts to have Dr. Beke sent back to Massowah in safety, in order that he might come up to him viâ Kassala and Matemma, and if any accident should befall him he would hold them responsible. 'If any serious accident happen to him,' said he, 'I will show you the severe punisment I shall inflict upon those who injure him. Did I not on a former occasion,' he added, 'kill a number of my relatives and their followers to revenge the blood of an Englishmen? Why should I now, then, allow any of my subjects to hurt or molest another?'"

Thus it appears that even up to this late date, May 27, 1866, there was no thought of complaining of my mission as having been in the remotest degree the cause of the Emperor's ill-will towards Mr. Rassam. On the contrary, it might fairly be argued that my coming was a source of gratification to that monarch, whether out of regard for me, or simply in the hope of inclosing another fish in his net, I will not decide. One thing, however, is quite certain. On more than one occasion I afforded His Majesty an opportunity of expressing his great love for the English nation, myself of course included, whilst in no single instance did I lead him to make use of an unkind expression towards us.

But I need not trouble your Lordship any further. Sufficient, and more than sufficient, will have been said to establish the fact that my mission had nothing whatever to do with Mr. Rassam's disgrace, or the detention of the captives after they had been once liberated; and that, consequently, the imputations against me made by that gentleman and his supporters, Mr. Layard and Mr. Badger, are unfounded and calumnious.

As to Mr. Rassam's further insinuation that my "abrupt departure had put him and his party into their fix," it would be too absurd to require notice were it not for its wickedness. Mr. Rassam got himself into his "fix" on April 13th. I did not leave Massowah in the "Victoria" steamer till May 12th, and my departure was not yet known at the Emperor's Court on May 27th, when, according to Mr. Rassam's own showing, I was believed to be a prisoner at Halai.

I will not think of questioning the right of Mr. Rassam or any one else to entertain, or even to express, an opinion as to whether or not my mission was necessary or expedient. At the time when I was requested to undertake it by the relatives of the unfortunate captives it was considered not merely expedient but highly necessary, on account of the great delay on Mr. Rassam's part, into the causes of which it is useless now to inquire. And on a review of all that has occurred, I retain my opinion that had I been allowed to undertake the liberation of the captives according to my own plan I should have succeeded, though doubtless under the condition of the temporary detention of my wife and myself, for which we were both fully prepared.

Before concluding, I would beg leave to say a few words on a subject of less importance, but still requiring notice. I am utterly at a loss to understand Mr. Rassam's object in placing on record in his letter to Colonel Merewether what my messenger, Gebra Musye, is alleged to have reported he had heard said by the Captain of an English steamer, who is sufficiently identified by that description, especially as Mr. Rassam at the same time says the man was "half-cracked." Were I to repeat all that Gebra Musye and others told me about Mr. Rassam's proceedings at Massowah I should have enough to do.

But in justice to Gebra Musye, not less than to myself, I am bound to state that he was in the service of the late Mr. Consul Plowden from the time of his first entering into Abyssinia in 1843 (when I met the two together) until that officer's death in 1860, having thus been employed by him as his confidential messenger, and having in his time performed some extraordinary feats. He was afterwards (I believe) for some time in the service of Consul Cameron. For myself, I have to speak of Gebra Musye only in terms of praise for the manner in which he conveyed my letters, first to Dedjaj Tekla Georgis, the Emperor Theodore's Lieutenant in Tigré, and afterwards to the Emperor himself. So secretly and ingeniously did he perform my errands that his departure was not known till he was out of reach of the "rebels," whose marauding parties, spread all over the country, would otherwise have stopped him, and he managed so to throw dust in the eyes of the people of Halai that I was reported at Massowah to be in communication with the rebels instead of with the royalists, which report was transmitted to Aden by M. Munzinger, the French Vice-Consul in charge of the British Consulate, who also thought fit to question me on the subject.

As regards the "false rumours" that Mr. Rassam "had been sent on false pretences by the British Government," which that gentleman says came from Massowah, they are well known to have originated with an individual who is (or was

in my time) an intimate friend of M. Munzinger. This person has been properly denounced by some of the captives in their letters. There can be no doubt of his being a "mischief-maker," as Mr. Rassam alleges, and as I know to my cost; but he is certainly anything but a "fool."

Trusting that, in the event of any further correspondence respecting Abyssinia being laid before Parliament, your Lordship will allow the present letter to be included,

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 803.

Mr. Purday to Lord Stanley.—(Received August 22.)

My Lord, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, August* 19, 1867.

THERE is an omission of two words in a letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship of the 27th August, 1866,* as printed in the Abyssinian Blue Book, page 62, line 8, which makes me throw discredit on the conduct of the English captives indiscriminately. I take the liberty of calling attention to the same. These words are "some of," which should stand before those of "the English captives," to be properly understood, as I intended them to be.

In the Blue Book I also find a letter from Mr. Rassam, page 7, paragraph 2, in which a similar statement to that in mine is made; and in paragraph 8 Mr. Rassam says that "the stores, &c., supplied to Captain Cameron were for his own use, and if he gave any to the other prisoners it was 'an act of charity,' " &c., when in point of fact Cameron and the other prisoners might have starved over and over again if it had not have been for the supplies they had obtained through the intervention of the missionaries.

With regarded to the "circumstances" hinted at in my letter alluded to above, they are contained in a letter from Mr. Rosenthal, dated Magdala, September 19, 1865, addressed to his brother, Mr. Eisner, of London (a copy of which was given to me), and are as follows:—

"Bardel, Cameron, and his people, try to dissipate the monotony of their prison life by drinking strong hydromel, and indulging in other excesses that shall be nameless. Only a few nights ago they were so boisterous a greater portion of the night that they were threatened with the stick. We (Stern, myself, and Makerer) have nothing to do with this, but as Abyssinian justice has a predilection for numbers, we are most anxious that the spies should not inform the King of their conduct, lest it should enhance his resentment, or at least create contempt for the pretended civilized and educated Europeans."

And my sole object in mentioning the matter was, that some caution should be given them from the Foreign Office to be more discreet for the future.

I thought it was my duty to myself to make this omission known, although it cannot now be corrected.

I should be glad to learn that every effort is now being made for the liberation of these long-suffering people, as it would be some satisfaction to the relatives to be assured that no more time would be lost over a matter that, if common courtesy had been used, would not have needed rectification.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

No. 804.

Lord Stanley to Mr. Barron.†

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 22, 1867.

IT will doubtless be well known to His Majesty the Sultan that certain of Her Majesty's officers and other Europeans have for some time past been detained in captivity, contrary to justice and the law of nations, by King Theodore of Abyssinia.

Her Majesty's Government have exhausted all peaceful efforts to procure the release of the captives, and they have naw resolved to resort to force. In order, however, to

* No. 641. † Laid before Parliament, 1867.

reach Abyssinia, Her Majesty's Government are led to believe that it will be necessary for their troops to pass through Ottoman territory, and, if so, they do not doubt that every facility will be afforded to them by the Sultan and the Viceroy of Egypt, who will readily understand that the Queen has no designs of conquest in that district, and that the only object of a military expedition is to effect the release of the prisoners, and to punish the tyrant who detains them in captivity.

You will make a communication in this sense to Fuad Pasha.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 805.

*Lord Stanley to Mr. Barron.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 22, 1867.

WITH reference to my despatch of this day's date, relative to the expedition which Her Majesty's Government are about to send to Abyssinia, I have to state to you that it would be of great importance that they should be able to establish a rapid communication between Suez and Bombay, and they have been informed that this may be done if permission be given by the Turkish Government to allow messages to pass along the Syrian coast line viâ Bagdad.

You will apply to the Porte for this permission, and you will use your utmost exertions to overcome any difficulties that may be interposed by Turkish officers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 806.

*Lord Stanley to Mr. Barron.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 22, 1867.

THE Government of Bombay have sent officers to Arabia with a view to procure beasts of burden for the use of Her Majesty's army in the East, and I have to desire that you will request the Porte to instruct the Turkish authorities in Arabia to give their utmost assistance to the officers in question.

I may add that it is of great importance that this assistance should at once be rendered, as the animals are required for the expedition to Abyssinia, in order to effect the release of the prisoners detained in captivity by King Theodore.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 807.

*Lord Stanley to Mr. Alison.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 22, 1867.

THE Government of Bombay have sent officers to Bushire and Bussorah, with a view to procure beasts of burden for the use of Her Majesty's army in the East, and I have to desire that you will request the Persian Government to instruct the authorities at Bushire to give their utmost assistance to the officers in question.

I may add, for your own information, that it is of great importance that this assistance should at once be rendered, as the animals are required for an expedition to Abyssinia, in order to effect the release of the prisoners detained in captivity by King Theodore.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

No. 808.

Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 27, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th instant,* and to state to you that it will be printed in the next collection of papers respecting Abyssinia that may be laid before Parliament.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 809.

Mr. Murray to Mr. Purday.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 27, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant,† and to state to you in reply that your letter of August 27, 1866, is correctly printed in the Abyssinian Blue Book; the words "some of," to the omission of which you call attention, not occurring in your original letter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 810.

Mr. Murray to Acting Consul-General Reade.‡

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 29, 1867.

WITH reference to Lord Stanley's despatch of the 19th instant,§ instructing you to request the Egyptian Government to afford facilities for the expedition which Her Majesty's Government are compelled to send to Abyssinia, I am directed by Lord Stanley to state to you that Her Majesty's Secretary of State for War has decided upon endeavouring to purchase 7,000 mules in countries bordering on the Mediteranean, and to forward them, viâ Alexandria and Suez, to Massowah. Officers will be sent to those countries accordingly, and a competent staff will proceed to Alexandria under the command of Colonel Clark Kennedy, C.B., to superintend the landing and forwarding the animals and the care of them while in Egypt. Considerable accommodation, however, will be required at Alexandria and Suez for the cargoes as they successively arrive, and I am to instruct you to take the necessary steps for obtaining permission from the Viceroy of Egypt for the establishment of such depôts as may be necessary at both places.

It is expected that this matter will be completed before the end of this year.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 811.

Mr. Purday to Mr. Murray.—(*Received August* 30.)

Sir, 24, *Great Marlborough Street, August* 29, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to thank Lord Stanley for your acknowledgment‖ of the receipt of my letter of the 19th instant,† in which you state that my letter of the 27th August, 1866, is correctly printed in the "Abyssinian Blue Book," and to regret that the omission of the words "some of," should have taken place, as it is not so in my copy.

This led me to trouble his Lordship with my explanation, and yourself to reply to it. However, I am desirous, notwithstanding, of putting my omission on record, as well as my explanation, if only to show what my object was in writing that letter.

Begging you to excuse this farther trouble, I am, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES H. PURDAY.

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* No. 802. † No. 803. ‡ Laid before Parliament, 1867. § No. 799. ‖ No. 809.

No. 812.

Acting Consul-General Reade to Lord Stanley.—(*Received September* 2.)*

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, September* 2, 1867.

PERMISSION is granted for passage of expedition through Egyptian territory. Egyptian officers will proceed immediately to Massowah to ensure every facility being afforded, and Viceroy's ships of war in the Red Sea are placed at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government in case of need.

No. 813.

Lieutenant Abbott to Lord Stanley.—(*Received September* 10.)*

My Lord, *Aden, August* 22, 1867.

COLONEL MEREWETHER proceeded to Bombay on duty on the 13th of this month; in his absence, I have the honour to report the arrival of a bugalow from Massowah yesterday evening, bringing intelligence of the captives up to the 1st July.

Mr. Rassam, whose letter is dated 30th of June, writes as follows:—

"The reason I am now in such a hurry is because I wish the bearer, Daftaree Dasha (one of my old trustworthy servants), to go down to Massowah with important intelligence. Wakshun Gobazay, the chief rebel of Tigré and Lasta has sent to the Bishop to say that he was coming to attack this fortress and give him his liberty, and if that be accomplished we shall all be free. The messenger reports that he left his master with an enormous army near Wadala, about five days' journey hence, and that all the rebel districts from Debra Tabor to this have sent deputations to him to join him, and it is premised that once Wakshun Gobazay approaches this neighbourhood our royal friend would be done for. As I cannot allow this important intelligence to lie dormant here, I am despatching a special messenger to convey it to you through M. Munzinger, and I have instructed him to collect further information on the road, and if he meet Wakshun Gobazay to find out from him what his real intention is regarding his movements. There is no doubt that if Wakshun Gobazay succeeds in capturing this stronghold (according to Abyssinian estimation) he will be proclaimed Emperor by the Bishop, and there is no doubt that once he gets the heads of the Abyssinian church, the prelate and the chief of the monks (who are both my friends), he will have the greater part of Abyssinia on his side. You will be glad to hear that we are all well, but have all suffered lately from colds; since the 21st of last month we have not been able to communicate with Debra Tabor, and the only messenger who arrived thence since then was from His Majesty, and even he was obliged to smuggle himself through the rebellious districts, and was not one of the Royal messengers, but was engaged for the occasion. He brought us compliments from His Majesty, and reported that all the messengers whom I had sent to Debra Tabor, and were plundered by the rebels, had reached the Royal camp safely, but in a state of nudity, and that the Emperor had dressed them all and was entertaining them with Hailo, the messenger I had sent to His Majesty some time ago. He reported also that the Emperor had not imprisoned the Europeans at Gaffat, but that one day he was angry with them and afterwards he was reconciled to them. They are all at present living with him inside a large hedge built for the winter."

2. A letter has also been received from Dr. Blanc; this will be forwarded by the first opportunity, *in extenso*. I regret that the sudden arrival of the bugalow, and the equally sudden departure of the steamer, prevent my forwarding it at once.

3. M. Munzinger, writing from Massowah on the 11th of August, says, "The letters brought down are full forty days old, and so quite lose all their interest. The messenger on his way down was to see Wakshum Gobazay and to bring me news about his further movements. On his passing through Lasta, that Chief was far off to the eastward, so the messenger was obliged to proceed without seeing him. If anything had happened since, the good news would have reached us, no doubt, before this. I asked the messenger if such an enterprise had any chances of success. He said there was no doubt about it, but he feared Gobazay would not have courage enough to try it. He has now before him a full month to make an essay, the rivers between the fortress and Debra Tabor not allowing the King's army to pass before the 15th September (Abyssinia?). I have no positive news about the King, but have been told by many people that the Europeans in his service are not in chains. I have again sent a spy to the camp with some lines for Mr. Flad."

4. The bugalow which brought the letters returns to Massowah this evening; by her I send letters and newspapers for the captives.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. B. ABBOTT, *Officiating Resident.*

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Inclosure in No. 813.

*Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, June* 30, 1867.

YOUR very kind and interesting letter of the 4th of May arrived yesterday; I cannot tell you what pleasure it gave me. I was above all things pleased to hear that at last a firm policy had been adopted, and that your unwearied exertions in our favour had been crowned with success. I must also thank you heartily for the trouble you have taken about my little summary of Abyssinian affairs. The objection you advance about landing troops on the burning shore of Massowah during the summer months is certainly a very valid one; but my reason for not considering this obstacle insurmountable was that I thought that arrangements might be made so as to allow the European portion of the force to proceed at once to the Highlands, leaving the baggage, &c., to be conveyed under the protection of native troops. I do not say it would have been all smooth; only, not impossible. However, the question is past discussing now. We must take patience during the next few months, and hope that nothing will in the meanwhile occur to delay or postpone the "promenade."

As I wrote to you a few days ago by Lumna, let no considerations influence the now decided course of action. The King, low or great, a mere robber as he is, now or again a successful conqueror, a wanderer, or our jailor, even should his place have been filled by another. For our liberty, for the good name of England, for the safety of the white men in future days, an army must be marched into this country, and the lost prestige restored. Certainly, the occasion is splendid to satisfy justice, and at the same time add another jewel to the British Crown.

Nothing new—a great many stories are daily circulated—it is difficult to believe anything. Even did a messenger (a servant of one of the prisoners) arrive here from Debra Tabor with a message from the King, is very doubtful; at all events, if he really did come from His Majesty, this one quite forgot our money, as compliments solely reached us.

Are all the Abyssinian prisoners daily tortured, tied up in fresh hides, and exposed to the sun?—have they all, with the exception of four, been killed?—is impossible to say, as both stories are equally credited and circulated. Did the King again plunder Begemder? Did he try to come here and was attacked during the night and obliged to retreat? Did a great number of his soldiers desert whilst on small expeditions, so that he was obliged to abandon his intent and return to Debra Tabor?—are among reports, the truth of which it is impossible to ascertain. One fact alone is true, the King is the greatest, the most unmitigated scoundrel under the sun. He is capable of the most atrocious crimes, and no confidence can be placed either in his words or deeds. He can send compliments one day and an order for hand-chains and plunder on another. If really a man, bearer of a letter of his, did succeed in passing through the rebels, it is a bad look-out for us, as another may do the same and bring us bad tidings.

Many thanks for your kindness in kindly sending me a few cheroots, brandy, medicines, &c., but I am most unfortunate. I wrote to Munzinger, and told my servant to come *viâ* Lasta, the only possible route; instead, the creature has gone *viâ* Waggara, and I will never see him again, nor the stores. I have already a good supply at Debra Tabor, some things at Matemma, but the advantage I will reap from them they might as well be at Timbuctoo. All my personal kit, too, is at Debra Tabor with the Europeans, minus the articles kindly appropriated by our friend. He might as well have taken the whole at the time, as I will never see a particle of it again. I regret above all the loss of the medicines, they are of great value to us. A few days ago I had to attend the sister of the "Sultana favorita," a fine girl, but suffering from the very common disease which seems to know no rank.

I am highly pleased to hear of your being appointed Commissioner of Scinde. I sincerely congratulate you on the appointment. I hope, however, that you will not have to join before our little affair is over, one way or the other. Excuse my selfishness, but once you are withdrawn from the work, woe to the Abyssinian captives. Samuel was highly gratified with your message; begs to thank you for the same, and sends you his respectful compliments.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) H. BLANC.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

No. 814.

Acting Consul-General Reade to Lord Stanley.—(*Received September* 10.)*

My Lord, *Alexandria, August* 30, 1867.

ON receiving yesterday your Lordship's despatch of the 19th instant,† relative to the proposed military expedition to Abyssinia, I called upon Cherif Pasha, and, after communicating to his Excellency your Lordship's instructions to me, applied in suitable terms for the desired permission of passage through the Egyptian territory, and such other facilities or assistance as the Viceroy's Government could afford to the officers in charge of the said expedition. His Excellency expressed himself as being personally disposed to comply at once with your Lordship's request, but declined to give a formal reply to my application until after a reference to Constantinople, which he told me would probably involve a delay of some forty-eight hours.

Later in the day, and conformably with an understanding I had come to with Cherif Pasha, I repeated in a written form the communication I had, as above stated, made to his Excellency verbally. Of this communication I beg herewith to inclose a copy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOS. F. READE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 814.

*Acting Consul-General Reade to Cherif Pasha.**

M. le Président, *Alexandrie, le* 29 *Août*, 1867.

J'AI l'honneur de soumettre, ci-joint, à votre Excellence la traduction d'une dépêche que j'ai reçue de son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de Sa Majesté Britannique, relativement à une expédition militaire projetée contre l'Abyssinie, dans le but d'obtenir la libération des Européens détenus en captivité par le Roi Théodore, et de châtier ce Souverain pour les avoir emprisonnés. En transmettant ce document, il est de mon devoir de m'adresser à votre Excellence pour prier le Gouvernement Egyptien de bien vouloir accorder à la dite expédition liberté de passage à travers le territoire Egyptien pour arriver en Abyssinie, et aussi d'accorder toutes facilités et bons offices aux officiers chargés de la direction de cette expédition.

Convaincu du reste que les bonnes relations qui ont si longtemps existé entre nos Gouvernements respectifs assureront un prompt accueil de la part de son Altesse le Viceroi à cette demande, je saisis, &c.

(Signé) THOS. F. READE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 814.

*Lord Stanley to Acting Consul-General Reade.**

(Traduction.)

M. le Gérant, *Londres, le* 19 *Août*, 1867.

LES rapports qui, par votre entremise, ont été envoyés par le Colonel Merewether à ce Département, vous auront fait anticiper que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, après avoir épuisé tous les moyens amicaux pour engager le Roi Théodore à libérer les prisonniers Européens détenus par lui captifs en Abyssinie, a résolu, si les circonstances l'exigeaient, d'user de la force pour atteindre ce but; mais, comme l'Abyssinie ne peut être commodément envahie qu'en passant par le territoire Egyptien, je vous charge de prier le Gouvernement Egyptien d'accorder la permission de passage et en même temps de le prier de donner toute l'assistance possible aux officiers chargés de la direction de l'expédition, de l'achat des vivres, et du train militaire.

Certains fonctionnaires ont déjà reçu l'ordre de se rendre à Massowah à cet effet, et vous prierez que les autorités Egyptiennes à ce port soient instruites par leur Gouvernement de leur rendre tout l'aide dont ils pourraient avoir besoin.

L'objet du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté étant seulement d'obtenir la délivrance des prisonniers, et de châtier le Roi Théodore pour sa conduite en retenant et emprisonnant les officiers de Sa Majesté, l'expédition quittera le pays aussitôt que ce résultat sera obtenu.

Il est inutile de dire que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté n'a aucun projet de conquête sur le dit pays.

Je suis, &c.

(Signé) STANLEY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 186".

† No. 799.

No. 815.

*Mr. Barron to Lord Stanley.—(Received September 11.)**

My Lord, *Constantinople, September 3, 1867.*

I HAVE had the honour to receive by messenger Webster your despatches to that of the 22nd August inclusive.†

As instructed by your Lordship's despatch of the 22nd August, I lost no time in notifying to the Porte, by an official note, and by a personal visit to Fuad Pasha, the fact of Her Majesty's Government having determined to resort to force for the purpose of procuring the release of the persons detained in captivity by King Theodore of Abyssinia.

I briefly exposed the circumstances, then but slightly known to his Highness, which had obliged Her Majesty's Government to adopt this measure, and I expressed a hope that every facility would be afforded by the Sultan and the Viceroy of Egypt for the passage of Her Majesty's troops through Ottoman territory. To this his Highness answered, that with regard to Egypt, he apprehended there could be no obstacle, and that a letter should be addressed to the Viceroy on the subject, but that if any other parts of the Ottoman territory were to be crossed by Her Majesty's forces, it was desirable they should be distinctly specified beforehand.

With reference to the use of the Syrian coast telegraphic line, his Highness did not see any obstacle whatever to its free use for the purpose of telegraphic communication between Suez and Bombay, viâ Bagdad, by Her Majesty's servants. At my request, he promised to communicate with the telegraphic administration, for the purpose of ascertaining what special facilities could properly be given in this respect to Her Majesty's Consuls at Beyrout and Bagdad.

I have also, in compliance with your Lordship's instructions, officially and verbally requested the Porte to instruct the Turkish authorities in Arabia to give their utmost assistance to the officers sent to Arabia with a view to procure beasts of burden for the use of Her Majesty's army in the East. Fuad Pasha promised to move for the despatch of orders accordingly by telegraph to Bagdad; that with regard to Yemen and the Hedjaz, which were not connected with the capital by telegraph, he would send me vizirial letters addressed to the Governors of those Provinces. On receipt of these letters I purpose to inclose them to Her Majesty's Consul at Jedda for transmission to their destination.

Previously to the receipt of your Lordship's of the 22nd August, I had been in correspondence with Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, and had procured the despatch of an order from the Porte to the Governor-General, granting facilities for the sale of transport mules belonging to the garrison.

On receipt of the official answers to my applications, I shall not delay in sending to your Lordship copies of them as well as of my three notes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. P. T. BARRON.

No. 816.

*Acting Consul-General Reade to Lord Stanley.—(Received September 12.)**

My Lord, *Alexandria, September 3, 1867.*

THE following telegram from Cherif Pasha reached me at Cairo yesterday and was immediately forwarded to your Lordship in a condensed form :—

"Le Gouvernement Egyptien permet avec grand plaisir le passage tel qu'il est demandé dans votre dépêche officielle. Il est heureux de prouver en cette occasion, comme en toutes autres, tout le prix qu'il attache à l'amitié et bonnes relations qui existent entre les deux pays. Des officiers seront envoyés à Massowah exprès. La Compagnie‡ louera avec plaisir les bateaux dont elle dispose dans la Mer Rouge. Son Directeur a reçu des instructions en conséquence."

On my return here this morning I called upon his Excellency and thanked him, in the name of Her Majesty's Government, for the permission of passage given, and other facilities promised, by the Egyptian Government with regard to the projected expedition to Abyssinia, adding that, in doing so, I felt I only anticipated your Lordship's instructions to the same effect.

The Pasha had already notified to me that the Egyptian fleet in the Red Sea was placed by the Viceroy at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government in case of need, and I

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 804. ‡ The Azizié Company.

have since been informed, by his Excellency, that the permission for which I had, by your Lordship's instructions, applied, with regard to the laying down of a line of telegraph between Souakin and Massowah, is also gladly accorded by his Highness.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOS. F. READE.

No. 817.

Mr. Melvill to Mr. Hammond.—(Received September 16.)*

Sir, *India Office, September* 14, 1867.

WITH reference to previous communications relating to the expedition to Abyssinia, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to submit, for the consideration of Lord Stanley, whether it would not be desirable that Sir Robert Napier should be furnished with the views of Her Majesty's Government as to the course he should take in the event of his demand upon King Theodore for the release of the captives proving ineffectual.

Sir Stafford Northcote presumes that, in so far as relates to military operations, Sir R. Napier will be left to act according to his own judgment, under the circumstances in which he may find himself placed. But as regards other political contingencies that may arise, it appears advisable that, besides being vested with full powers to act on Her Majesty's behalf in such matters, he should receive instructions as to the general tenour of his conduct towards King Theodore and the Chiefs and people of Abyssinia.

Sir Stafford Northcote apprehends that this will be peculiarly important, because the great scale of the preparations which are being made, taken in connection with some of the unfortunate complications which have occurred in our relations with Abyssinia, may give rise to misconceptions as to the ultimate intentions of Her Majesty's Government. It may, therefore, be necessary that the object of the expedition and the present views of Her Majesty's Government should be distinctly explained to Sir R. Napier.

In assenting to the proposal of Sir Robert Napier for the organization of a force upon so large a scale, and in taking immediate measures to provide the very considerable quantity of transport-vessels, baggage animals, and other appliances which have been, or are about to be, dispatched from this country to the East, Sir Stafford Northcote has been influenced by the conviction that these preparations afford the best hope of bringing King Theodore to reason without an actual collision, and that they will also tend, should active hostilities be necessary, to shorten their duration, and to enable the British forces to leave the country as soon as their object is accomplished. A smaller or a less perfectly equipped force might be detained in Abyssinia while reinforcements and supplies were being provided; and its long detention might give rise to complications which it is particularly desirable to avoid.

Sir Stafford Northcote would suggest, for the consideration of Lord Stanley, that Sir R. Napier should be instructed, at the earliest opportunity, to proclaim that the object of the expedition is to vindicate the dignity of the British Government, by procuring the release of Mr. Rassam and his suite, and of Consul Cameron, from the captivity in which they have for a long period been most unjustifiably held; and also the free egress from Abyssinia of all other Europeans who may be detained by King Theodore in his dominions against their will; together with satisfaction for the insult offered to the British nation, in the persons of Her Majesty's Consul and of the officers charged with the delivery of a letter from Her Majesty to the King of Abyssinia. It should be made generally known that Her Majesty's Government would greatly deprecate any necessity for a British force remaining in Abyssinia longer than may be absolutely requisite for the accomplishment of those objects.

The proclamation should further specify that no injury is intended to the people of Abyssinia, who may remain quietly in their homes; that the persons and properties of all inhabitants of the country who should furnish supplies or carriage to the British army will be protected, and that none will be molested excepting such as may appear in arms or endeavour in any way to impede the progress of the army by the removal of cattle and means of subsistence, or afford information, aid, or support to a hostile force.

It might be well to add that the King will be held personally responsible for any further injury to the captives. It would probably be undesirable to express any apprehension that he might himself do them an injury, but it would be right that Sir R. Napier should have instructions as to the language he should employ and the measures he should take in the event of the captives being removed further into the interior of the country or of actual violence being used towards them.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

Sir Stafford Northcote is of opinion that a distinct expression of the views of Her Majesty's Government upon these and similar points, while it need not limit the discretion of Sir R. Napier in the prosecution of the campaign, would be of essential service to him from the first, and might tend to prevent embarrassments hereafter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. COSMO MELVILL.

No. 818.

*Mr. Hammond to Mr. Melvill.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 18, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you herewith a letter in quadruplicate, addressed by his Lordship to King Theodore of Abyssinia, together with a copy of the same, for the information of Secretary Sir Stafford Northcote, and I am to request that these letters, four in number, may be transmitted to the Resident at Aden, with instructions to forward as quickly as possible, by separate messengers, who should be directed to proceed by routes which may appear best calculated to ensure the letters, or, at all events, one of them, reaching King Theodore.

The letter now inclosed is designed to supersede that sent to you from this office on the 9th instant, which I am to request may be returned to England.

Lord Stanley proposes in a few days to communicate fully with Sir Stafford Northcote on the subject of the instructions to be given to Sir Robert Napier for the Government of his proceedings in other than military matters.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

Inclosure in No. 818.

*Lord Stanley to King Theodore of Abyssinia.**

Foreign Office, September 9, 1867

To His Majesty Theodore, King of Abyssinia.

MANY months have now elapsed since the Queen, my Sovereign, on the 4th of October, 1866,† and Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, by command of Her Majesty, on the 16th of April of this year,‡ appealed to your Majesty in order to obtain the release from the captivity in which they have for a long period been most unjustifiably held, of officers sent to your Court on public matters, and of other individuals who have come under your control.

But your Majesty has disregarded these successive appeals, has made light of the remonstrances and representations of the Queen, and has rejected the friendly overtures which have so repeatedly been made to you by Her Majesty's commands.

It is impossible for the Queen any longer to endure such conduct on the part of your Majesty, and Her Majesty has therefore given orders that a military force, under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Napier, K.C.B., should without delay enter your dominions, and obtain from you by force a concession which you have hitherto withheld from friendly representation.

For the result of this measure, whatever may be the consequences of it to your Throne and to your country, your Majesty can alone be held responsible throughout the civilized world; and although the Queen would fain hope that, even in this the last hour, your Majesty may be induced to listen to words of peace, and avert, by full and immediate concessions, the attacks which in a short space of time will be directed against you, I am commanded by the Queen to warn your Majesty that the course of action which I now make known to you is irrevocably determined on, and that the only means of preserving your country from war, and your own power from overthrow, will be found in the delivery to the Commander of the British invading army of all the European prisoners in your keeping; and it is the earnest desire of the Queen that this last opportunity which Her Majesty offers to you may be taken advantage of by your Majesty, and that peace may be so preserved between England and Abyssinia.

Having thus fulfilled the command of the Queen my Sovereign, I bid your Majesty heartily farewell.

Your sincere Friend,
(Signed) STANLEY.

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* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 661. ‡ Inclosure in No. 721.

No. 819.

*Mr. T. Plowden to Lord Stanley.—(Received September 26.)**

My Lord, 80, *Gloucester Place, Portman Square, September* 24, 1867.

IT is well known that a great friendship and mutual esteem existed between my brother the late Mr. Walter Plowden and the King of Abyssinia. But no one knows how strong this feeling was, and how great the estimation in which my brother was held by the King as members of his family from personal intercourse with him.

Founded on this knowledge, it has occurred to us that a letter to the King from me, Mr. W. Plowden's elder brother and representative, might have an influential effect in obtaining the release of the captives in Abyssinia, and that, at all events, it would do them no harm to make the attempt. If your Lordship should be of this opinion, I shall be happy to prepare a letter and submit it to your Lordship's approval, and to send it direct from myself and unconnected with the Government.

If this proposition be unacceptable, I trust your Lordship will, nevertheless, excuse the intrusion on your valuable time in consideration of the motive of public duty which alone has prompted me to address you.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TREVOR C. PLOWDEN.

No. 820.

*Acting Consul-General Reade to Lord Stanley.—(Received September 27.)**

My Lord, *Alexandria, September* 18, 1867.

IN continuation of my despatch of the 30th ultimo,† I have the honour to forward to your Lordship Cherif Pasha's reply to the communication which, in pursuance of your Lordship's instructions, I addressed his Excellency on the preceding day, for the purpose of notifying to the Viceroy the decision at which Her Majesty's Government had arrived of sending a military expedition to Abyssinia, and of applying for such facilities and assistance as the Egyptian Government could under the circumstances accord to the officers in charge of that expedition.

I have the honour also to inclose a copy of a letter which, pending any further acknowledgment which your Lordship may think proper to transmit, I deemed it my duty to address to his Excellency on receipt of his above-mentioned communication.

I heve, &c.
(Signed) THOS. F. READE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 820.

*Raghib Pasha to Acting Consul-General Reade.**

M. le Gérant, *Alexandrie, le 9 Septembre*, 1867.

J'AI pris connaissance de votre dépêche du 29 Août dernier et de la note y annexée de son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de Sa Majesté la Reine de la Grande Bretagne. Par cette note son Excellence explique que le Gouvernement Anglais, ayant vainement essayé de tous les moyens amiables pour amener le Négus d'Abyssinie à libérer les Européens, par lui retenus captifs, s'est déterminé à user au besoin de la force pour atteindre ce but, et qu'il demande en conséquence du Gouvernement Egyptien, l'autorisation de faire passer des troupes sur son territoire pour arriver à l'Abyssinie, en même temps que son assistance en faveur des officiers chargés de la direction de cette expédition, et dont quelques uns auraient déjà reçu l'ordre de se rendre à cet effet à Massowah.

Son Excellence ajoute que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique retirera ses troupes immédiatement après, et qu'il entreprend cette expédition sans aucun esprit de conquête.

J'ai dû, M. le Gérant, prendre les ordres de Son Altesse le Vice-roi sur l'objet de cette communication.

Son Altesse me charge d'exprimer au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, auquel il est uni par tant de liens d'amitié, tous ses regrets à propos des faits qu'il reproche

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 814.

au Négus d'Abyssinie et qui le déterminent à user au besoin de la force pour obtenir satisfaction.

En même temps, son Altesse ordonne que son Gouvernement accorde toutes les facilités possibles pour l'expédition ; qu'un officier spécial soit envoyé, à cet effet, à Massowah ; et que des instructions formelles soient transmises dans le même but aux autorités locales.

Je suis heureux, M. le Gérant, de porter à votre connaissance ces dispositions favorables qui, de la part de son Altesse, sont un nouveau témoignage du désir qu'elle éprouve de continuer les meilleurs relations avec votre Gouvernement ; et je vous présente l'assurance de ma haute considération.

Le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères,
(Signé) RAGHIB.

Inclosure 2 in No. 820.

*Acting Consul-General Reade to Raghib Pasha.**

M. le Ministre, *Alexandrie, le* 10 *Septembre*, 1867.

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser la réception de la dépêche de votre Excellence me communiquant de la part de Son Altesse le Vice-roi les sentiments amicaux qu'elle a bien voulu exprimer au sujet de l'expédition militaire projétée contre l'Abyssinie, aussi bien que les ordres donnés par son Altesse afin que toute facilité possible soit accordée de la part du Gouvernement Egyptien aux officiers de Sa Majesté Britannique chargés de cette expédition.

J'expédie à mon Gouvernement, par ce courrier, une copie de la dépêche de votre Excellence, et jusqu'à ce que je reçoive les instructions de Lord Stanley de vous transmettre une expression plus formelle de la reconnaissance de mon Gouvernement pour ces nouveaux témoignages d'amitié de la part de Son Altesse le Vice-roi et de son Gouvernement, je m'empresse en attendant de vous exprimer avec un vif plaisir, et au nom de mon Gouvernement, ses remerciements sincères pour les services importants si gracieusement accordés par son Altesse à cette occasion—services qui ne manqueront pas, j'en suis convaincu, de serrer davantage les liens d'amitié qui existent depuis si longtemps entre nos deux Gouvernements.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) THOS. F. READE.

No. 821.

*Mr. Egerton to Mr. T. Plowden.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 3, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th ultimo,† proposing to write a letter to the King of Abyssinia, with a view of inducing him to release the captives now detained in that country ; and in reply I am desired by his Lordship to thank you for this offer, and to inform you that he sees no objection to such a course being taken by you, as a private individual having influence with the King, provided the letter in question is merely in the form of friendly advice to the King from yourself, and that it is distinctly understood that Her Majesty's Government are in no way concerned in or cognizant of it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. C. EGERTON.

No. 822.

Lieutenant Abbott to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 3.)*

My Lord, *Aden, September* 6, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to report that Her Majesty's schooner "Fanny" arrived here yesterday morning having left Massowah on the morning of the 1st instant. Letters have been received from Mr. Rassam to Colonel Merewether, dated Magdala, 24th and 27th July ; from Captain Cameron to Colonel Merewether, dated Magdala, 24th July ;

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 819.

three letters from Mr. Flad, dated Debra Tabor, June 11th, July 9th, and July 11th; the first addressed to Colonel Merewether, the other two to Mr. Rassam; extracts of letters from Mr. Flad to M. Munzinger, dated 7th May, 28th May, 9th July, and 11th July; and four letters from Dr. Blanc for Colonel Merewether, dated respectively, Magdala, July 18th, July 19th, July 22nd, and July 24th. The two former copies "at length" are appended.

2. Mr. Rassam, writing on the 24th July, says, "I have at last succeeded in communicating with Debra Tabor; of ten different messengers, one of my servants, named Gosbo, managed to take letters and bring their answers, but even himself did not escape the rapacity of the rebels on returning. He managed to save the letters by having them hid in a bamboo, which he carried as a stick. I am sending this man to Massowah with these letters, together with another servant and a follower of Dejaj Mirand, in order that they may bring us money; I have told them that they must try and reach Massowah before the 17th proximo, when you intend to visit that port for the purpose of finding out whether the Emperor would send us down. I fear if England does not get us out by force of arms, we shall have to spend many an August in this wretched state, and Wakshum Gobazye has done so little since he came up to this vicinity that I have lost all hope of ever leaving this country through the succour of the rebels, for whom I am beginning to have utter contempt. I do not believe there is a more cowardly race than these Abyssinian rebels, who allow themselves to be butchered and plundered and have no pluck to attack their common enemy, against whom they might take a force of not less than 100,000 men (that is to say, if all join), and I am certain with the handful of men His Majesty has now, and the disgust every one has for him, he would not be able to hold his ground one day. The rebel Chiefs talk very big, but do very little. We have not heard of the movements of Wakshum Gobazye since I last wrote to you in the beginning of this month; all his big talk about attacking the Emperor and releasing the Bishop and myself and party has dwindled to nothing. One day we heard that he had made friends with the Walloo Gallas upon their promising to pay him tribute, and the next, it is reported that he had to retreat to Lasta for fear of the Gallas, who had gone to Yagó to turn him out of it. However, whether he is powerful or weak, far or near, it is evident that he can render us no succour, and even if he manage to get us out, the chances are he will follow the example of Theodorus by keeping us and trying to get what he can out of the British Government. Another private messenger has arrived from the Emperor who has brought us compliments from His Majesty. In his letter to the Chiefs of this garrison he says, 'Inform my friend Aitoo Rassam the glad tidings of my faithful subjects of Agou Mader having repulsed the attack of a great rebel of Godjam, and of the destruction of the Gondar rebel and his party who had plundered his messenger in Waggara.' He said also that he would not 'forsake' me. He alluded to Daftara Dusta, who had lost 300 dollars while he was coming up from Massowah in August last. It is so difficult for messengers to travel between this place and Massowah for the next forty days that I do not intend to send down again before the beginning of September, unless indeed I shall have something important to communicate: so farewell until then."

On the 27th of July Mr. Rassam writes:—

"As the messengers have not been able to start before now on account of not finding a proper escort to conduct them through Dalanta, I am enabled to add a few lines. The new King of Shoa has sent to say that he intends to capture this fortress, and asked for the Metropolitan's blessing. He is a mere boy, and writes like a child. He could no more come so far than he could go to Massowah; and the very name of Theodorus would make him hide himself under his mother's dress. His Majesty has sent to say that he would be here in four or five days; but there is as much chance of seeing him here before the middle of September (at the earliest) as there is in seeing you here,—unless, indeed, he leaves everything behind (which he cannot possibly do), and comes here himself alone with a few followers."

3. Captain Cameron, who generally writes so cheerfully, appears now to be becoming despondent; he writes as follows:—"I merely write to thank you for the news about the column. Your letter has the right ring about it, and has given me some hopes; but I am wearing out, and have to fight with myself day and night to prevent my giving way altogether. I shall still, however, cherish the hope of living to shake you by the hand in a few months. The rains have set in, and the constant streams from the floor of my room seem to be poisoning me. These things are difficult to remedy; courage and patience must be my watch-word for some time longer; never mind, pray come and get us out, and all will be well."

4. Mr. Flad, writing to Colonel Merewether, on the 11th of June, says:—

"What will you think has become of me when you, up till now, have not received

a single line from me? I hope that you will have heard the news of my safe arrival here from Mr. Rassam long ago. I was very anxious to send immediately, but it was impossible: no way—all in rebellion against the King. No safety all around us. To-morrow merchants are going to Massowah with an escort of the King as far as Ifag, and I hope that our messenger will get on with them. The King's soldiers are deserting in every direction, but still he has left an army of 10,000 or more soldiers, chiefly gunners. If it will go so well with him a month or two more, he will reach a certain point advantageous to the British Government. His last deeds were plundering Dembea Dagusa, and part of Begemder, and to slaughter, in about a fortnight, 1,000,000* of cows and oxen. No one was allowed to keep a cow, even for milk; thousands of people were executed in one week in our neighbourhood; the wives and children, even, of some soldiers who had run away were not spared. We are living in constant fear of death, and in scarcity of food. water, and wood; a small hut, which even gives us not a good protection against the rains, is our all. The articles of Mr. Rassam I brought with me are still here. The 1,000, dollars are, I believe, not yet paid by His Majesty. No communication between this and Magdala. There are about ten servants of the European prisoners here, and no road for them to return to their masters. I believe Abyssinia never was so bad as it is at present. Regarding our affair, the King does not say much, but he is grieved that he did not get the artizans and machinery. To Mr. Waldemeier and companions he once said: 'Did you hear the private message Mr. Flad had for me from Her Majesty the Queen of England? But now, if they don't come and fight for Mr. Rassam, I shall defy them and despise every white man.' On the 8th instant Isherry arrived; he was plundered three hours from here. Your letters are left at Derite, where they have to remain until His Majesty sends for them. On the 9th, when he saw me, he said, 'Though the English are too proud to send me workmen, God has given me, in Mr. Waldemeier and Saalmuller, workmen who can do every work for me; but I tell you if they don't come now and fight for their Mr. Rassam I shall keep him and force them to give me what I want from them. I have Mr. Rassam in my hands; what shall I fear? I have them in my hands.' To me he said, 'I know you did not come back in the fire for my sake, but for your wife's and children's sake, to die with them; still I will not be angry with you, because you have brought me an answer.' To this I said, it was true I came back because I love my wife and children, but at the same time I had confidence in him, that he would not be angry with me for having brought him an answer from Her Majesty the Queen. Regarding Her Majesty's Government, I said that they had no intention of war if they can settle this affair in peace, and that the artizans and machinery are waiting for his order at Massowah according to Her Majesty's letter; and it would be a pity if those clever men and useful machines would not come to your Majesty's Court. To this he said, 'Well, we must see the letter; if we can get it, perhaps we can get them all.' As far as I can judge, the King does not want artizans; what should he want with them before he governs his country again? According to the Abyssinian prophecy, he will again conquer Abyssinia, and have a happy reign of twenty years. Whether His Majesty will send an answer to Her Majesty's letter and to yours, is very doubtful. As far as I can judge, a political change must take place this rainy season."

On the 9th of July Mr. Flad writes to Mr. Rassam as follows:—

"The country people all around us are in rebellion against His Majesty, on which account the road is made unsafe. Yours and Captain Cameron's messengers arrived here naked, being deprived of their clothing and the mules by the peasants. All of us enjoy good health. His Majesty, though vexed fearfully by his soldiers and rebellious Begemder population, has been hitherto very kind to every one of us. Though His Majesty, in the last six weeks, has killed above 3,000 men, soldiers and peasants, they are still so obstinate that they yet will not obey his orders, but prefer rather to die than to pay to His Majesty the tribute he asks them to pay. His Majesty kindly gave us a place below the new church in the hedge, in order that we may not be disturbed or insulted at night by thieves or rebels who surround us. His Majesty supplies us with cows and sheep, so we have plenty to eat. His Majesty made some angry expressions about the English Government, because they did send the instruments, machinery, and machines only as far as Massowah, and not directly to His Majesty's Court, as his wish was. His Majesty is at present at Madracha; he has taken Messrs. Waldemeier and Saalmuller with him. A large mortar, called Sebastopol, is in work. They are hard at work. No road between here and Massowah for a long time."

On the 11th of July Mr. Flad tells Mr. Rassam that "the King is expected back to-day; we have already plenty of rain day and night; fearful thunderstorms."

5. In writing to M. Munzinger on the 7th May, Mr. Flad says:—

* *Sic in orig.*

"The general opinion is, that the King will put all Europeans to death as soon as English troops land. This is possible, but I doubt it much. It would, I think, be well, nay, even necessary, that the Government, when making a Proclamation, should say nothing of its intention to punish the King. Any hostile wording would make him lose whatever occult hopes he may entertain, and would only lead him on to vengeance. Have nothing to do with the rebels before you are in the country itself. State in the Proclamation that you are coming to fight against the King, in order to force him to surrender the prisoners. It is certain that the King conceals very well-calculated ends by his obstinacy. As long as the Government does not treat with the rebels, the prisoners have nothing to fear. M. Bardel is in high favour, and is always at the camp. A letter of mine to my wife was intercepted on the road, and given to him to translate. In doing this he concealed everything which might have caused injury. We are all living in tents. Gaffat is deserted. We have rain daily."

On the 28th of May Mr. Flad writes as follows to M. Munzinger:—

"Every day fresh desertions: it is said that during the last three days 1,200 men have left the King. Mr. Mority has been in chains for a week; the cause is unknown. We are strictly guarded, and surrounded by soldiers."

On the 2nd of July Mr. Flad writes:—

"The King has about 8,000 soldiers. All the country round is in a state of rebellion."

On the 9th he continues:—

"I am very much annoyed at not being able to send my letters. I fear also that Colonel Merewether and others might place a wrong construction on the cause of my long silence: we are in perpetual fear of our lives. The King during the last six weeks has had 4,000 persons put to death, soldiers and peasants, either burning them, or cutting their throats like beasts, or shooting them. He has caused women and children to be tortured, dishonoured, and starved in an unheard-of manner. The King asks no more about the telescope, and it is always in my possession. Mr. Rassam's things are still here. Essller, Schiller, and Makerer are pretty well, but suffer much at times. The King had five of their servants executed for having concealed their masters' projects. Provisions are very expensive here—three or four blocks of salt for one thaler, &c. Dysentery is making great ravages in the camp. Mc Kelvy is very ill, and I have small hopes of his recovery. Our existence here is very miserable; with difficulty we procure the common necessaries of life."

"*July* 11.—The King has caused several thousand deserters (soldiers) to be executed. Everything here is miserable, and the daily fear of death. No one can proceed further than one mile without an escort. The King treats me well, but is cold and indifferent. It appears he is not likely to yield. He says, As long as I have Rassam, the English nation, which does not like war, will give me what I wish."

6. Dr. Blanc's letter of the 22nd July contains the following:—

"The camp (King's) is surrounded by a strong fence. The King is obliged to go out himself with the musqueteers to protect the camp followers, when they collect wood, otherwise they would be cut to pieces. The King's residence is strongly fenced. A platform has been erected at the top of the hill for the guns. They are fired when, in the absence of the King, the peasants attack the camp. Europeans are in a hedge near the King, inclosed in his own fence. He has consecrated his new church, and is building near it a large house for his prisoners. He has but few soldiers, but a great number of starved peasants, who follow him on the plundering expeditions. On the road they murder one another, to rob what the more fortunate have been able to plunder. Soldiers even kill one another for the same purpose. Two of the Europeans have gone with the King to Antracho, to build rafts, and fire the cannon on the people of the island if they attempt to decamp in their boats. Some of Rassam's servants, who had been plundered in May, returned. The King gave them neither clothes nor food. Hailo, the messenger to the King, was very sick. These accounts differ greatly from the supposed messenger's. Bardel has never been chained; is still in favour. In a country where any servant or messenger will make up a tale to please his master, it is quite impossible to know the truth. Fancy, we do not know at the present time whether some months ago the Bishop excommunicated the King or not! How can we know anything certain of what takes place a few miles from here? Send me, please, some Indian papers. There is no fear of the King whatever for the present; if he comes it will be known far and wide, and the messenger can be instructed to do away with them should this happen. Samuel begs to send his respectful compliments."

"*July* 24.—Last evening the servant of one of the prisoners, the same who is said to have come some time ago from the King, arrived. He brought stale news, but the

mountain people made such a fuss about it that I am more sceptical than ever. The message he brought was, 'I have killed the rebel who seized your things at Gonda and my faithful subjects of Agoumedar have killed a large number of rebels who came to attack them.' Both facts were known, only the King had nothing to do with the killing of Kassa Zoualon, who, with 200 of his kinsmen, fell by treachery in Dembea. The Agoumedar people defended their country against an officer of Tadla Zoualon, not out of love for the King, but simply because they preferred being their own masters. Nothing could show more the great weakness of the King and his friends than this fuss made about nothing at all. Gobazye has settled the Yedgon question satisfactorily, the son of Ras Mariay being acknowledged Governor by them. Gobaze is said to have returned to Lasta for the winter: so much for the Bishop's influence. Chiefs and petty Chiefs begin to quarrel here."

7. M. Munzinger writes from Massowah on the 31st of August—"I received news from Bogos which forced me to return, having been absent from this (Massowah) from the 17th to the 20th of August. The schooner 'Fanny' arrived here on the evening of the 27th; she will sail to-morrow morning at an early hour. I will again send Mr. Rassam some money, but unfortunately the last messengers who started with some of this valuable commodity encountered the greatest difficulty on the road, and have been obliged to remain for a season in Tigré. During my absence, bearers of letters from Magdala of the 27th July had arrived. I will send them back to-morrow with some money. Mr. Flad not having discovered any means of expediting messengers, writes to me *vid* Magdala; his last date is 11th of July. I inclose a few extracts."

8. The last mail from Bombay, which arrived here on the morning of the 4th instant, brought me instructions from Colonel Merewether to have as many camels as are procurable collected in as short a time as possible. I sent for Mr. Hassan Ali, the Government Contractor in the Public Works Department, the same afternoon, and gave him orders on this subject; the following day he sent agents in all directions into the interior, and over to the opposite coast of Africa, for the purpose of collecting all the camels they could. Colonel Merewether also sent me an immediate letter for M. Munzinger, the Acting British Consul at Massowah, requesting him to procure all available carriage. A native boat was engaged in the afternoon, and started early on the morning of the 5th with Colonel Merewether's letters, some newspapers and letters for the captives, and a letter from myself to M. Munzinger, asking him to forward any intelligence there might be by the same boat. The nacoda expects to make the voyage there and back in seven or eight days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. B. ABBOTT.

P.S., *September* 12, 1867.—Letters have been received from your Lordship to Colonel Merewether's address; these await Colonel Merewether's return from Bombay. Colonel Merewether is expected to arrive here about the 18th or 20th of this month.

H. B. A.

Inclosure 1 in No. 822.

*Dr. Blanc to Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel; *Magdala, July* 18, 1867.

YOU will have seen by the two small notes inclosed in my two last letters, what the King's two great rivals proposed to undertake. I was not wrong when I took it to be simply boasting. From the first nothing more has been heard; the second sent another messenger, who told the Bishop, on the part of his master, "You know that we cannot take forts, so it would be useless for me to come; but give me your blessing, and I will go and attack my blood enemy." The required blessing was duly given, but though a fortnight ago, this would-be hero still remains in the Yedjon's country. Some say that he is acknowledged by them, and has appointed the son of Ras Marié (brother of Ras Aali) as Governor of the province; whilst others report that a large section of the population still in arms resist his authority, and have called upon the Queen of the Gallas to render them assistance.

It is generally reported that she has gone in that direction, but whether for peace or war is doubtful, though Gallas seldom fight far from their own country; and probably as the rival Queen is to be befriended by Shoa, she will endeavour to form an alliance with Gobazye. Whatever may be his position in Yedjon, acknowledged or not, he will far less attack the King than this mountain; the fallen and humble lion is, even in his weakness,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

much more dreaded than all the ambas of Abyssinia put together. Gobazi is rising, the King is falling; the first knows well that the King can no more march against him, and must before very long retire here or run to the low country, so Gobazye quietly awaits until, by mere necessity, the whole of the Amhara must recognize him. His messages to the Bishop are the natural consequences of his birth, all Abyssinians being story-tellers and boasters, and the greater the man the more he indulges in such freaks. That Gobazye is morally no better, quite as treacherous as the King, a fact that happened a few days ago clearly proves. You remember Rasadiloo, the Yedjoh chief about whom I wrote to you some time ago; he went to the Wakshum, was well received and told to remain as a friend and guest, but a few days ago he was seized by his order and put in chains—a simple measure of precaution. This is not the man into whose hands I would like to fall. Before long we would find that we have simply exchanged gaolers; with him or with the King, only one thing will succeed. Should any false hopes lull into imaginary expectations, and the proposed steps be postponed, not only ourselves will have reason to lament the change, but more so Government, who after renewed negotiations will have some day to send troops into this country to liberate or avenge: but of evil good comes. I believe we might out of the Wakshum reap great advantages. This is what I mean: the King though fallen very low, though surrounded by large bodies of rebels on all sides, though he cannot communicate any more with this fortress, still can come here whenever he likes, and I fear will; although as I have formerly stated, he must lose, by that move, the greater part of his remaining army. His staying at Debra Tabor or coming here materially influences our positions: our lives would be saved on the one hand; probably lost on the other. Moreover, for an army it would simplify matters exceedingly. In every respect it is so important to keep him from entering Magdala before the arrival of the force that any reasonable plan ought to be tried to obtain that end. What I would suggest is this: in a few days the rivers will be full, and until the 15th or 20th September he cannot cross them. Should Gobazye be induced to come here by that date (he is only three days' distance), and encamp around the amba as if he was laying siege to it, then the King will not come; though the bravest, he is too weak to venture to attack him, as very few indeed would follow him even the first stage if they knew that Gobazye was between the Bechiloo and Magdala. The amba would doubtless surrender, but should it hold out until the arrival of our troops we would be in perfect safety and probably well treated, when it would be known that our countrymen are marching to deliver us. Should you approve of this plan, after all a very simple and feasible one, its execution would offer no difficulty; you would have only to despatch at once a trusty messenger to Gobazye, who would be in the present political condition of the country only too happy to act according to your wishes, if he is made aware that troops are in readiness, and arrrive what may, in October they will land.

He requires neither guns nor anything of the kind; he need not attempt to take the mountain: what we want is his presence in the neighbourhood, it will be sufficient to keep away the King; and I am almost certain from what our guards say, that he would not be a fortnight below before the soldiers would open the gates, however opposed the Chiefs themselves might be to such a step. Even should Wakshum Gobazye not comply with your request (a point on which I have however not the slightest doubt) communications are so thoroughly interrupted that the King could not possibly hear of your corresponding with him.

The Bishop, always sanguine, put the utmost credence in the first message of Gobazye, spoke to his friends and made a plan to open our chains and supply us with arms; it was rash, because, should the King come, some one is certain to betray the others in order to gain favour in the eyes of the despot. Samuel and many of the best men on the mountain would certainly forfeit their lives.

No news whatever, only rumours more or less worthy of credence. The King is said to have buried his big guns, and afterwards to have murdered the labourers, so that they should not reveal the spot. Kafra Goolon, the Kamante rebel of Tchelga, is said to have invaded Koura, the King's native land. Dembea people are said to have sent a deputation to Gobazi, requesting him to protect them. The King proclaimed that in future all those who did not submit he would execute (nothing new); made a sortie and butchered every man, woman, and child he caught.

The Dahonte people will not have anything to do with the Wakshum, because they say the locust always follows in his wake. If we up here know nothing, how is it that they are so wise and well informed at Bekesbourne, and such other similar places?

I have just heard that the Queen of the Gallas has agreed to pay tribute to Gobazye; he is to have Dalanta, the Queen Dahoute, he is not to enter the Galla country unless called upon by the Queen in defence of her country. This makes him very strong; he

cannot have less, with his Galla allies, than 50,000 men, of whom 3,000 are armed with muskets, but the whole host would scatter like chaff before the first shell.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) H. BLANC.

Inclosure 2 in No. 822.

*Dr. Blanc to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

My dear Colonel, *Magdala, July* 19, 1867.

I HAVE just spoken to Samuel about your asking Gobazye to come here; he is quite delighted at the idea, and says, "If Colonel Merewether does it, you are all safe. I myself thought of it and told Gobaze's servant, when he came here, to tell his master to make friends with the English, that they only wanted their people and cared not for the amba and its treasures; but Gobaze will not believe what an Abyssinian tells him: it is very different if it comes from your people." He says that if you agree to the idea, no time ought to be lost. The letter should be written in this strain. Theodorus has imprisoned our people; after the rainy season Queen Victoria's soldiers will be sent to rescue them; if you desire to be great in your country, through our friendship, go to Dalanta and remain there till we come. We know that you have not the means of taking ambas, for us it is easy; all we require of you is that you will not allow Theodorus to enter Magdala before our arrival. Samuel says that the King is afraid of Gobazye and will not come if he is here. At the same time, should it come to nothing, and the King be here when the troops land, you must come single-handed, because, if in alliance with his blood enemy, he knows he has no pity to expect from him, and, in his despair, will proceed to extremities. Should the above succeed, we would not be so unlucky after all.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. BLANC.

No. 823.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 10.)*

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, October* 9, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Murray's letter of the 27th of August,† and to express my thanks for your Lordship's promise that the letter which I took the liberty of addressing to you on the 20th of that month shall be printed in the next collection of papers respecting Abyssinia to be laid before Parliament.

Though I cannot but believe that in my said letter I have sufficiently proved the falsehood of Mr. Rassam's accusation against me, I have, nevertheless, felt myself bound to show the real cause of the failure of that gentleman's mission with all its calamitous consequences, in order that it may be clearly seen where the blame really lies of having occasioned the costly and precarious warlike operations which are now being undertaken by Her Majesty's Government.

The facts elucidatory of a subject so materially affecting the honour and the interests of the British nation are set forth by me in a letter dated the 7th instant, which appeared in the "Morning Herald" newspaper of yesterday, a copy of which letter I now beg leave to lay before your Lordship:—

"*The Cause of the Abyssinian War.*

"To the Editor.

"As the British taxpayer is deeply interested in learning the truth as to the origin of the present costly war with the Emperor of Abyssinia, I avail myself of the columns of your widely circulating journal to give publicity to some important facts connected with the subject, which I believe to be not generally known.

"In August 1864, Mr. Rassam was made the bearer of a letter from Her Majesty the Queen to the Emperor Theodore,‡ which letter he delivered to that Monarch in person on January 28, 1866.§ In a despatch to Her Majesty's Government, dated the 22nd or 23rd of March following, Mr. Rassam reported his favourable reception, and gave a

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 808. ‡ See Inclosure in No. 451. § See No. 593.

narrative of events from his arrival at the Emperor's Court almost down to the imprisonment of himself and the other members of the Mission, together with the former captives who had been liberated in compliance with Her Majesty's request.

"This most important document is not printed among the papers laid before Parliament. But an abstract of it, made by Colonel Merewether for the use of the Government of Bombay, appeared in the 'Times of India' of July 21, 1866, was thence copied in England into the 'Jewish Intelligence' of October 1st following, and has since been printed, with a running comment, in my work 'The British Captives in Abyssinia.' Could it have been foreseen that Her Majesty's Envoy, with the liberated captives, would be detained and imprisoned, this abstract assuredly would never have seen the light; Mr. Rassam's narrative being manifestly adapted for an anticipated triumph rather than for the lamentable failure which has ensued.

"According to that narrative, the Emperor, shortly after the receipt of the Queen's letter, sent orders to Magdala for the liberation of the captives, and wrote to Her Majesty a most respectful and friendly letter. In so doing he must be understood to have condoned all previous offences, whether on the part of the British Government or of any individuals; and his subsequent change of conduct has, therefore, to be attributed to some fresh grievance, real or imaginary. For it cannot be believed that he would have been so senseless as to quarrel again with England almost immediately without some ostensible reason.

"A translation of the Emperor's answer* is printed in page 35 of the Abyssinian Blue Book; but the Queen's letter† is not given, although Her Majesty's subsequent letter of October 4, 1866,‡ is printed in page 77.

"From the absence of a copy of the Queen's first letter, it cannot be said what was its precise tenor. Still, it is certain that it was not limited to the simple demand for the liberation of Her Majesty's Consul and his companions in captivity, but contained some offer and held out some promises for the future. Indeed, traces of this are perceptible in the Emperor's letter to Mr. Rassam of March 14, 1866§ (Blue Book, page 114), wherein he states, 'In the letter which my friend the Queen sent it is thus said: "We have sent to you, Mr. Rassam . . . . Consult with him concerning what you require of us, and he will do it for you."' And, again, Mr. Flad, in his Report to the Earl of Clarendon, of July 10, 1866‖ (Blue Book, page 36), puts into the Emperor's mouth the following words with reference to the Queen:—She says, in her letter, everything I wish Mr. Rassam will do for you.

"It is true that on the former passage Mr. Rassam makes this curious note:—'I do not know how this passage has crept into the translation. It was deemed inexpedient to discuss the matter.' And on the latter passage Mr. Flad makes the not less remarkable observation, 'There was one sentence in Her Majesty's letter which was just the contrary to its meaning translated.'

"When the Queen's letter is laid before Parliament it will be seen what Her Majesty really did say. Meanwhile it is clear, from the statement of Mr. Waldemeier, the Chief of Bishop Gobat's lay missionaries (otherwise the Emperor's European workmen), dated March 20, 1866, and published in the 'Record' of 11th July following, that an arrangement of some kind was proposed and agreed to, for he says—'It is possible, as Mr. Rassam tells me, that, in consequence of some Treaty between England and Abyssinia, there may be more liberty for Europeans to come to Abyssinia and leave it again at pleasure.'

"From the whole tenor of the Emperor Theodore's conduct from the very outset, it is certain that he had nothing more at heart than an alliance with England, and the Treaty thus entered into with Mr. Rassam would naturally have seemed to him the realization of his fondest wishes. What then could have given him a more painful shock than to learn that the British Government did not desire an alliance with him; and to be told this on no less an authority than that of Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs!

"In order to explain this, it is necessary to go back to what occurred in the latter half of the year 1865, several months before Mr. Rassam reached the Emperor's Court.

"In July of that year, when nearly a twelvemonth had elapsed, and Mr. Rassam had not proceeded further than Massowah with Her Majesty's letter, Earl Russell decided on recalling that gentleman and sending out Mr. Palgrave in his stead. The latter was already in Egypt and on the very eve of proceeding up the Nile to Abyssinia when Mr. Rassam suddenly made his appearance at Suez on September 5, 1865, and telegraphed to Colonel Stanton that Consul Cameron had been released, which news Colonel Stanton

* See Inclosures 2 and 3 in No. 609. † See Inclosure in No. 451.
‡ No. 661. § Inclosure 13 in No. 706. ‖ No. 610.

instantly repeated to the Foreign Office. On the same day, however, Mr. Rassam addressed a letter to Earl Russell, contradicting the intelligence which had been communicated by telegraph.

"Mr. Rassam's said letter* has not been laid before Parliament, but a portion of its contents is given by Earl Russell in his despatch to Colonel Stanton, dated October 5, 1865,† which is printed among the papers respecting Abyssinia, laid before Parliament just before the close of the session 1866.

"Though the contents of Mr. Rassam's letter have not been made public, it cannot be doubted that in it the certain prospect was held out of the speedy release of Consul Cameron and the other captives; and as Her Majesty's Government appear at that time to have determined on abandoning Abyssinia as soon as ever Mr. Rassam and the others should have left the country, Earl Russell thought fit to write to Colonel Stanton his memorable despatch of October 5, 1865, wherein he declared that, 'considering the short tenure of power in the Abyssinian Kings, whatever be their title, the difficulty of reaching with a regular British force their seats of Empire, and the little value of a victory gained at Gondar and Shoa, the risk of failure, and the certainty of expense, it had seemed to the British Government a preferable course to withdraw, as much as possible, from Abyssinian engagements, Abyssinian alliances, and British interference in Abyssinia.'

"Unhappily his Lordship did not content himself with merely laying this down as a rule for the guidance of Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, or at most with authorizing him to make the contents of his despatch known to the Government of that country, deferring its publication until such time as Mr. Rassam and the captives should be known to be safely out of the power of the Abyssinian Monarch. On the contrary, for some reason which is only to be guessed at, this despatch was published in the 'London Gazette' of October 31, 1865, whence, on the following morning, it was copied into all the daily newspapers, and from these in turn translated into several of the continental journals, especially those of France.

"The fatal nature of this step is evidenced by the following statement of Mr. Flad, in his letter to the Earl of Clarendon of July 10, 1866‡ (Blue Book, page 41) :—

"'I must say the Government, as well as the different societies like that who sent out Dr. Beke, acted very imprudently since our captivity began. If some of those letters and despatches would be sent by one of our enemies to King Theodore, they would be enough to provoke his indignation in such a way that he would kill in one day, not only those who have English blood in their veins, but every one who is from the European race.'

"And in a foot-note he prominently instances this identical missive of October 5, 1865, saying, 'For example, the despatch of Lord Russell to the Political Agent and Consul-General in Egypt.'

"As both Earl Russell and Mr. Layard have repeatedly deprecated in Parliament, in the strongest terms, the expression of anything at all likely to give offence to the Emperor Theodore, and to endanger the success of Mr. Rassam's mission, if not even the lives of the captives, this glaring inconsistency is quite unaccountable, except upon the supposition of its having been confidently anticipated that ere the knowledge of this inauspicious document could possibly reach Abyssinia, Mr. Rassam would have obtained the liberation of the captives, and have succeeded in altogether leaving the country with them. If this was really the calculation of the authorities of the Foreign Office, they were woefully mistaken, as I now proceed to show.

"A few days after my arrival at Massowah, in January 1866, I was informed by M. Munzinger, the French Vice-Consul there, who had recently been placed by Colonel Merewether in charge of the British Consulate likewise, that a French newspaper, containing a translation of Lord Russell's despatch, had been received in Massowah a short time previously; and, having himself read it, he expressed 'the opinion that, if a knowledge of the contents of that despatch should reach the Emperor Theodore, he would assuredly regard it as an absolute withdrawal of friendship on the part of England, if not as a declaration of hostilities, and might, consequently, be expected to treat British subjects within his dominions as prisoners of war.'

"The foregoing passage is copied verbatim from page 240 of my work, already cited, where it is further stated that 'when I was at Massowah, there were several persons there quite willing and able to forward the French translation of Earl Russell's despatch into Abyssinia, and M. Bardel was there to read it to the Emperor, making such comments on it as he might think best suited to inflame his mind against the British Government and everybody dependent on or connected with them.'

"At that time I did not name any of the persons thus alluded to, neither did I

* See Inclosure 1 in No. 529. † No. 539. ‡ No. 611.

mention what I now copy from my diary, written on the spot, namely, that M. Munzinger said 'he did not at all believe that any one had thought it worth while to repeat to Theodore anything that had appeared in the newspapers.' Still he expressed his decided opinion that, if a knowledge of the contents of that despatch should reach the Emperor, then the result would be as I have just stated.

"I must confess that I was, and still am, at a loss to understand M. Munzinger's avowed belief that 'no one would think it worth while,' seeing that he must be well acquainted, as every one is who knows Massowah, with the character of Padre Del Monte, his own intimate friend and agent during his frequent absences from Massowah, who is the person I had specially in my mind when I noted down what is written above, and respecting whom Colonel Merewether has thus expressed himself in his letter to Lord Stanley of February 28, 1867* (Blue Book, page 128): 'An intriguing priest named Delamonté had a copy of Earl Russell's despatch to Colonel Stanton. This Delamonté corresponds, I know, with Bardel, and most probably communicated the essence of that despatch, which was used by Bardel to promote his views.'

"Colonel Merewether adds that a spy of the King was at Massowah at the end of April and beginning of May 1866, and visited the Roman Catholic (French) mission, and saw Del Monte there; and he would seem to imply that it was through the instrumentality of this spy that the contents of Earl Russell's despatch were communicated to Bardel. It is, however, in my power to demonstrate that it had been sent from Massowah several months previously.

"When M. Munzinger told me on January 24, 1866, that he had read that despatch in a French newspaper, I was anxious to see it, and requested him to ask Padre Del Monte to lend it me to read; but though he sent me several other French papers containing information respecting Mr. Rassam, the captives, and myself, M. Munzinger was unable to procure me the one I wanted, and as there is no conceivable reason why Padre Del Monte should not have let me see it with the other newspapers if it had still been in his possession, whilst it was urgent that he should lose no time in making M. Bardel acquainted with it, in order to foil Mr. Rassam, it may assuredly be concluded that he had already sent it off into the interior. Assuming this to be the case, and that it had taken two months to reach Massowah (which is more than sufficient), that no time was lost in forwarding it to M. Bardel (which under the circumstances is only natural), and that it took six weeks to reach its destination (which is a fair average), we have the beginning of January 1866, for the date of its arrival at Massowah, and the middle of the ensuing month, February, for that of its arrival at Zegay.

"Now, Mr. Rassam had reached the Emperor's Court with the Queen's letter on January 28, 1866, and as that letter was all that Theodore could possibly desire, there is no ground whatever for imagining him not to have been perfectly sincere, at that early period, in his friendly reception of Her Majesty's Envoy, in his conduct generally towards him, and in his liberation of the captives and delivery of them over to him; and the Treaty which Mr. Rassam negotiated with him would only have tended to strengthen his kindly feelings towards the whole party.

"About the middle of February, however, arrived the ill-omened despatch of Earl Russell,† expressing the aversion of the British Government to Abyssinian engagements and alliances.

"With the Queen's letter and the Treaty in one hand, and Earl Russell's despatch in the other, what could Theodore believe but that Her Majesty's Government were dealing falsely and treacherously with him, and that when once Mr. Rassam and the captives should be out of the country, the Treaty just entered into would become a dead letter, if, indeed, it were not absolutely repudiated, as having been negotiated without authority, or for some other plausible reason? Hence his determination that the British Envoy should not quit the country till some material guarantee had first been obtained for the sincerity of England, and hence the arrest and detention of the whole party on April 13, 1866.

"It remains to be seen how far the dates of the several occurrences tally. In a note made by Mr. Rassam on the Emperor's letter to him of March 23‡ (Blue Book, page 116), that gentleman says that at the interview consequent on that letter, His Majesty 'consulted with all his nobles and best advisers about our leaving Abyssinia, and it was determined that we should all depart thence.' And a week afterwards the Emperor wrote to Mr. Rassam, that as soon as certain presents should be completed, 'I wish you to hold yourselves in readiness to start (for Europe), by the power of God'§ (Blue Book, page 117).

"Of course, this was not at all meant, but was simply deceit against supposed

* No. 712. † No. 539. ‡ Inclosure 17 in No. 706. § Inclosure 19 in No. 706.

treachery; for Mr. Flad reports to the Earl of Clarendon* (Blue Book, page 37) that 'a month before we had received the King's order to start, it was reported by the natives that the King intended to keep Mr. Rassam and the released prisoners, in order to get a "kassa" (ransom) satisfaction from the Queen of England.' Now, remarkably enough, one month before March 23 would be February 23; whilst calculating from the other end, we have been brought to the middle of February as the approximate date of the arrival at Zegáy of Earl Russell's despatch. The conclusion, therefore, is inevitable, that that despatch was the immediate cause of Mr. Rassam's detention, and thus led to all the evils which have since ensued, and it is to be feared have yet to come.

"*Bekesbourne, October 7.*

"I am, &c.

(Signed) "CHARLES BEKE."

To the facts thus stated I would beg leave to add that, according to the evidence adduced in my letter to your Lordship of 20th August last,† the messenger, who carried my letter to the Emperor with the petition from the relatives of the captives, left Massowah on 30th January, 1866, and reached Korata on 15th March, having been just six weeks on the journey: and that the rumour of my arrival at Massowah preceded my messenger only two days.

The facts now submitted to your Lordship afford, therefore, a proof (if such further proof were requisite), in addition to those already recorded, that my mission had nothing whatever to do with Mr. Rassam's disgrace, in spite of the attempts made by him and his patron Mr. Layard, as well as by his brother-in-law Mr. Badger, to attribute the blame to me. At the same time, these facts suggest an all-sufficient motive for the earnest desire evinced by them to make me the scapegoat for the sins of others, now that Mr. Rassam's fellow-prisoners, Mr. Stern and Consul Cameron, are no longer available for that purpose.

In implicit reliance on your Lordship's inflexible sense of justice, I respectfully request you to allow the present letter to be likewise printed in the next collection of papers relating to Abyssinia that may be laid before Parliament.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 824.

Lord Stanley to Acting Consul-General Reade.‡

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 10, 1867.

I HAVE received your telegram by which you inform me that an offer has been made by the Viceroy of Egypt to send a Mission to King Theodore with a view of counselling him to release the British subjects and others detained in captivity in Abyssinia rather than to incur the danger of an attack upon his territory by British forces.

I have now to instruct you to offer to the Viceroy the best thanks of Her Majesty's Government for the interest taken by His Highness in the prisoners, and you will state that Her Majesty's Government will gladly avail themselves of this opportunity of endeavouring to avert the necessity of a war, and will entertain the hope that the Viceroy's Mission may be successful.

You will, however, add that Her Majesty's Government do not deem it prudent to relax in the least in their preparations for an invasion of Abyssinia, although you will assure His Highness that if the prisoners are released, and are safely sent out of the country, no further steps will be taken by Her Majesty's Government against King Theodore.

I am, &c.

(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 825.

Mr. Murray to Dr. Beke.‡

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 12, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowlege the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, inclosing a copy of a letter published by you in the "Morning Herald" newspaper, respecting Mr. Rassam's Mission to Abyssinia.§

* See No. 610, Paragraph 13.

† No. 802.

‡ Laid before Parliament, 1867.

§ No. 823.

I am to add that your letter will be printed in the next collection of papers respecting Abyssinia that may be laid by Lord Stanley before Parliament.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

No. 826.

Mr. T. Plowden to Mr. Egerton.—(*Received October* 15.)*

Sir, 80, *Gloucester Place, Portman Square, October* 14, 1867.

WITH reference to your letter of the 3rd instant,† I beg leave to submit the draft of the letter I propose to send to the Emperor Theodorus, subject to Lord Stanley's approval.

I have endeavoured to make the communication a strictly private one; and if I have departed from this resolution in the concluding sentence, it is under the conviction that unless some such opening is given, no letter would have any effect whatever.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TREVOR PLOWDEN.

Inclosure in No. 826.

*Mr. T. Plowden to King Theodore.**

May it please your Majesty,

I, THE elder brother of the late Walter Plowden, respectfully approach your Majesty, emboldened to do this by the recollection of your Majesty's great kindness to him, and of his respect and esteem for your Majesty.

Your Majesty knows that it was always my brother's object to establish friendship between your Majesty and Queen Victoria, and by the blessing of God he succeeded. So long as he lived there was friendship and mutual goodwill, which the Embassy your Majesty proposed to send would doubtless have confirmed and strengthened. At this juncture it pleased God to take my brother from this world. Alas! what disastrous consequences ensued! Your Majesty, displeased with his successor, Consul Cameron, imprisoned him, and with him many other British subjects, and thus the friendship which my brother so long and so earnestly laboured to establish was rudely shaken, and now threatens to be entirely destroyed.

I, the brother of Walter Plowden, seeing this unhappy state of things, knowing how my brother honoured and respected your Majesty, and how this disturbance of old friendship would have grieved his heart, and myself grateful for your Majesty's numerous kindnesses to him, desire to do what he would have done had he been alive, to come forward as a friend to your Majesty, and in order to bring about a renewal of friendship between your Majesty and Queen Victoria.

My brother never deceived your Majesty, neither will I. Therefore I write and ask, why this difference? Has Consul Cameron displeased your Majesty by going to Bogos to the Turks? If so, it was from inexperience, he being new to the country and to the office; for your Majesty knows well, as my brother has often told you, that Queen Victoria does not and would not encourage or support Turks against your Majesty. If, therefore, it is for this error Consul Cameron has been imprisoned for four (?) years, the punishment is enough. To keep him longer in confinement, and with him the other British subjects, who have not offended, is unworthy of a great King. Their detention in captivity is injurious to your Majesty's reputation for justice, and an indignity to Queen Victoria. While this continues, how can there be friendship?

I write to your Majesty, as my brother would have done, as a friend and well-wisher, with the words of truth and sincerity, of my own free will, and apart from my Government, to increase your fame, and to restore friendship and goodwill between the countries of England and Abyssinia.

I therefore pray your Majesty to remember your great name, and your reputation for justice and magnanimity, to remember also my brother, and the things he did for you, and his unhappy death, and to remember that friendship is better than enmity.

And for all these considerations I pray your Majesty to release Consul Cameron and the other captives, and to send them with all honour to Massowah to Colonel Merewether,

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 821.

the Governor of Aden. Then will Queen Victoria understand that you desire friendship, not enmity. Then will she give friendship in return, and all will be as before in my brother's time. At the same time your Majesty can communicate your wishes to Colonel Merewether as to the future intercourse between the two countries.

No. 827.

*Mr. Egerton to Mr. Merivale.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 16, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you the accompanying copies of correspondence with Mr. T. Plowden,† brother of Her Majesty's late Consul in Abyssinia, and I am to request that you will move Secretary Sir S. Northcote to inform Lord Stanley whether he sees any objection to the letter which Mr. Plowden proposes to address to King Theodore.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. C. EGERTON.

No. 828.

Mr. Barron to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 19.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, October* 4, 1867.

MY despatch of the 3rd ultimo‡ will have informed your Lordship that I had executed the instructions conveyed in your letter of August 22nd,§ relative to the notification of war with Abyssinia.

I have now the honour to transmit a copy of the note by which I acquainted the Minister for Foreign Affairs that Her Majesty's Government, having resolved to resort to force, hoped that facilities would be afforded by the Sultan and the Viceroy of Egypt for the passage of Her Majesty's troops through Ottoman territory.

I have only just received His Highness's answer, herewith inclosed in copy. It is to the effect that His Majesty the Sultan authorizes the passage of British troops through his Empire for the purpose specified, and that consequently the Sublime Porte has requested His Highness the Khidive of Egypt to accord all necessary facilities to the force employed on this expedition.

I thought it advisable to communicate to the Viceroy of Egypt, during his residence at Emirghian, near this capital, the substance of your Lordship's despatch, and to explain to him in detail the events which had necessitated this expedition.

His Highness informed me that he had received an official and direct notice on the subject from Her Majesty's Government, and that he had lost no time in ordering his Ministers, by the telegraph, to do all in their power to facilitate the passage of of British troops. He further stated that he would advance his own departure to the 10th September, being an earlier date than that originally named, on the ground that his presence in Egypt would be necessary for accelerating the required preparations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. P. T. BARRON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 828.

Mr. Barron to Fuad Pasha.

Sir, *Constantinople, September* 1, 1867.

IT will, doubtless, be well known to His Majesty the Sultan, that certain of Her Majesty's officers and other Europeans have, for some time past, been detained in captivity, contrary to justice and the honour of nations, by King Theodore of Abyssinia.

Her Majesty's Government have exhausted all peaceful efforts to procure the release of the captives, and have now resolved to resort to force.

I have now the honour to communicate this fact to your Highness, and I am further instructed to state that, in order to reach Abyssinia, Her Majesty's Government

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † Nos. 819, 821, and 826. ‡ No. 815. § No. 804.

are led to believe that it will be necessary for their troops to pass through the Ottoman territory. If so, they do not doubt but that every facility will be afforded to them by the Sultan and the Viceroy of Egypt. His Imperial Majesty will readily understand that the Queen has no design of conquest in that district, and that Her Majesty's only object of a military expedition is to effect the release of the prisoners, and to punish the tyrant who detains them in captivity.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) H. P. T. BARRON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 828.

Fuad Pasha to Mr. Barron.

M. le Chargé d'Affaires, *Le* 1 *Octobre,* 1867.

J'AI eu l'honneur de mettre sous les yeux de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan la note que vous avez bien voulu m'adresser, le 1 Septembre, par laquelle, en m'annonçant la décision prise par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, d'employer la force armée contre le Roi Théodore d'Abyssinie, pour obtenir la délivrance des officiers Anglais et autres Européens tenus par lui en captivité, vous me faites part du désir du Cabinet de St. James, de faire passer à travers de l'Empire Ottoman les troupes qu'il sera dans le cas d'envoyer à cet effet en Abyssinie.

En réponse, je m'empresse de vous informer, M. le Chargé d'Affaires, que mon auguste Souverain, prenant en considération ce désir du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine, qui, comme vons le déclarez dans votre susdite note, n'a en vue par cette expédition aucun but de conquête, mais bien uniquement le redressement de ses légitimes griefs contre le Roi Théodore, s'est plû à autoriser le passage libre, à travers le territoire de son Empire, des troupes Anglaises se rendant en Abyssinie. Je dois ajouter, M. le Chargé d'Affaires, qu'en conséquence de cet ordre impérial, la Sublime Porte vient d'inviter Son Altesse le Khidive d'Egypte à accorder toutes les facilités nécessaires au corps expéditionnaire de Sa Majesté Britannique lors de son passage par cette partie de l'Empire.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) FUAD.

No. 829.

*Mr. Egerton to Mr. T. Plowden.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 22, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to inform you that he has been in communication with the India Office upon the subject of your letter of the 14th instant,† and that his Lordship sees no objection to the letter which you propose to address to the King of Abyssinia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. C. EGERTON.

No. 830.

Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 25.)*

My Lord, *Aden, September* 28, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to state that on my return from Bombay on the 26th instant I found your Lordship's despatch of the 19th ultimo with accompaniments.‡

The messenger who brought Prince Menelek's letter was still in Aden, awaiting the answer.

I have to-day delivered it to him, with instructions to return at once to Ankoba. He will leave Aden in a few days for Zeyla, and will proceed by the route from that place.

The presents sent for Her Majesty the Queen by Prince Menelek were forwarded to England in July last, viâ Southampton. Your Lordship does not mention anything about return presents to the Prince, but as I conclude your Lordship would not wish the messenger to return empty-handed, after having brought presents with him, I have caused a few suitable articles of English manufacture to be selected from those sent out las

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 826. ‡ No. 800.

November, which were then intended for the King Theodorus. It is not known to the messenger who they were originally meant for. A list of the articles chosen will be submitted hereafter.

I trust the above will meet with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 831.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to Sir S. Northcote.—(Communicated by India Office, October .)**

Sir, *Annesley Bay, October* 9, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to forward copy of my latest despatch to Government of Bombay, relating to Abyssinian affairs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

Inclosure in No. 831.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether to the Secretary to Government, Poonah.**

Sir, *Annesley Bay, October* 9, 1867.

JUST as I had closed my despatch of to-day to the Secretary to Government, Military Department, and the steamer "Coromandel" was about to leave, messengers arrived with letters from Magdala up to the 7th September, and from Debra Tabor to the 13th August.

2. Mr. Rassam writes from the former that they were all well, notwithstanding that fever of a typhoid nature was carrying off daily some of the native dwellers on the mountains. They were sorely pressed for money, owing to the sums sent up to them not having reached; 2,000 dollars were despatched on the 14th July, but the bearers remained at Adowa for some time, fearing to go further, and I regret to say that the messengers just arrived report them in Tigré still. Other dollars were dispatched by M. Munzinger in August by trustworthy people, which I hope may reach. Another thousand will be sent by these returning messengers.

3. Mr. Rassam says further, "We are afraid that Magdala will be besieged by the Wollo Gallas in a day or two, as a party from this garrison made a night attack on a village about twenty miles distance hence, killed its Chief with a great number of followers, and carried away the rest of the inhabitants captives, with all their cattle and horses. The reason this attack was made was because one of the officers in charge of the Royal Treasury and the Afa Negoos (mouth of the King through whom he speaks when deciding any case) decamped the day before yesterday, and went and took refuge in the village above alluded to. The Magdala party suffered very severely on their return, because they were foolish enough to burn three houses of the village, which roused the neighbourhood around and hundreds of horsemen hurried to the rescue of their countrymen, but they could render very little assistance, though they killed and wounded a great number of the enemy."

4. Dr. Blanc, after mentioning the above, writes: "We expect that this aggression will rouse the Queen of the Gallas to action. I hope so; as, though we may suffer from it, if it keeps off the King we do not mind a little roughing. We hear Gobazye is marching; should he come near here or go to Begemeder we are safe, and as you must come soon it will be a case of coming out soon with flying colours."

5. Mr. Flad writes: "We are going on here in the same manner as before, except that we have much sickness, and every day from forty to fifty cases of deaths, most owing to poverty, starvation, and dysentery. His Majesty enjoys good health now and is in excellent spirits; he is progressing in subduing his rebellious peasants and deserted soldiers by the sword and by the fire. There is no doubt if he will go on in this manner scarcely a man or female will be left alive. A beautiful island in the Tsana Lake, Matraska, was lately burnt with its inhabitants; the peasants of both sexes, aged, grey bearded people, and little children, were, in vast numbers, burnt: all the villages about are heaps of ashes and the churches broken down. Inside the hedge which surrounds the camp here His Majesty reigns, outside his name is not known; peasants hiding themselves in caverns and deserted soldiers come near to the fence every night, crying out the hardest

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

truths, which are called insults here. At present, great preparations are being made for battle with one of his chief rebels, most likely with that of Sustu: then, he says, it shall be decided whether he shall reign again or whether God will give it to another one. The Europeans here believe that after a month and a-half His Majesty will march towards Magdala. Messrs. Schiller, Esller, and Makerer he released of their hand-chains; on their legs they are still chained together. In their prison they have to make stone bullets for his mortars and cannons; Messrs. Staiger and Brandeis are still chained hand and foot. For the bullets the first three had made he gave them some measures of grain. Towards me, for the most part, he leaves me alone. I was told that some days ago, on an occasion when he saw Mr. Rassam's sword, he said to the keeper of his Treasury keep it well and take care of everything that belongs to Mr. Rassam: I have nothing, no quarrel with him; I imprisoned him only because I had listened to instigators. I shall bring him together with them, and set him at liberty. It cannot go on in this way much longer, some change must come. That is what every one says, even His Majesty. The opinion of the European workmen here is, that as soon as His Majesty will, after the rainy season, meet with Mr. Rassam, he will send an answer to Her Majesty's letter. Mr. Bardel thinks he will be the bearer of it. I hope before this will happen something will be decided either here or down at the Court. He has plenty of men to govern still for a long time in these his devastations as long as he has only to do with the helpless peasants, but if once he will meet on a battle-field one of his great rebel Chiefs, it will be decided; but, it seems, none of them wishes to attack him at first. What his intentions are towards the English prisoners no one can say, as he has never said a word about it to any one. If he gets time to send an answer he will only try to prolong the affairs and to make new conditions, and perhaps hold out some promises which he will never fulfil. Your telescope is still with me. His Majesty had asked Mr. Waldmeier again whether it was a good one, but when Mr. Waldmeier praised it highly he did not make any reply.

6. Mrs. Flad, Mrs. Rosenthal, and their children, had suffered from sickness, but were well at the time of writing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. L. MEREWETHER.

No. 832.

*Lord Stanley to Lieutenant-Colonel Merewether.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 26, 1867.*

I HAVE received your despatch of the 28th ultimo,† reporting that you had forwarded to Prince Menelek the letter which I addressed to him on the 19th of August, together with certain presents selected from those intended for King Theodore; and I have to state to you that I approve your proceedings in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) STANLEY.

No. 833.

*Sir S. Baker to Lord Stanley.—(Received October 29.)**

My Lord, *Hedenham Hall, Bungay, October 27, 1867.*

AS military operations against Abyssinia have commenced, I venture to suggest a supplementary expedition upon a small scale that would, most probably, effect the immediate release of the European captives, whose lives may otherwise be imperilled by the sudden rage of Theodore upon hearing of the advance of a hostile force from the Red Sea.

There is a great Chief, whom I know well, in a portion of Abyssinia, at the western base of the mountain chain—he is named Mek Nimmur and he rules as King over a small territory. This man is a great personal friend of Theodore, with whom he has much influence.

I received much attention from Mek Nimmur, and I propose that he should be the medium of communication with the King of Abyssinia, according to the following programme:—

A British Envoy, bearing an ultimatum from the Queen, should leave England accompanied by a force of 1,000 men direct to Alexandria, to embark at Suez for Souakin.

* Laid before Parliament, 1867. † No. 830.

The Egyptian Government should be requested to have a steamer with a supply of Nile water, &c., awaiting the force at Suez. Also, they should send immediate orders to the Governor of Souakin to hold 3,000 camels with fodder, &c., in readiness, so that the force could start the day after disembarkation.

The Governor of Souakim should be instructed to dispatch a messenger to Cassala with orders to the Governor of that province to collect an equal number of camels, with supplies, that the force might proceed without delay.

In December until May (when the rivers are fordable), a march of five days, in a direct route from Cassala, will reach Mek Nimmur's head-quarters, Mai Gubba, in Abyssinia; thus, in twenty days' march through a friendly country the Envoy and escort would reach Mek Nimmur from Souakin. A present of 200 old Tower muskets would secure Mek Nimmur's co-operation. I feel convinced that his influence well directed would quickly succeed in procuring the release of the captives, as he could explain the critical position of affairs in a manner that has hitherto been misunderstood.

A British Envoy thus powerfully supported would carry immense weight with the people of the country, and the King and his advisers would believe in his reality as a messenger from the Queen of England.

Introduced by Mek Nimmur I believe that Theodore would receive the British Envoy and his military escort, especially if he is hard pressed by the rebels.

On the other hand, should he refuse to liberate the captives, the force of 1,000 men would form an imposing centre around which the rebels would gather. Some 3,000 or 4,000 Tower muskets and ammunition should be taken by the British Envoy either to be used in organizing a rebel force or otherwise, as circumstances might render necessary: and a few well-selected officers might accompany the expedition to take the command of any rebel forces that might be raised.

I thoroughly believe that an expedition on this small scale, well conducted, would be perfectly successful within a few weeks from the arrival at Souakin: it would be perfectly independent of the military operations conducted from Massowah, and would have the advantage of small numbers with unlimited means of transport, the want of which, together with the failure of supplies in a country devastated by civil wars, will be severely felt by the large force that will act from the coast of the Red Sea.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SAM. W. BAKER.

No. 834.

*Mr. Egerton to Sir S. Baker.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 29, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of the 27th instant, suggesting that a supplementary expedition should be despatched viâ Souakin to Abyssinia, with the view of obtaining the release of the British captives through the agency of an Abyssinian Chief, named Mek Nimmur, and I am to inform you, in reply, that as the management of the proposed expedition rests entirely with the India Office, your letter has been referred to that Department for their consideration and decision.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. C. EGERTON.

No. 835.

Acting Consul-General Reade to Lord Stanley.—(Received November 4.)*

My Lord, *Cairo, October* 25, 1867.

WITH reference to my telegram reporting the Viceroy's intention to send an Envoy to Abyssinia for the purpose of endeavouring to persuade King Theodore to release the European prisoners, I have the honour to state that I did not fail to communicate to his Highness your Lordship's telegraphic reply.†

I expressed in suitable terms the thanks of Her Majesty's Government, and gave the assurance that the liberation of the prisoners would bring about an immediate cessation of hostilities.

The Viceroy has since furnished me with a copy of the letter he has addressed to

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

† See No. 824.

King Theodore, and I have the honour to inclose it herewith accompanied by a translation into English. The document is very ably written and is expressed in rhymes. A Coptic Priest, hurried to his destination by steam-boat and dromedary, is the bearer of it.

The Viceroy has apparently selected the present as a fit occasion for sending an army to the Abyssinian frontier. Ten thousand troops, most of whom have just returned from Candia under Abd-el-Kader Pasha, left yesterday for Massowah and Souakim. His Highness informs me that the object of that force is simply to act on the defensive in the event of any attack upon his territory being made by King Theodore; but that he has given Abd-el-Kader Pasha instructions to give any assistance in his power to the officers in command of the British troops if the latter should require it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. F. READE.

Inclosure in No. 835.

*Letter addressed by the Viceroy of Egypt to King Theodore.**

(Translation.)

From the Khìdiv of the Territory of Egypt and its Dependencies of the Soudan to His Most Gracious Majesty the Great King, the August Sultan, the Sultan Theodorus, Sultan of the Countries of Abyssinia and of the Kingdom of Ethiopia.

AFTER loving salutations and exceeding affection towards you and inquiries of your gracious health and prayers for the continuance of your glory and honour, we inform your High Majesty that as our lands are adjacent to your lands and our valley contiguous to your valley, we consider it of essential duty and obligation to tender counsel to your Exalted Majesty as occasion may require and indicate to your gracious pleasure whatever may tend to prosperity and security in the present or future, as imposed by the duty of neighbour to neighbour and nearness of house to house. We have now ascertained positively, by means free from supposition or conjecture, that in consequence of the period of detention in your Empire having been prolonged in respect of the prisoners, the English Consul and his associates, the exalted British Government has considered that it is incumbent on it and important for it to use coercion for rescuing them with military force, out of consideration for those who are under its protection and of the preservation of the honour of the Government. For this reason it has thought proper to break off amicable relations with your kingdom and to declare war against your dominions. And behold, it has prepared for that purpose an immense force with soldiers in great number, complete with implements of war. Nor can it have been concealed from your noble intelligence, and the excellence of your large experience, that the exalted English Government from ancient time has been renowned for valour and might and prowess in war defence, and it would not have remained passive up to the present time, for so long a period, even of numbers of years, but from its wish to be far from doing evil and its desire to maintain peace and happiness and from its hope of their (the prisoners) being released without war and set at liberty in an amicable way. Now, should it not attain this object, it will be compulsory on it to light up the fires of war and to use overpowering force and subjugating means of which the evil result and injurious consequences cannot be ignored. Certainly it must be within your high knowledge what the aforesaid exalted Government did in the countries of India and in the countries of China with their numerous populations and vastness of territory and distance of their shores.

Now, inasmuch as there is between us and that Government ancient friendship and established relations and firm amity and candid dealing, and those soldiers and forces for entering your parts must necessarily pass through our lands and valley, and there is no hope of their foregoing their determination and of their returning to peaceful intercourse with your Royal Empire, except in the hastening by your High Majesty to liberate the prisoners, and to allow them to return rejoiced to their country, before the fire of war is lighted, and terror becomes great, and men are destroyed, and life and property is lost; for that reason, great friendship, clearness of conscience and neighbourly duty, invite me to offer advice to the part of your Imperial Majesty in this affair, and to counsel your Majesty to keep aloof from such evil.

If, then, you desire the welfare of your Empire and beautiful kingdom, accept from us this friendly advice and amicable monition, and expedite the liberation of the above-mentioned Consul and the remaining mentioned prisoners, and send them to Massowah or the confines of your kingdom, in safety and security. And be so good as to inform us of the circumstance, that we may hasten to apprize the highly-honoured English Govern-

* Laid before Parliament, 1867.

ment, in the hope that it will hinder the advance and march of its troops against you; for should they enter within the limits of your Empire, and overrun the provinces of your kingdom with this immense army and numerous host, with their perfect implements and prodigious guns and fire-arms, and weapons of war and military engines, very great disasters and alarm will fall upon your honoured Empire.

Also, as is necessarily known, if destruction befall those prisoners, that will be no cause for the retreat of the English and the retracing of their steps, but a cause for increasing their resentment and aggravating their rage, and adding to their determination to exact signal vengeance and inflict severe punishment, such as ought not to be here recorded, nor even here mentioned or written.

If you accept this friendly advice, and elect to follow the right way for preserving property and lives, and for maintaining peace and prosperity, which I expect from your high intelligence and excellent system of government, it is better than the ravaging of countries and the harassing of human creatures, and confusion of affairs, and increasing of evil, and falling into a complete state of disorganization.

But if you act contrarily, and dissent from my view, and insist after this on keeping the before-mentioned in prison, assuredly the English will overrun the lands of your Empire with the army now prepared, and abounding force, and manifest strength, and all-subduing power, in face of which repentance will not avail, nor safety be possible; and the time of opportunity will be passed, and its season gone, and its recall difficult; and we also shall be under the necessity of allowing to cease the friendship existing between us and your Majesty, although that would be without our wish and contrary to our desire, and only on account of your disregard of our advice and the want of your acceptance of our intimation.

The prudent man selects the best phase of affairs, and throws not himself into evil. Thus we have accomplished our duty of counselling you, and it remains for you to accept, which is our last hope and final request.

No. 836.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received November 25.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, November 22, 1867.*

WITH reference to what was said last night in the House of Commons respecting Consul Cameron, I beg leave to direct your Lordship's attention to a letter from me, headed "Consul Cameron and the Emperor Theodore," which appeared in the "Times" newspaper of September 23rd last, and of which the following is a copy:—

"To the Editor of 'The Times.'

"Sir, "*Civil Service Club, September* 21.

"In the discussion of the cause of Consul Cameron's first detention in July 1863, and the subsequent imprisonment of himself and the other Europeans, there appears to be a great confusion of times and places. As I am innocently a main cause of that grossly misrepresented officer's originally falling under the Emperor's displeasure, it is due to him and to the British nation that I should set matters right by stating the facts as they really occurred.

"Notwithstanding the repeated attempts to throw blame on Consul Cameron for proceeding into the interior of Abyssinia, it is now an acknowledged fact that he was accredited to the Emperor Theodore by Earl Russell's letter to that Monarch of February 20, 1862,* and that he went to his Court in pursuance of express instructions. On his arrival there in October 1862, he was most favourably received, and in the beginning of November he left for the coast with the memorable letter to the Queen, the not replying to which on the part of Her Majesty's Government was one of the causes, though anything but the only cause, of the Emperor's displeasure.

"Having been prevented from reaching Massowah, Consul Cameron forwarded the Emperor's letter to Aden by two Abyssinians, and he himself went into the frontier Province of Bogos. In doing so he is alleged, not merely to have acted contrary to his instructions, but also to have incurred the displeasure of the Emperor Theodore. In both respects this is not the fact.

"The Christian inhabitants of Bogos had long been under the protection of the British Consul in Abyssinia, with the knowledge and approval of the British Government, and

* Inclosure in No. 329.

Consul Cameron, in following in the footsteps of his predecessor, Consul Plowden, believed that he was acting according to orders. But since Plowden's death, in 1860, Egypt had become a large cotton-growing country, and it would not do for England to quarrel with so valuable an ally for the sake of a paltry tribe of Abyssinian Christians. So Consul Cameron was blamed by Earl Russell for doing precisely that for which Consul Plowden had been highly commended by Lord Palmerston. Thus it is, that in Earl Russell's most ill-timed despatch of October 5, 1865,* to Colonel Stanton (which has far more to do with the present lamentable war with Abyssinia than is imagined by any one except those few who know the facts†) it is asserted that 'Captain Cameron, in going to Bogos, acted without orders, and incurred the displeasure of his own Government.' And more recently the policy of England with respect to Bogos has been declared by Lord Stanley, in his despatch to Colonel Stanton of December 15, 1866 (Blue Book, page 95),‡ to be that 'Her Majesty's Government do not feel themselves in any way called on to interfere in differences and disputes between native tribes residing respectively on the frontiers of Egypt and Abyssinia.'

"Still, this is no reason why Consul Cameron should have incurred the displeasure of the Emperor Theodore. On the contrary, his visit to Bogos was made in the cause of that Monarch's Christian subjects, and in company with Samuel, the Emperor's steward, formerly my servant; and had our Consul but returned direct from Bogos to the Emperor's Court, even though without an answer from the Queen, no harm could have ensued. For he had only to show that sufficient time had not elapsed for such answer to arrive. In fact, his own despatch of October 31, 1862,§ forwarding the Emperor's letter to the Queen, did not reach London till February 12, 1863, and Lord Russell's answer to that despatch was dated April 22;‖ so that when Consul Cameron returned to Gondar in June 1863, and met the Emperor there in the following month, not sufficient, or hardly sufficient, time had elapsed for Lord Russell's answer to reach him. It has nothing to do with the question as it then stood that in that answer the Emperor's letter to the Queen should have been totally ignored. Both Cameron and the Emperor expected a reply, and neither of them for a moment imagined that no reply would be sent. All then that Cameron had to do, had circumstances been favourable, was to account for the delay as above stated, which could not have failed to be satisfactory, especially as M. Bardel, who had left the Emperor's Court with him in November 1862, and had gone direct to Paris with a letter to the Emperor of the French, was not yet returned, and in fact did not return till September following.

"The real cause of Theodore's displeasure, then, was not so much that Consul Cameron returned in June 1863 without the so anxiously expected answer from the Queen, as that, instead of waiting for it at Massowah, or at all events returning direct from Bogos, he had been in the interval into the neighbouring Egyptian provinces; in the Emperor's own words,—'He went to the Turks, who do not love me. . . . . He stayed with them some time, and returned to me.'

"The explanation of this is that while in Bogos with Samuel, Consul Cameron received from the Foreign Office a despatch containing certain communications which, under the circumstances detailed in my work, "The British Captives in Abyssinia," I had made to the Board of Trade in the months of November and December 1862, respecting the expediency of adopting measures for the development of British commerce in Ethiopia, and which, as I was informed by the Secretary of that Board, in a letter dated January 10, 1863, 'had been referred by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for the report of Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah.'

"In consequence of the orders thus conveyed to him, Consul Cameron went into the Egyptian Provinces of Taka and Kalabat, 'to see about cotton, and trade, and so forth,' as he wrote from Kedarif on May 25, 1863, in a letter quoted in my said work, or, as he has since written from his prison at Magdala, in a letter dated the 13th of November, 1866, which has been duly recorded, 'At Bogos I got a letter from the Foreign Office directing me to report on the comparative merits of Souakin and Massowah as the seat of a Consulate; also to report on the trade of Souakin. It was this which led me to go to the trading stations of Kassala and Matemma.'

"This, then, is what the Emperor meant when he accused Cameron of 'going to the Turks,' and this it is that poor Cameron himself alludes to when he says, in his letter of the 25th of May, 1866,¶ to Mr. Henry D. Seymour, M.P., printed in page 55 of the Abyssinian Blue Book, 'I feel somewhat like the lad in the "Arabian Nights," who made

* No. 539.

† See my letter to Lord Stanley of October 9, 1867, printed in the Blue Book on the Abyssinian expedition, page 324, No. 672.

‡ No. 687. § No. 343. ‖ No. 351. ¶ No. 633.

his cheesecakes with pepper, and found that in so doing he had committed a great political offence.'

"I have thus shown what was Consul Cameron's primary offence. The neglect of the British Government to reply to the Emperor's letter, the abandonment of the Christian Abyssinians at Jerusalem, and other grievances aggravated his displeasure, and led to the imprisonment of our Consul and the other Europeans. Still all this appeared to have been condoned on Mr. Rassam's arrival with a friendly letter from the Queen. What led to the subsequent imprisonment of Her Majesty's Envoy and the whole party is a totally different question. I regret to say that a letter from me, which appeared in the 'Times' on September 14, 1865, by drawing forth Earl Russell's ill-advised despatch of October 5 following,* became, without any fault of mine, the primary cause of the misfortunes which have since ensued, as I purpose showing on another occasion.

"I have, &c.
"(Signed) CHARLES BEKE."

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 837.

Dr. Beke to Lord Stanley.—(Received November 23.)

My Lord, *Bekesbourne, November* 23, 1867.

IN page 463 of the Blue Book on the Abyssinian expedition, just laid before Parliament, is a letter to your Lordship from Sir Samuel Baker, No. 885, dated the 27th ultimo,† submitting to you the programme of a supplementary expedition, with a view to secure the co-operation of a powerful chief, called by him Mek Nimmur, who, he says, was well known to him personally several years ago, and whom he represents as being a great friend of King Theodore of Abyssinia, and as possessing much influence with him.

In consequence of that communication, I beg leave to lay before your Lordship the following two extracts from public journals, published a few days after the date of Sir Samuel Baker's letter; from which it will be perceived the chief in question, Mek 'Umr Wed Nimr—that is to say, Mek (or Melek) 'Umr, the son of (Mek Nimr), his father, the famous chief of that name, having died long ago,—was killed upwards of two years ago by the Abyssinian rebel Tussoo Gobaze. The same extracts furnish some details respecting the hostile movements in the frontier districts between Egypt and Abyssinia, which are highly important at the present juncture.

The first of these two extracts is from the "Athenæum" of the 2nd instant, being part of a review of Sir Samuel Baker's recent work "The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia." Speaking of Mek Nimmur, who is described by that traveller as "the vassal of King Theodore," and as maintaining a constant guerilla warfare against the Turks, being in fact, a shield that protected the heart of Abyssinia; the reviewer remarks:—

"Alas for the heart so protected! We hear that 'two years ago Tussoo Gobaze, one of the principal chiefs in rebellion against Theodore, with a view to conciliate the Turks, cut the throat of Mek (or Melek) 'Umr,'—evidently the individual named Mek Nimmur by Sir Samuel Baker,—'the son and successor of the Mek Nimr who burnt Ismail Pasha, the son of Mahommed Ali, during the first invasion of the country of the Upper Nile nearly fifty years ago. Tussoo, as some excuse for what he had done, accused the Mek of constantly intriguing and fomenting quarrels between King Theodore and the Turks, and of being, in a great degree, the cause of the imprisonment of the English by Theodore.' *Divide et impera* has always been the maxim of the Egyptian Turks in their incessant advance towards the south. The miserable result of this internecine warfare has doubtless been, ere this, the annexation of the tract of country marked on the map as 'Mek Nimr's Territory;' whilst Tussoo Gobaze's blind affection for his Mahometan neighbours, will only have served to open to them a road into the very heart of Abyssinia, thereby adding to the political complications, already more than sufficiently numerous."

The second extract is from the "Pall Mall Gazette" of the 6th instant, being part of a letter from a correspondent in Egypt, dated the 26th ultimo. It says:—

"I mentioned in a previous communication that Tussoo Gobaze, assumed to be friendly to the Egyptian authoritles, and to make himself more agreeable to them had killed the Mek (Melek) 'Umr, son of the Mek Nimr who had burned Mohammed Ali's son Ismail, at the time of the conquest of the Soudân in 1817 or 1818. This scheme of

* No. 539. † No. 833.

the Viceroy's assisting Gobaze, it is true, is supposition, but see what has actually taken place on this side. The Viceroy, against the remonstrance of the Porte, withdraws at this present juncture his troops from Crete on the plea of being unable to sustain the expenditure. These troops, however, no sooner arrive in Egypt than they are ordered to the frontier of Abyssinia to form part of a force which the Viceroy has said is to amount to 10,000 men, but which some of his friends say for him is not to be less than 15,000 men. All this manœuvring is quite understood by the Turks, among whom I heard it observed, 'Oh, these are the old Mahomet Ali's ideas, which might have led to something then (and would if France had not stood in the way with her idea that Abyssinia might be useful to her one day—an idea which was more developed under the patronage of Marshal Soult in 1838–40), but will come to nothing now.' The Viceroy, in the present straitened condition of his finances, which are very far from being improved—his local paper is at 20 to 21 per cent. per annum discount—would hardly embarrass himself still more by maintaining so large a force as that he is organizing for the mere purpose of guarding his frontier, for which 4,000 or 5,000 men in addition to those he has already there would suffice. It is supposed that His Highness has other objects in view besides those assigned to him. It may be that he would like to be in a position to step in should we by possibility meet with a reverse; or to avail himself of the confusion which our withdrawal, after obtaining satisfaction, will inevitably occasion; or to assist Tussoo Gobaze to the throne of Abyssinia with terms in favour of Egypt; or, to cut out, in some way, in the general imbroglio, a good slice of Abyssinia for himself—perhaps the northern portion of Amhara and Tigré—which would give His Highness a free run from Matemma and Sennaar to the Red Sea, of which he obtained, through the assistance of the British Ambassador nearly three years ago, by transfer from the Porte, the two principal Abyssinian ports of Suakin and Massowah. All this intriguing and double purpose will not do us any good in Abyssinia, where the people, if they see the English and Egyptians playing so much into each other's hands, will naturally consider their cause as one and receive them both in an equally hostile spirit."

Though I perceive from the letter from the Under Secretary of State for India to Sir Samuel Baker, dated the 31st ultimo (No. 932, in page 484 of the Blue Book), that Sir Stafford Northcote considers it inexpedient to sanction any independent action that might interfere with the full powers intrusted to Sir Robert Napier as Commander-in-Chief of the Abyssinian expeditionary force; still I think it desirable that the facts above stated should be brought officially to the notice of your Lordship, for the information of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES BEKE.

No. 838.

Return of the Names, &c., of Prisoners in Abyssinia.*

Return of the Names, Nationalities, and Occupations, and Length of Residence of the several Prisoners in Abyssinia, to release whom a Military Force is proceeding to Abyssinia; together with a Return of the Europeans not Prisoners in the service of the Emperor Theodorus.

Name.	Length of Residence.	Nationality.	Occupation.
C. D. Cameron ..	Arrived at Gondar, June 23, 1862.	British . ..	Her Majesty's Consul at Massowah.
L. Kerans ..	Supposed to have accompanied Consul Cameron.	Ditto	Secretary to Consul Cameron.
R. Mc Kelvey ..	Ditto	Ditto	Servant to ditto.
J. Makerer ..	Ditto	French. ..	Ditto.
D. Pietro	Ditto	Italian . ..	Ditto.
H. Rassam ..	Arrived at Emperor's camp, January 28, 1866.	Syrian by birth, but British by employment.	Her Majesty's Envoy to Abyssinia.
Lieut. Prideaux ..	Ditto	British . ..	Attached to Mr. Rassam's Mission.
Dr. Blanc ..	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto.

No return of Servants accompanying Mr. Rassam's Mission.

* Laid November 29, 1867, in pursuance of House of Commons Address of November 21, 1867.

Persons stated to be detained in captivity by King Theodore whose case is specially recommended to the British Commander-in-Chief, although the military force is not proceeding to Abyssinia specifically to effect their release.

Name.	Length of Residence.	Nationality.	Occupation.
A. Bardel.. ..	Exact length of residence unknown.	French. ..	Painter and teacher of languages. Formerly Secretary to Consul Cameron.
Rev. H. A. Stern ..	.. .. ..	Hessian ..	Missionary.
Rev. H. Rosenthal ..	.. .. ..	Mecklenburg ..	Ditto.
Mrs. E. Rosenthal ..	.. .. ..	British-born.	
Rev. J. M. Flad ..	.. .. ..	Prussian ..	Ditto.
Mrs. Flad ..	.. .. ..	Ditto.	
A. Flad, F. Flad, P. Flad } children ..	.. .. ..	Ditto.	
Rev. W. Staiger ..	.. .. ..	Baden.. ..	Ditto.
Rev. F. Brandeis .	.. .. ..	Ditto	Ditto.
K. Schiller ..	.. .. ..	Prussian ..	Natural History Collector.
T. Essler	.. .. ..	Hungarian ..	Ditto.

Europeans (not known to be imprisoned) in the service of King Theodore.

The only information on this head is given in the following extract of a letter from Mr. Flad, dated July 10, 1866:—

"The European workmen, with their wives and children, are thirty-five souls."

No. 839.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(Received December 19.)

My Lord, *Cairo, December 1, 1867.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that, at an audience with which I was honoured by the Viceroy a few days since, I took the opportunity of speaking to his Highness on the subject of the reinforcement of Egyptian troops lately sent to Massowah and to the Abyssinian frontier, and I informed his Highness that the presence of so large a force of Egyptian troops at Massowah was calculated to interfere seriously with our operations, not only by increasing the difficulty of procuring supplies from the country, but also by leading the Abyssinians to suppose that the Egyptians were acting in concert with ourselves.

I also stated to his Highness that I had heard it rumoured that King Theodore had issued a Proclamation to his people, stating that the British were about to make war on Abyssinia for the purpose of forcing them to change their religion, as they had lately made war on the Russians (their co-religionists) in support of the Turks; and I added it was of great importance to us that no measures should be adopted by his Highness that would tend to encourage such a belief amongst the natives of Abyssinia.

His Highness, in reply, assured me the Egyptian force at Massowah consisted only of three battalions, each 500 strong, but that he was obliged to strengthen the forces on his frontier line to insure proper respect to Egyptian territory and to prevent any sudden incursions being made from Abyssinia into the frontier districts, in consequence of the assistance and facilities afforded to the British troops. I remarked to his Highness that at all events it was not very probable that an attack would be made on Massowah, and expressed the hope that no unnecessary force would be maintained at that station; and I have reason to believe His Highness will not increase the force already stationed at that port.

I must, however, remark to your Lordship that I perceive this Abyssinian expedition is watched by the Egyptian Government with considerable anxiety and apprehension, lest it should result in the permanent occupation of that country by the British, and it is unnecessary to add that persons are not wanting in Egypt who endeavour to place obstacles in our path by working on the Viceroy's timidity, and insinuating that the occupation of Egypt itself is contemplated by Her Majesty's Government, and that the Abyssinian expedition is merely a pretext for collecting a force in the immediate vicinity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

No. 840.

Mr. Hammond to Mr. Merivale.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 19, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you, to be laid before Secretary Sir Stafford Northcote, a copy of a despatch from Colonel Stanton,* reporting a conversation which he had held with the Viceroy on the subject of reinforcements of Egyptian troops lately sent to Massowah and the Abyssinian frontier, I am to add, with reference to that paragraph of Colonel Stanton's despatch which refers to alleged apprehensions with respect to the presence of the British Expeditionary Force in Abyssinia, that he has been instructed by telegraph to assure the Viceroy that Her Majesty's Government do not entertain any intention of permanent occupation of that country.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 841.

Lord Stanley to Colonel Stanton.

(Extract.) *Foreign Office, December* 19, 1867.

YOU may give an assurance to the Viceroy of Egypt that Her Majesty's Government have no intention of occupying Abyssinia permanently.

No. 842.

Mr. Merivale to Mr. Hammond.—(Received December 21.)

Sir, *India Office, December* 20, 1867.

I AM directed by Sir Stafford Northcote to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant,† with inclosure from Colonel Stanton, reporting a conversation which he had held with the Viceroy of Egypt respecting the increase lately made to the Egyptian forces at Massowah; and I am to request that you will inform Lord Stanley of Sir S. Northcote's concurrence in Colonel Stanton's opinion that any material increase to the force in question would be embarrassing to the Commander-in-chief of the expedition, as tending to confirm the report spread by King Theodore of a coalition between the British Government and that of the Viceroy.

I am, &c.

(Signed) HERMAN MERIVALE.

No. 843.

Mr. Murray to Captain Desborough.‡

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 27, 1867.

I AM directed by Lord Stanley to inform you that accounts have been received to day from Colonel Merewether, that the captives at Magdala were all well on the 11th of November, and in good spirits, having heard of the measures taken for their relief. That Mr. Flad had written on October 11th that all the Europeans from Debra Tabor were in the camp of the Emperor, some in chains, but Mr. Flad and others free, and that all the women and children were well. The captives, Mr. Flad said, had of late been more favourably treated by the King.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JAMES MURRAY.

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* No. 839. † No. 840.

‡ A similar letter was addressed to Mr Purday.

1868.

No. 844.

Lord Stanley to Colonel Stanton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 3, 1868.

I DESIRED Mr. Reade, in my despatch of the 10th of October last,* to state to the Viceroy that Her Majesty's Government would gladly avail themselves of his offer to send a Mission to King Theodore with a view of counselling him to release the British subjects and others detained as captives in Abyssinia; and, in reporting that he had executed these instructions, Mr. Reade, in his despatch of the 25th of October,† inclosed a copy of the Viceroy's letter to the King, and added that the Viceroy had apparently selected the present time as a fit occasion for sending an army to the Abyssinian frontier, and that 10,000 troops had, in fact, been dispatched to Souakin and Massowah. The Viceroy, however, Mr. Reade went on to say, had assured him that the object of the force was merely for the defence of Egypt if attacked by King Theodore, but that the Commander of it was instructed to assist the British expedition, if applied to.

Although Her Majesty's Government did not contemplate any such military demonstration on the part of the Viceroy when they accepted his offer to appeal to King Theodore for the release of the British and other captives, they did not, when informed of the grounds on which the Egyptian forces were dispatched in the direction of Abyssinia, feel warranted in offering any observations on that measure, and it is only now, when the effect it may probably have on the position and operations of Her Majesty's forces has become apparent, that they feel themselves justified in making any communication to the Viceroy on the subject.

From the information that has reached Her Majesty's Government there is much reason to suppose that the presence of the Egyptian forces on the scene, or even in the neighbourhood of the English operations, has a tendency to indispose the tribes not depending on King Theodore, and those in revolt against him, and to induce them to apprehend attempts, notwithstanding the disavowal of Her Majesty's Government, to alter the general state of affairs in Abyssinia. Such an impression would unquestionably add very much to the difficulties with which the British expedition has to contend by tending to make lukewarm in its course the population of the country through which it is moving, even if it did not divert them into enemies.

But, besides this, looking to the difficulty which may be experienced in procuring supplies in the districts through which the British force is moving, on account of the limited resources of the country, the neighbourhood of a large Egyptian force, equally drawing a portion at least of its supplies from the same districts, must prove a source of great inconvenience and embarrassment, and can scarcely fail to cripple the expeditionary army.

Her Majesty's Government think it best, therefore, at once to state to the Viceroy how matters stand, and they cannot doubt that he will fully appreciate the grounds on which you are instructed to request him to withdraw at least a certain portion of the Egyptian force from the neighbourhood of Massowah, which he can do without any apprehension for the safety of his own territory, inasmuch as the movements of the British expedition will find sufficient employment for the forces of which King Theodore can dispose, and will leave him no means for attacking the Egyptian territory.

You will, of course, make the Viceroy clearly understand that the request which you are instructed to prefer is not based on any doubt as to the intentions of His Highness. Her Majesty's Government place the fullest reliance on his sincerity and goodwill, and they can give no better proof that they do so than by instructing you frankly and unreservedly to lay before him their request and the grounds on which they prefer it.

I am, &c.

(Signed) STANLEY.

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* No. 824. † No. 835.

No. 845.

Colonel Stanton to Lord Stanley.—(*Received January* 27.)

My Lord, *Cairo, January* 16, 1868.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt, on the 12th instant, of your Lordship's despatch of the 3rd of January,* instructing me to make certain representations to the Viceroy on the subject of the inconvenience and embarrassment which the presence of the Egyptian forces in the neighbourhood of the English operations in Abyssinia was likely to create for the expeditionary army, and I have the honour to report to your Lordship that, in obedience to these instructions, I immediately waited on the Viceroy and stated to his Highness the purport of my visit.

I explained to his Highness that Her Majesty's Government had reason to suppose that the presence of the unusually large Egyptian force actually at Massowah or in the immediate neighbourhood had a tendency to indispose the tribes, not depending on King Theodore and those in revolt against him, from rendering such assistance to Her Majesty's troops as might otherwise be expected from them, even if it did not convert them into enemies, from the apprehension that attempts might be made to alter the general state of affairs in Abyssinia.

I also stated to his Highness that, in addition to these reasons, the neighbourhood of a large Egyptian force could not fail to prove a source of great inconvenience and embarrassment to Her Majesty's troops, considering the difficulty which may be experienced in procuring supplies in the districts through which the British force is moving and from which the Egyptian troops are equally drawing a portion at least of their supplies; and that under these circumstances I was instructed by your Lordship to request his Highness to withdraw at least a certain portion of his troops from the neighbourhood of Massowah which, I added, could be done without any apprehension for the safety of his Highness's own territory.

I also explained that the request that I was instructed to prefer was not based on any doubt as to the intentions of his Highness; that, on the contrary, Her Majesty's Government place the fullest reliance on his sincerity and good will, and that by instructing me to lay this request frankly and unreservedly before him, as well as the grounds on which it is preferred, they gave the best proof of this reliance.

His Highness, in reply, assured me most positively that the number of Egyptian troops reported to have been sent towards the Abyssinian frontier had been much exaggerated, that in reality he had only increased the force in the Soudan by about 1,200 men, and that the present garrison of Massowah consisted only of about 1,500 men which he did not consider excessive; but upon my again insisting that any increase to his garrison there at this moment would naturally give rise to exaggerated rumours in Abyssinia itself, and tend to the belief amongst the natives of that country that his Highness was acting as our ally—a belief that might seriously affect our operations, from the known hostility of the Abyssinians to the Egyptians—the Viceroy assured me he would, to prove his good will towards Her Majesty's Government, immediately send orders to Massowah to withdraw one battalion from the garrison.

His Highness also desired me to assure your Lordship that he was sincerely sensible of the good opinion of Her Majesty's Government and of the manner in which your Lordship had expressed this opinion.

I beg also to state to your Lordship that since this interview with the Viceroy I have myself visited Suez, and there endeavoured to ascertain exactly the number of Egyptian troops that had been embarked for Massowah or Souakin, and from the best information I can collect there I have every reason to believe that instead of 10,000 men having been sent, as was reported, the actual number embarked could not have exceeded 3,000 men.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. STANTON.

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* No. 844.

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